

The Eola-Amity Hills

Bethel Heights Vineyard is located in the Eola-Amity Hills, an independent hill chain in the center of the Willamette Valley, home to many highly regarded vineyards. In July 2006, our hill-chain was granted a federally approved viticultural appellation of origin, recognizing a place name that is historically and geographically distinct.

We have discovered over the past three decades that Pinot noir more than any other grape is a creature of place, and while there are clear differences even between adjacent blocks within our own vineyard, we are now beginning to recognize broad similarities that distinguish wines grown in the Eola-Amity Hills from wines grown in other parts of the Willamette Valley.

We do know the geography is unique. This freestanding hill chain stretches about sixteen miles from just south of McMinnville to the Willamette River in West Salem. The soils are typically volcanic in most areas, and significantly shallower than in the Red Hills and Chehalem Mountain.

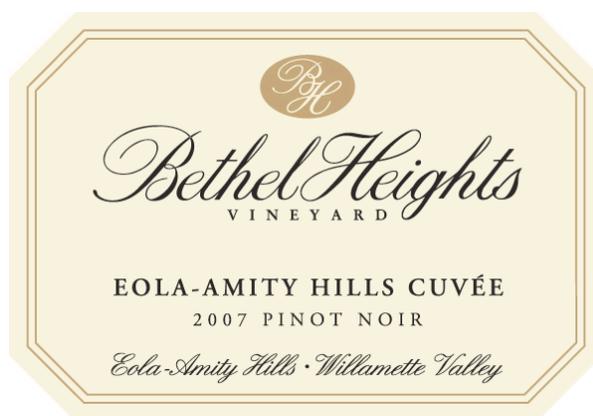
Another defining characteristic is the Van Duzer effect, created by a low point in the Coast Range directly to the West. That unique break in the mountains funnels cool air from the Pacific into the valley and lines up directly with the Eola-Amity Hills. The late afternoon cooling breeze and relatively cool nights help the grapes retain freshness and acidity, allowing us to leave our fruit on the vines longer into the fall than vineyards in the north end of the Willamette Valley.

Our Eola-Amity Hills Cuvée celebrates the new appellation,

blending fruit from six vineyards in the AVA: Elton Vineyards located 6 miles to the North of Bethel Heights, Jesse James Vineyard located 8 miles to the North, Lewman Vineyard which sits adjacent to Bethel Heights to the South, our own Justice Vineyard, and a small component from our own Estate vineyard.

BETHEL HEIGHTS VINEYARD

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2007 PINOT NOIR • EOLA-AMITY HILLS CUVÉE

Harvest dates: October 3 – 22, 2007

Source: 40% Jessie James Vineyard, 28% Elton Vineyard,
15% Carter Vineyard, 7% Bethel Heights Estate Vineyard,
5% Lewman Vineyard, 5% Justice Vineyard

Grapes at harvest: Brix 22 - 24; pH 3.0 - 3.3

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.2%, pH 3.51, TA 6.8 gr/liter

1612 cases bottled August 16, 2008

Suggested retail \$30

WINEMAKER NOTES: The fruit was destemmed into 1.5-ton fermentation bins and kept cold for five days before fermentation began. Following ten to fourteen-day fermentations, the new wine went into French oak barrels (35% new) for ten months. Each lot was kept separate until the final blending of the cuvée.

THE 2007 VINTAGE: 2007 was a classic, cool Oregon vintage, very similar to 2005. The summer provided adequate heat to ripen the fruit, and the fall finished cool, allowing the grapes to fully express their varietal character. Nice weather during the mid-summer produced a large crop that had to be rigorously managed to achieve optimum ripening. Some blocks were thinned three times, often to less than one cluster per shoot. When the fall turned rainy and cool, we pulled more leaves around the fruit, as a hedge against botrytis, and to expose the fruit to more sunlight. In the end, the extra effort gave us clean ripe grapes, and wines with moderate alcohols and pure, focused fruit character.

TASTING NOTES: Initial aromas of clove and anise give way to red caneberry, oak spice, and white peach as the wine opens in the glass. The entry is juicy with Royal Anne cherry, hints of citrus, and firm yet balanced acidity carrying the wine to the finish. The tannins are fine grained and suit the wine in its youth, but are robust enough to balance this wine for aging over the next five to seven years.