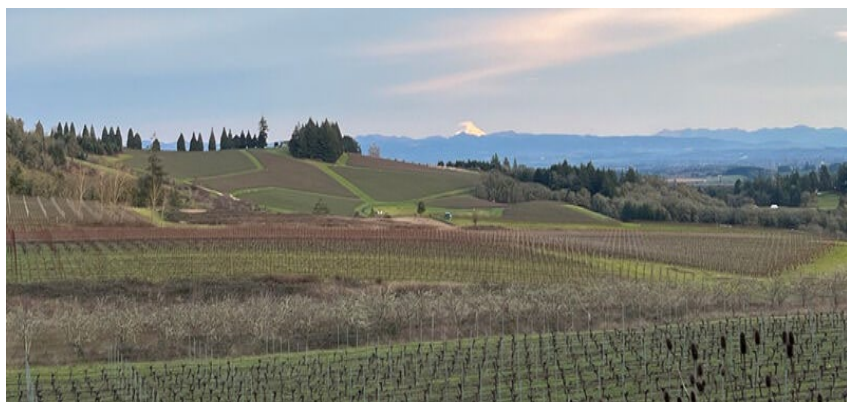




## Oregon, Willamette Valley: Walter Scott's 2022s

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Jul 25, 2024



The 2022 growing season in the Willamette Valley must have given winemakers whiplash. Initial warmth in February and March led to budbreak in mid-April as the soils warmed. But as the green buds emerged, the weather suddenly turned wintry. Temperatures cooled dramatically, and several days of frost killed primary buds. Many growers declared the severe frost an economic disaster. Cool, rainy weather continued

through early June and vine growth was delayed. Northern appellations with later budbreak, particularly the Eola-Amity Hills, plus vines planted at higher elevation sites, were less affected by the frost.

Warmth returned in June during flowering and set was exceptional, although powdery mildew became a big problem with the warm, humid weather. Despite fears of low yields due to the devastating frost, the vines bounced back and yields were much higher than expected. Thinning was critical. "It was about what you were willing to sacrifice," winemaker Ken Pahlow explains, noting that at lag phase, vines were already hanging six tons per acre. Warm, dry weather defined the rest of the growing season, and October was idyllic, with sunny skies and 80-degree temperatures. At Walter Scott, harvest began on September 26, much later than usual.



Stylistically, the 2022s from Walter Scott are supple and approachable, especially compared to the chiseled, firmly structured 2021s. I tasted the 2022s just after they were bottled, and while the Pinot Noirs were open and inviting, the Chardonnays will require a bit more time in bottle to unwind. In general, the 2022s are what I'll be drinking while waiting for the 2021s and 2019s to mature. For more detailed information on the winemaking practices at Walter Scott, please see my previously published article "[Oregon, Willamette Valley: Walter Scott's Freedom Hill Vineyard Chardonnay, 2014-2021.](#)"

*Pictured: a vineyard cat in the Justice Vineyard.*