

SCARECROW

BACK IN LATE 2005 I WAS SUMMONED TO A LARGE WHITE VICTORIAN FARMHOUSE TUCKED UP AGAINST THE EASTERN FLANK OF THE MAYACAMAS MOUNTAINS IN RUTHERFORD CALIFORNIA. THE REASON I WAS THERE WITH A COTERIE OF OTHER PEOPLE INCLUDING A MASTER SOMMELIER, CHEF, WINE DIRECTOR, AND ANOTHER SPECIALTY RETAILER, OUR HOSTS, THE WINEMAKER, VINEYARD MANAGER, AND TWO MARKETING EXPERTS WAS TO TASTE A NEW WINE THAT WOULD LAUNCH ONTO THE MARKET THE FOLLOWING SPRING. IN 2006, THE INTENTION WAS TO BLIND TASTE AGAINST SOME OF THE TOP WINES FROM NAPA VALLEY, HOWEVER OUR WINE WAS A 2003, AND THE OTHERS WERE 2002 AS THEY HAD BEEN IN THE MARKET FOR SOME MONTHS.



THE WINE TURNED OUT TO BE THE PREMIERE RELEASE OF SCARECROW SOURCED FROM THE JJ COHN ESTATE, NOW OWNED BY BRET LOPEZ, THE GRANDSON OF THE ORIGINAL OWNER, AND MIMI DEBLASIO, COHN, HEAD OF PRODUCTION AT MGM STUDIOS IN THE 1930'S WAS INVOLVED IN, *THE WIZARD OF OZ*, AND BUILT THIS HOME AND VINEYARD FOR HIS FAMILY TO SPEND THEIR SUMMERS AT. AFTER UNVEILING THE WINES, AT SOMETIME DURING THE OPEN DISCUSSION OF WHAT WAS ON THE TABLE, I MADE THE BOLD PREDICTION THAT SCARECROW WOULD BE THE WINE TO BRING THE WINEMAKER, CELIA WELCH THE WORLD-CLASS ATTENTION WHICH SHE HAD MANAGED TO AVOID UP TO THAT POINT. LITTLE DID I APPRECIATE HOW ACCURATE THAT STATEMENT WOULD PROVE SIX YEARS LATER...

In March 2006, the wine was released to little fanfare at the time I wrote the first review for Vinfolio, scoring it 97 points. Back then it was priced at the rather quaint sum of \$100 per bottle, which was one of the key elements we had collectively kicked around at the farmhouse that previous December. Those who purchased the wine on release or jumped on the mailing list early were in good shape now that the wine, proprietor, and winemaker were no longer a secret by the following December. The property, anchored by a small number of vines planted in 1945 by John Daniel has gone on to enjoy amazing success. Taking the better part of a year to arrange to sit down with a full bottle of the current release, happily the review is included below.

Currently priced at \$225 a bottle, it seems low in light of the fact that Welch and team will more likely than not create some of the world's top wines from this site especially compared to other wines of the same type selling for this price, or higher. It would not surprise me to see a price increase in the 2009 vintage.

2008 Scarecrow Cabernet Sauvignon

Rutherford, Napa Valley, 14.7% alcohol, \$225. 800 cs. 100CS

Shows a sublime and sophisticated nose of red and blue fruits with hints of salted licorice, faint aroma of rose petal and black cherry taffy. The palate is initially a little behind the nose and I revisited the wine the following day which allowed the substantial tannins to resolve to the point where they were revealing more integration with the equally substantial fruit. Drink 2014 – 2025

www.scarecrowwine.com

The full review (with rating) on this wine is available on page 21 of [purely domestic wine report, issue one](#). Subscription required.