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Biodynamic viticulture conference in South Africa

Just as the five year drought began to break in South Africa the farm at Reyneke Wines in Stellenbosch held a 2 day Biodynamic wine conference in mid-June 2018 with guest lecturer Dr. Georg Meissner from the Free Wandering School. Rain lashed down like a dream after the 2017/ 2018 hottest & driest summer ever recorded. Vineyards being newly converted were challenged by the rain but the 12 year Biodynamic soil held strong, radiating its strength gained from the Biodynamic management. The color and texture of the soil now indicates that the sand has been transformed showing off its dark organic matter as the longed for rain sits comfortably in the soil. These old decomposing granite soils have great potential for generating quality wine.

As the drought took its toll in the Western Cape for its fifth year the future of farming practice was seriously threatened. Farmers, especially those conscious of sustainable practice, were challenged repeatedly to discover what environment is needed to maintain a healthy soil in drought conditions. And also how can they themselves maintain a healthy and positive attitude?

Dr Meissner skillfully brought our attention to contrast the qualitative difference between the 12 year Biodynamic soils at Reyneke Wines with the adjoining new vineyard in conversion to Biodynamics. Listening to the biography of the farmer, Johan Reyneke's journey and his practice, it became apparent at the conference that the work of integrating the principles and practices of Biodynamics offered drought resilience to the land.

This discovery was welcomed like the rain!

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