



## FELTON ROAD

### 2023 Felton Road Chardonnay *Block 6*

#### *Tasting Note*

*The higher elevation and north facing slope of Block 6 has again ripened with stone fruit aromas that are exuberant and defining. Peach and nectarine flavours dominate the broad and expansive palate, but are sufficiently contained by a finish of purity and dancing acidity. The depth and length are impressive. Uncomplicated by unnecessary intervention, it's an accurate and compelling expression of Block 6, Elms Vineyard.*

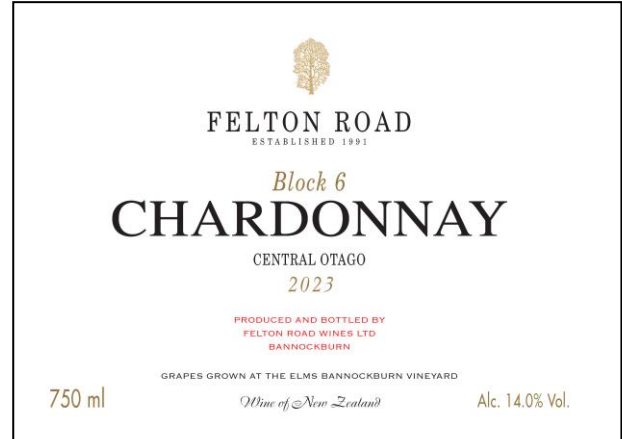
#### **Introduction**

Commencing with meticulous site selection and vineyard design in 1991, Felton Road's story is one of refusal to compromise. A strict 100% estate policy with fully organic and biodynamic viticulture (BioGro and Demeter certified) ensures that our fruit arrives at the winery as pure as it can be, while our entire estate comes as close to true sustainability as is possible. A commitment to hands off winemaking: gravity flow, indigenous yeasts and malolactic, an avoidance of fining and filtration all help preserve the wine's expression of its terroir. The result is Riesling, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir which accurately express the authenticity and complexity of our unique vineyards.

Gareth King; Viticulturist, Blair Walter; Winemaker, Nigel Greening; Proprietor.

#### **Vineyard & Viticulture**

Felton Road farms four properties totaling 34 ha in the Bannockburn subregion of Central Otago. Block 6 was planted in 1993 and is positioned on a north facing slope immediately south of Block 5 on The Elms vineyard. Its higher elevation (282-300m) and steeper slope favourably intercepts the sun but results in it being more wind exposed. Meticulous summer management of a single vertical shoot positioned (VSP) canopy ensures even and early fruit maturity. Shoot thinning, shoot positioning, leaf plucking, bunch thinning and harvest are all carried out by hand to ensure optimum quality fruit. Cover crops are planted between rows to assist in vine balance and to improve soil health and general biodiversity.



#### **Vintage**

Spring temperatures and rainfall were normal with only a couple of mild frost events which were successfully fought. Flowering proceeded in warm and relatively stable weather and resulted in setting a normal sized crop across all three varieties. December was warm and dry with these conditions further exacerbated over the next several weeks until a welcome rain event on February 21. With the relatively dry conditions prevailing for the previous months, this event and the periodic rain throughout March (but still only 43mm recorded), did not present any disease pressure issues and provided welcome relief to the warm and somewhat previous stressful conditions. Cooler night temperatures arrested the ripening for slow and steady development. Harvest commenced on March 23, and fears of an early, hot and fast harvest were fortunately not realised.

#### **Vinification**

Predominantly Mendoza with some Dijon clone 95 Chardonnay from Block 6, was whole bunch pressed, settled overnight and flowed by gravity to barrel in the underground cellar. Fermentation with indigenous yeasts in seasoned French oak (only 6% new) was followed by a long and complete malolactic over the spring and summer. After 17 months in barrel (11 months on gross lees) the wine was racked carefully to tank for bottling in late-August 2024. The wine was not fined or filtered.