



DIVERSITY IS KEY



ALOIS LAGEDER



What can you find in this booklet? Our aim is to simplify the concept of biodynamics and share our personal approach to it. How do we practise healthy and sustainable agriculture in our winery? It's a reflection of our own experiences, emphasising open-mindedness and dialogue. We are on a continuous journey, filled with unanswered questions, and we are dedicated and enthusiastic about delving ever deeper into this exploration.



DIVERSITY IS KEY

Simply put, we like diversity – it makes for more fertile soil, healthier agriculture and more life, ultimately, imparting distinct character to our wines.

We question and scrutinise everything, including ourselves. Our approach to viticulture is holistic: oxen roam our vineyards, and a vegetable garden grows beside them. We are mindful of the effects of climate change and experiment both in the vineyard and the cellar. We harvest our grapes at peak freshness, like to design our own labels – sometimes even by painting them with our fingertips – and run an organic restaurant, all while celebrating a team with members from over 15 nations. Diversity inspires us. Why think in black and white when you can think in colour? Certainly, this diversity demands effort to manage and organise, but it's an effort we embrace. Our approach to biodynamics is much the same.

We aim to capture the diversity of the landscape of the Alto Adige region. The wines should be clearly identifiable and represent both their geographical and artisanal heritage. We favour wines that are fresh and lively, the kind that invite you to enjoy not just one but multiple glasses. They are meant to bring joy and leave an impression.

As the sixth generation leading our family winery, we are stewards of a deep-rooted tradition. Nevertheless, we remain eager to explore and maintain our curiosity. We are not trying to completely redefine winemaking, but we do continuously fine-tune and adjust our methods. Sometimes, we even take a walk on the wild side, stepping beyond conventional boundaries and embracing the risks that come with innovation.

Biodynamics gives us more space to bring out the character of each wine, fostering the development of both our wines and ourselves.

What does biodynamics mean to us?

Our goal is to practise agriculture in a way that's not only healthy but also supports nature in the long term. This commitment has led us to choose the biodynamic farming method. However, it is important to avoid categorising biodynamics as inherently superior and conventional farming as flawed. Biodynamics demands a great deal of patience and a thorough understanding of interrelationships. It gives us more space to bring out the character of each wine, fostering the development of both our wines and ourselves.

Imagine you have a headache and visit the doctor. The doctor could simply prescribe you pain medication. But a more in-depth examination might explore the underlying causes – be it weather sensitivity, poor sleep or work stress. By identifying the root cause, you may be able to manage or even prevent future headaches without medical intervention.

That's the essence of our approach to biodynamic agriculture. We focus less on immediate relief and more on addressing underlying issues to cultivate vines that are as healthy, vigorous and resilient as possible.





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The beginnings

Our father Alois's first encounter with biodynamics traces back to his childhood, in his mother's vegetable garden. There, he saw that she aligned certain gardening tasks with the phases of the moon. This was his introduction to the age-old wisdom of farmers. One aspect that particularly intrigued him was how farmers treated their vine prunings. They gathered these prunings into bundles of brushwood to light their stoves in winter. Some bundles lasted for years, while others quickly turned brittle. The farmers' explanation resonated with him: wood cut during the waning moon stays strong and durable due to its lower sap content, making it harder and more resistant. Conversely, wood pruned when the moon is waxing tends to break down sooner as it's softer and contains more moisture.

The idea that the phases of the moon could influence plants seemed logical to him. After all, the moon is responsible for the tides – why shouldn't it also have an effect on plants, which are largely made up of water?

These early experiences were pivotal in leading our father to begin experimenting with biodynamic vineyard cultivation in the 1990s. By 2004, our winery had fully transitioned to biodynamic farming, and in 2008, we introduced our first biodynamically certified wines to the market.

