



Pellenc Harvester used for machine harvest – I was a supervisor of machine harvest



Villa Maria Marlborough, NZ Jessica Marston



Harvester tipping harvested grapes into gondola pulled by tractor during harvest

Overview

- Villa Maria was founded back in 1961 by Sir George Fistonich when he was just 21 years old and is New Zealand's largest family owned winery
- Villa Maria has 3 company wineries across NZ, one in Auckland, Hawkes Bay and Marlborough
- In Marlborough alone they have 18 vineyards the company personally manages with another 60 people growing for them.
- I have been based in Marlborough with the viticulture team as the viticulture cadet
- As viticulture cadet I was able to work in all areas of viticulture to give me a well rounded understanding of how everything works.



View of Villa Maria vineyard out in front of the winery and tasting room

Summary

- Working with Villa Maria as the viticulture cadet has helped me learn all the practical elements to all the theory learned at University
- I have been able to gain so much valuable experience and knowledge working alongside different vineyard managers and viticulturists the company has
- I have learned how the vineyard functions on a day to day basis and how to operate machinery and equipment used and I got to be a supervisor of the machine harvest for 2019.
- I hope to become the head viticulturist of a company some day and feel this experience has given me the building blocks to begin that journey

Responsibilities

- I worked alongside different vineyard managers on their vineyards using the tractors and machinery learning the practical skills of the vineyard
- I was involved in the development of 2 new vineyards, specifically helping manage the planting and posting
- I was involved with a new biological product trial that kills mealy bug which is a pest problem
- I worked alongside the assistant viticulturist looking at trunk disease and doing disease assessments which is becoming a big problem in Marlborough
- I was one of the machine harvest supervisors for 2019 and was in charge of making sure the machine harvesting went smoothly
- I collected data for yield estimation throughout the season



Tractor I drove on the vineyards, this one has a roller implement attached used to flatten cultivated ground



Left Photo: Covering wounds on vines with protective coating to prevent trunk vine disease
Middle and right photos: Symptoms of trunk disease found in grape vine trunks, dark staining in center caused from Eutypa and Botryosphaeria dieback