



VINEYARD SOURCES: 100% Nielson Vineyard, Santa Maria Valley. Founded by pioneer, Uriel Nielson in 1964, this property is Santa Barbara County’s oldest vineyard. The estate was replanted in 1999 using cuttings from the original old vines, which included the famed Wente clone of Chardonnay. The small, intensely flavored berries bring concentration, complexity and a broad palette of vibrant fruit aromas and flavors to the wine.

VINTAGE: The 2014 harvest made history as the earliest and shortest in duration in Santa Barbara County, commencing on August 25 and concluding just 32 days later. The growing season began with a very mild winter and below average rainfall for the third year in a row. Budbreak occurred in early March followed by warm, even temperatures throughout the spring and summer. Yields were a touch above average in most vineyards, though slightly lower than 2013. Grapes from Nielson Vineyard were harvested on August 25.

WINEMAKING: This small bottling of Chardonnay comes from a vineyard Ken has worked with for more than 30 years. The vines are especially expressive, and Ken’s “old world” approach to winemaking adds richness and silkiness that complement the vibrant character of the fruit. The grapes were handpicked and gently pressed as whole clusters. After settling in tank for 24 hours, the juice was racked to 60-gallon French oak barrels for fermentation. The wine was 100% barrel fermented with 100% malo-lactic fermentation and aged *sur lie* with *bâtonnage*, or lees stirring. It aged for a total 10 months in French oak, with 12% new French oak barrels, and was bottled on August 18, 2015.

TASTING NOTES: This Chardonnay is elegant and beautifully balanced with expressive aromas of Fuji apple, honeysuckle and lemon accented by hints of pear, honey and vanilla. The flavors mirror the aromatics and are enveloped in a rich, silky texture highlighted by a sparkle of natural acidity. The finish is seamless and rich, culminating in bright notes and a touch of citrus. As in past vintages, this Nielson Chardonnay is poised to age exceptionally well.

TECHNICAL DATA

T.A.: 7.8 g/l

pH: 3.27

Alcohol: 14.1%

Production: 97 cases