

2010 Sandler Keefer Ranch Pinot Noir

Clone: 23

Alcohol: 14.7%

pH: 3.55

TA: 6.5 g/L

Barrel aging: 10 months in 20% new and 80% 1 and 2 year old French oak

Cases produced: 199

Release price: \$40

The only vineyard in the world so far that has budded over a specific block of Pinot Noir for Sandler is the Keefer Ranch. After working with Keefer since 2004 at Freeman, I asked Marcy Keefer if I could purchase some fruit for Sandler in 2008. She knew I was a big fan of the clone 23 Pinot at her vineyard, so she asked if I would like to commit to an acre that she would bud from Dijon 777 to the Swiss clone 23, aka Mariafeld. The answer was yes in less than a second.

The 2010 Keefer Ranch Pinot Noir is the first wine I've made entirely from clone 23, since the 2009 had a small amount of 777 blended in. The vintage up north in the Russian River Valley had a similar heat wave in September, but it wasn't as severe as down south. We harvested Keefer on October 8, 2010, a bit later than "normal," however, since 2005, October harvests have become the new normal for coastal California Pinot. This is the most approachable wine of the trio being released now, but as typical for Keefer, it has the highest acidity too. The 2010 Keefer Pinot is quite similar to the 2009 with its lively, fruit character and gentle palate. Although it's drinking beautifully already, it should also cellar well for at least 5 years, probably longer.