Where we stand today

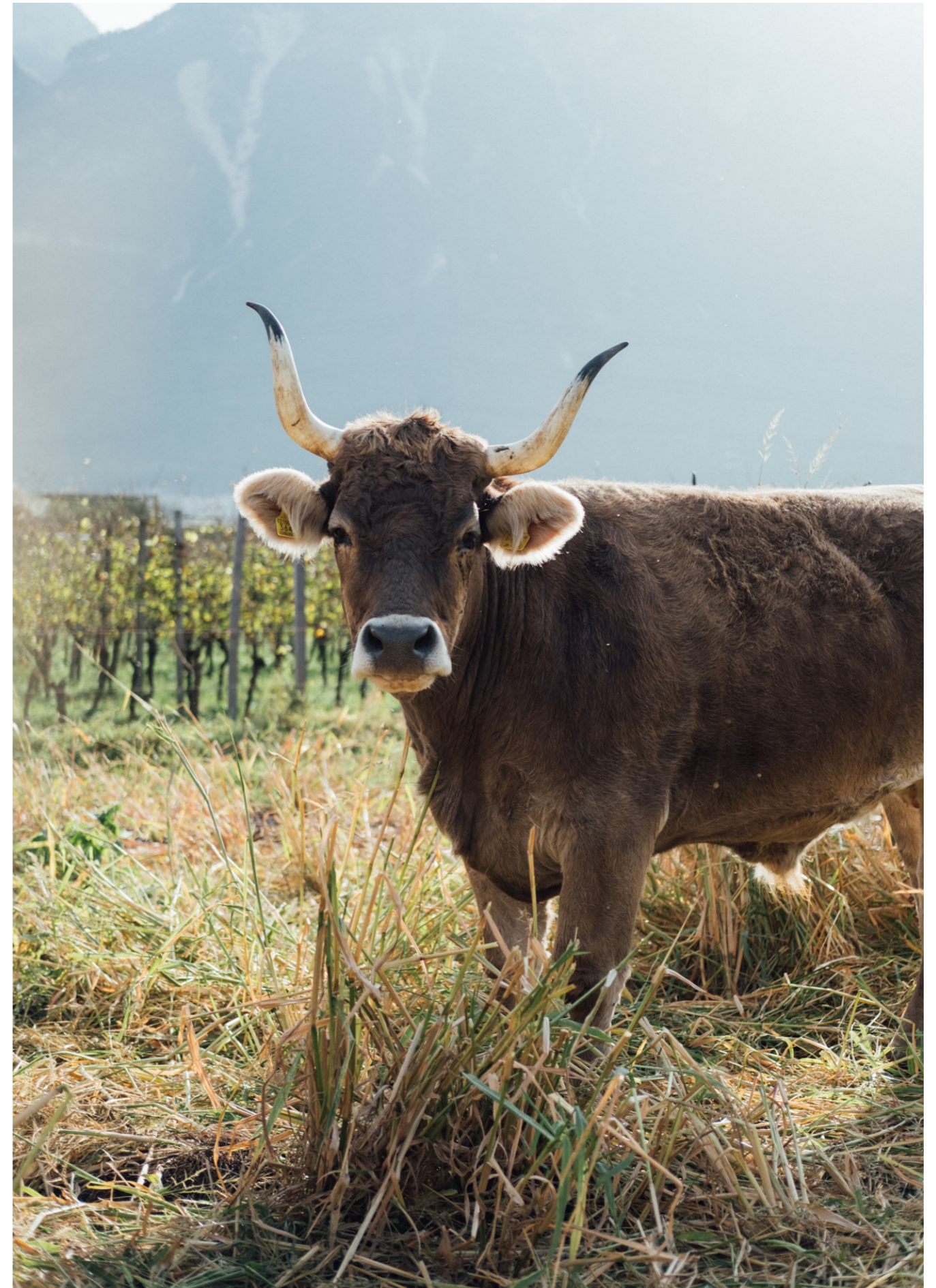
As of the 2024 vintage, we've successfully encouraged all our vintner partners to adopt organic or biodynamic practices. In addition to our own approximately 55 hectares (136 acres) of vineyards, which began transitioning to these methods in 2004, we now oversee an additional 85 hectares (210 acres) of organically or biodynamically cultivated vineyards from around 60 vintner partners. This achievement, a result of 13 years of dedication, fills us with immense pride and joy.



The farm organism and its natural cycles

In biodynamics, we draw on the wisdom that farmers have accumulated over thousands of years. In the 21st century, we have, in many ways, lost touch with our inherent ability to understand the interrelationships of the natural world. Traditionally, a farming family kept hens, pigs and cows while cultivating grains, vegetables and sometimes even grapes for wine. However, this multifaceted approach to farming has largely been replaced by expansive monocultures. In Alto Adige, for example, viticulture and apple cultivation now predominate.

In biodynamic agriculture, our aim is to re-establish the farm as a self-sustaining organism with natural cycles to enhance biodiversity. We strive to incorporate a diverse range of plants and animals to establish symbiotic relationships between them. Our biodynamic vineyards are grazed by oxen and cows, and we also rear pigs. The Römigberg vineyard is also home to chickens, geese, turkeys and peacocks. Our GrandOrto vegetable garden flourishes with an assortment of vegetables, fruits, herbs and grains. Everything produced on the farm is used in the culinary creations of our Vineria Paradeis, from seasonal garden produce to meat from our oxen and pigs, as well as our olives and, naturally, our grapes. This approach brings us closer to achieving a natural cycle. Consequently, we view our family business not merely as a winery but, above all, as a holistic farm organism.



