



FREEMAN

VINEYARD & WINERY

2006 RYO-FU CHARDONNAY



VINEYARDS	58% Keefer Ranch and 42% Heintz Ranch
BARREL FERMENTATION AND AGING	100% French oak, 100% 1 year old barrels fermented and aged 13 months sur lies
BOTTLED	November 15, 2007
PRODUCTION	452 cases

For the fourth year in a row, Freeman has been one of the few lucky wineries which receive Heintz Ranch Chardonnay. Charlie Heintz farms his vineyard on a vine by vine basis. His ranch is located on the western side of the Green Valley appellation just northeast of the town of Occidental. The vines at Heintz were planted in 1982 and are the oldest that Freeman works with.

The other contributing vineyard to the 2006 Ryo-fu is the Keefer Ranch which is located on the eastern side of the Green Valley appellation. Marcy Keefer and her son Craig Strehlow have supplied Freeman with some of our favorite Pinot Noir lots since 2004 and Chardonnay since 2005. Coincidentally, the 2nd oldest vines Freeman contracts with are the Keefer's Chardonnay vines.

2006 turned out to be one of the most challenging years for growing Chardonnay in Sonoma County since 1989. There were vineyards all over the western stretches of Sonoma which harvested no fruit at all. The biggest factors were large clusters, intermittent foggy and hot weather in June and July, and subsequently botrytis forming through the late summer and fall. Fortunately for Freeman, both Heintz and Keefer did a fantastic job of only picking the cleanest and ripest clusters for us. It's thanks for their extra efforts in the vineyard that we were able to maintain the quality of our Chardonnay.

The 2006 Ryo-fu Chardonnay starts with a subtle nose of lemon zest, crème caramel and toasted coconut. The full and ripe palate is balanced by bright acidity and has flavors of honeydew melon and white peaches. Just a hint of oak comes through on the finish, and the clean, citrus-like flavors complete the experience.