



2006 *Conner Lee Vineyard Chardonnay*
COLUMBIA VALLEY

Located on Radar Hill south of Othello, Washington, Conner Lee Vineyard is a cool site in a warm sunny region. Like a desert, the spring and fall nights can be 50 degrees cooler than the day temperatures. The hot 90 degree summer ripens the fruit, while the fall temperatures keep the acids balanced and the pH low. Like almost all of Washington State's vines, the Conner Lee Vineyard was planted as ungrafted vinifera. Our 1989 block is planted in sandy-silt soils, which provide excellent drainage.

Bud break was in early April in 2006, flowering on June 8th, veraison from August 10-15th and harvest on September 23rd and 27th. We cane prune these vines annually. We shoot thin in mid-spring, cluster thin at veraison, and do not leafstrip. Long before the fall, these steps promote excellent canopy balance and develop concentrated fruit early in the season. The shaded fruit and small crop create the grace and concentration of our wine. The spring and summer is when our vines develop fruit expression and minimize herbaceous flavors. The fall weather ripens our summer work.

We began hand-harvesting on September 23rd at dawn. The fruit was physiologically mature at 23.0°brix hydrometer, 9.5g/L organic acids, and 3.45 pH. We grew nine pounds of fruit per plant. We hand sorted clusters and both whole cluster pressed and crushed the chardonnay clusters using a new method I designed to allow for greater extraction in the wine. Our new methods will allow us to continually provide the rich and powerful character of this 2006 vintage. The raw juice fermented entirely in 90% mature Burgundy barrels. This wine's balance is naturally developed in the vineyard. We never add acids or water to our juices to adjust acidity or alcohol. Instead, we grow our fruit to balance the natural juice acids so that our wine needs no additions. We partially ferment the malic acid for stylistic crispness. This wine was milk-fined to improve its long finish. The chardonnay was lees stirred until bottling on August 8th, 2007. Buty white wines are naturally heat and cold stable between 45°F to 90°F. Sediments may develop if stored cooler or hotter. We believe this wine is ideally served at 50°F to 55°F, where after it can warm up at the table.

The nose is attractive and ripe, made of clean stone fruit flavors and vibrant citrus notes. The silky texture and the long, crisp, fruit-filled finish complete our wine, unobscured by oak. More powerful than the 2002 and 2005 vintage Buty wines, it is young at release and will open and taste best over the next three years.

Five hundred sixty three cases were produced. Released September 1, 2007