THE WORK IN THE VINEYARD AND IN THE CELLAR

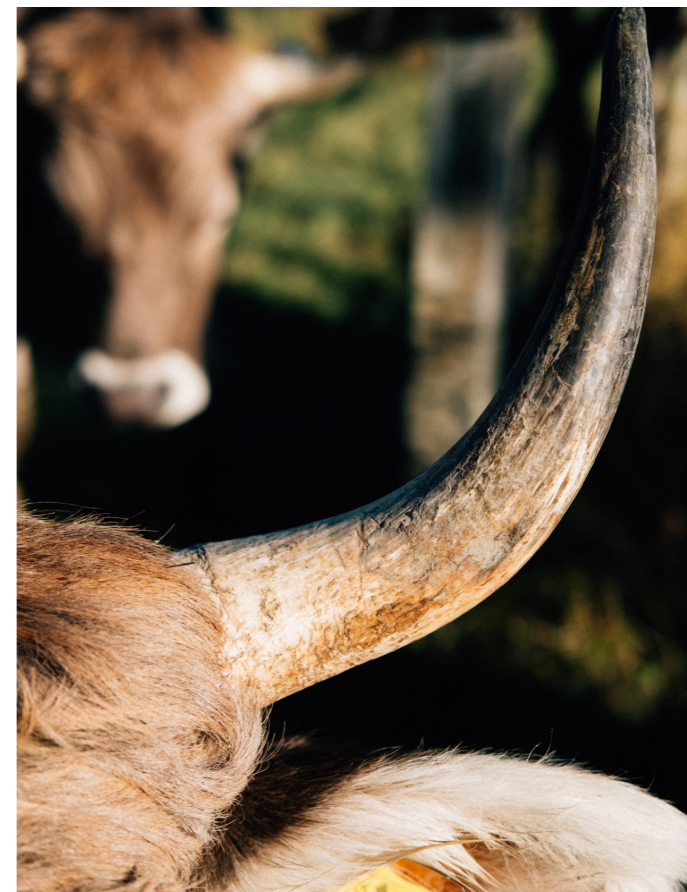
Biodynamic preparations

Our biodynamic preparations are designed to provide targeted impulses that we want to pass on to the soil and plants, enhancing soil quality, plant strength, vitality and growth. The preparations are categorised into field and compost preparations.

There are two primary types of field preparations: horn manure preparation (500) and horn silica preparation (501). Horn manure preparation involves placing fresh cow manure into cow horns and burying them over the winter months. In contrast, horn silica preparation involves burying ground quartz in cow horns during the summer. The preparations are then removed from the horns, dynamised in water and applied either with spraying equipment or manually.

The horn manure preparation has a particular influence on the soil and root development, which stimulates the balanced growth of the shoots and leaves. At our winery, this preparation is applied in November and again in spring. In contrast, horn silica is used during and following the flowering period, when the plant transitions from its growth phase (expansion phase) to the fruiting phase (concentration phase) at the peak of its development. The horn silica preparation strengthens the leaves, increases resistance to diseases and promotes fruit formation.

To further promote the formation of humus, we use compost to fertilise the soil in our vineyards. This is where the so-called compost preparations are used. Our compost is created from a mixture of cow dung and organic materials like straw, leaves and vine wood. We then enrich this compost with biodynamic preparations of yarrow, oak bark, camomile, nettle, dandelion and valerian.





Infusions

Alongside our preparations, we utilise various infusions to proactively bolster our plants. These infusions, made from chamomile, horsetail, nettle, dandelion, valerian, willow, oak bark and yarrow are sprayed on the plants to preventively strengthen them. We also use compost teas.

Cover crops

To improve soil quality and increase biodiversity, we sow various seeds between the vine rows during the autumn months. These plants germinate at different depths, loosening the soil and fostering an environment where earthworms and soil microorganisms thrive. Improved aeration around the vine roots results in more breathable and water-retentive soil. The blossoming plants offer natural habitats for insects, which in turn attract more birds, thereby enriching biodiversity. Additionally, these plants contribute to increased biomass in spring, facilitating the formation of green manure and beneficial humus.

