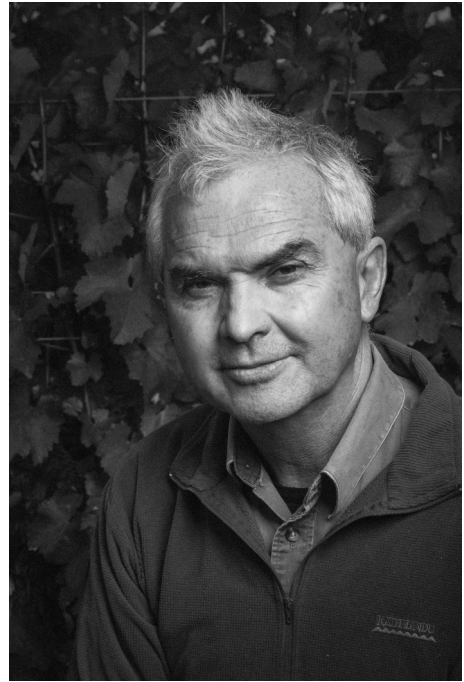




Saving Grace

Jean-Luc Dufour Vineyard Manager



Jean-Luc is a fourth generation grape grower. Beginning in his home country, Switzerland, he has also worked in vineyards across Europe and the United States before immigrating to New Zealand. He has been a viticulturist for more than 34 years, and has been with us for 25 of those years.

The Home Block vineyard, from which we harvest today, was planted by Jean-Luc. It is one of the oldest Pinot Gris blocks in New Zealand and uniquely, is all on its own rootstock. His grandfather was fond of saying 'better a good wind than a spray' and it's a philosophy that Jean-Luc lives by, 'apart from Powdery Mildew', he smiles wryly. Over the years his interest in natural methods of pest and disease management and bio-diversity has grown. He has worked with Lincoln University to identify which New Zealand native plants can add diversity and attract 'nature's services' to assist in the vineyard. Sheep are also a common sight in our vineyards—they are a vital part of the seasonal ground and canopy management. They do a good job too—both the sheep and vineyard are in great shape!

A keen tramper, Jean-Luc likes to share photos (evidence!) of his adventures. He loves the uncluttered space the Waipara region offers, even though at times, the climate is harsh, complete with frosty mornings, inescapable winds and heat. Yet for Jean-Luc, there is one resounding factor that keeps his feet planted firmly in these soils. "It's the love of 'your place', and love for those who live here."

Jean Luc is a pillar of our Waipara Valley viticulture team, with many in his team working with him for over 10 years. His knowledge of the area is invaluable and his patience and quiet dedication is something we treasure and celebrate.