

## FROM CAMEL VALLEY VINEYARD

March 2011-03-09

The new season has got off to a good start this year – away from the vineyard. With winter pruning finished by the middle of February and well ahead with winemaking and bottling, Bob and Sam were able to attend the World Sparkling Wine Championships – Bolleccine del Mondo - in Verona. We were delighted to win the Trophy for the Best Sparkling Rosé.

Some of the world's top producers and wine journalists attended the gala dinner and awards ceremony at the prestigious Café Dante on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February. The winning wines were each served with a specially designed food match and the 2008 Camel Valley Pinot Noir Brut was hailed a sensation when served with a parmesan cheese soufflé on a bed of mushrooms. Sam collected the Trophy and Bob was given the honour of presenting trophies to some of the other winners. We now have a second beautiful Murano glass trophy in our cabinet which is a real joy to look at.

Then at the end of February Bob and I received an unexpected invitation to the 2011 Cornwall Farm Business Awards Dinner and Presentation at the Wadebridge Showground. We were surprised and delighted when Bob won the Award for Best Farm Processor. He won a trophy and bottle of Champagne – always good to try the opposition! It was very special to us to win this as we always think of ourselves as farmers, although many people do not consider growing vines to be 'proper' farming.

Agriculture is defined as cultivating the soil, and we definitely do that – if you don't look after your land properly you'll never get it to grow anything well, whether the crop is grass, cereal, grapes or anything else. That's why it's important to regularly look at growth and yields, have the soil analysed, and keep looking at what's going on when you're walking the dog round the fields.

In preparation for planting the new vineyard we've had 6 tonnes of lime spread, 50/50 pre and post ploughing, together with phosphate, potassium, muriate of potash, sulphur, and boron, to provide the best possible conditions to get the young vines started. And of course that old favourite – FYM – as much as we can get. A minimum of a hundred tonnes of farmyard manure will be spread, thanks to Stephen and Tom Angwin next door.

This vineyard will be the highest we've got, which will hopefully make it less vulnerable to late spring frosts, but the vines may suffer from greater exposure to wind. To minimise any adverse effects we're planting alder trees as a windbreak which will give the vines valuable shelter. Then once they're planted we'll be looking after the new vines like babies till they're established. Hopefully one day they too will produce an award winning wine.

ANNIE LINDO