Agrosilvopastoral system

This term may sound a little complicated, but it's essentially made up of three Latin words: "ager" (field), "silva" (forest) and "pastor" (shepherd). This system combines the cultivation of crops with forestry and grazing lands for livestock. In recent years, we've put a greater emphasis on forestation alongside animal husbandry and growing grains. We've planted a variety of shrubs, aromatic plants, fruit trees and olive trees among our vines, even replacing some grapevines with other types of woody plants. When planting new vines, we now allocate ample space for trees. This increases the vineyard's diversity, and the trees and shrubs create habitats for birds and insects. Their deep roots improve the soil's capacity to retain water, and the shade they provide helps keep the soil and ambient temperatures cooler and more consistent. Last but not least, the fruit, nut and olive trees serve as an additional food source for both humans and animals.

The aim is to make the vines as resistant as possible so that when diseases occur, their natural defences and self-healing powers are sufficient.



Biodynamic plant protection

We aim to proactively strengthen and balance our vines to increase their resistance to fungi, pests and environmental stressors like heat and drought. The goal is to foster consistent growth and a yield of high-quality, well-ripened grapes. In biodynamic viticulture, we do not use synthetic aids such as fungicides, insecticides, herbicides or synthetic mineral fertilisers. The aim is to make the vines as resistant as possible so that when diseases occur, their natural defences and self-healing powers are sufficient. In extreme weather conditions, such as long periods of high humidity, it is possible to prevent fungal diseases by applying copper and sulphur. These substances, which only cover the surface of the leaves, are permitted in small quantities in biodynamic agriculture. While we are cautious about copper and sulphur, we are not yet in a position to do without them completely.

Timing the harvest just right

Crispness, freshness and authenticity are key values for us, forming a consistent theme across our range of wines. To capture these qualities, we try to harvest at the exact moment when the grapes are at their peak. When biting into a ripe grape, you should get the perfect crunch – it should not be over-ripe or shrivelled – similar to the crunch of freshly harvested lettuce. Just as lettuce gradually loses its crispness and vibrancy even when stored in the fridge, grapes too lose their desirable qualities if not harvested at the right moment. We want to avoid this with our grapes, so we have carefully defined our understanding of grape ripeness. All our grapes are handpicked.

The work in the cellar

Our work with and on our wines is driven by the individual requirements of each wine. We do not work according to standardised recipes or procedures but interpret each year's harvest anew.

Our work in the cellar aligns with the stringent guidelines of both international and Italian Demeter standards. We emphasise natural processes, utilising the yeasts native to our cellar and vineyard for spontaneous fermentation. Additives and fining agents like sulphur and bentonite are used minimally and only as needed, in accordance with the Demeter Association's strict, low thresholds for sulphur use.

Our wines undergo a gentle filtration process, which is not standardised but rather tailored specifically to each individual wine, applying or omitting filtration as needed. Less is more.





Addressing the climate crisis

Climate change has been on our radar since the 1980s. Both in the vineyard and in the cellar, we are always looking for ways to respond to the rising temperatures and continue to produce fresh wines. For over four decades, we've experimented with grape varieties suited to warmer climates, including old varieties indigenous to Alto Adige. Planting our vineyards at higher altitudes can also help to counteract the rising temperatures. We prefer to use traditional pergola training systems for new plantings as they provide more shade for both the grapes and the soil. The grapes are harvested at different times, depending on the location, to preserve their acidity and crispness. In the cellar, we experiment with applying vinification methods and age components to the grape

