



2015 1MN BECHTOLD RANCH

This wine is composed of 100% Cinsault from the amazing Bechtold Ranch vineyard, planted in 1870 on its own roots, in deep, sandy loam soil deposited by the Mokelumne River, flowing down from the Sierras. The vineyard is on the west side of Lodi in an area where the ground is often heavy, clay loam— but Bechtold is in the old flood plain of the Mokelumne, and its Sierra sand

balances the heavy loam. The vineyard is so old and healthy that it has never been replanted, thus the fact the the vines still grow on their own (ungrafted) roots.

We make this wine in the simplest possible way: we bring the fruit in from the vineyard, introduce it gradually into 600 liter puncheons turned vertical, with their heads removed. We stomp some of the fruit as it goes in, releasing some of the juice. Then we leave it alone. In a week or so, fermentation starts and a cap forms. Still we leave it alone. We call this the Courier Protocol— an extended floating cap fermentation with a minimum of punchdowns and no pumpovers. After about 3 weeks of fermentation, we drain the wine away, press the remaining pomace very gently, and age the two wines (press and free-run) separately for about a year, in 220 liter neutral oak barrels.

The wine usually ages without SO₂ and is bottled with 0 free and about 40 mg/L total.

A note on the name: We were originally told that the vineyard was planted to “Black Malvasia.” I knew that this was one of those weird, very local names the settlers from all over Europe called the vines that they planted in California— like Napa Gamay and Grey Riesling. But it never occurred to me that it referred to anything other than the Italian grape that I knew as Malvasia Nera. And then, after two years, I learned that the Germans who settled, and planted, this part of Lodi used the name Black Malvasia for what we know, universally, as Cinsault. We called the wine “1MN” because it was then the first fruit that we brought into the winery and we thought that it was Malvasia Nera.

TOTAL PRODUCTION:
about 100 cases