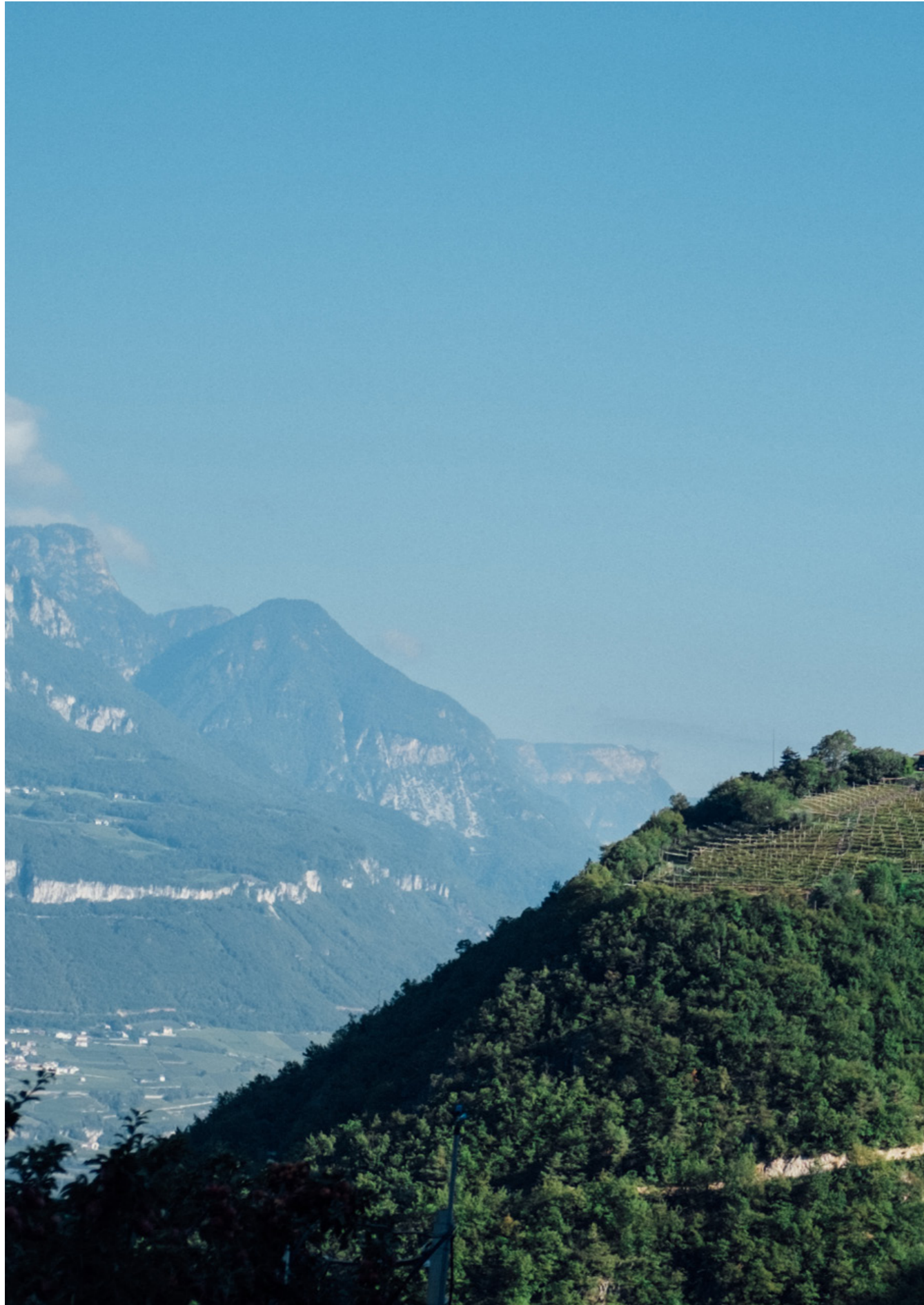
skin or the whole grape for different lengths of time to enhance the perception of freshness, among other things.

These experiments have a huge influence on the development of our wines. Some that started out as experiments have found their way into our assortment, either as independent wines or elements of existing wines.

Sustainability and materials R&D

As a winery, our focus extends beyond the contents of the bottle to the bottle itself. In 2021, we introduced the Summa bottle, a lightweight design of our own creation. This bottle weighs only 420 grams compared to the standard 650 grams. The weight reduction translates to over a hundred tonnes less glass needing to be produced, transported and recycled each year. Our wines are all sealed with natural cork, and we have replaced the traditional zinc capsule and aluminium screw cap with a paper strip. Additionally, we've modernised our boxes by simplifying the printing process and now use a minimal amount of water-based ink on a natural surface.





The diversity of Alto Adige

Alto Adige's uniqueness and speciality lie in its diversity. This diversity is twofold: culturally, it's a melting pot where three distinct language groups converge, and geographically, it boasts a varied landscape. The vineyards span altitudes from 200 to 1,000 metres (656 - 3,280 feet) above sea level, and the microclimates are correspondingly diverse, with cool

Alpine and warm Mediterranean conditions. At the same time, the Alps represent a unique geological "playground", with both porphyry and dolomite limestone soils. We work closely with vintner partners across Alto Adige to make the most of this diversity.

We are not trying to completely redefine winemaking, but we do continuously fine-tune and adjust our methods.



ABOUT US

Our family history

Our winery has been family-owned for six generations. Each generation has shaped and moulded the company in its own unique way. In 1823, Johann Lageder laid the foundation stone and began trading in wine alongside his work as a wagon maker. His successors bought the first vineyards and began making wine themselves. A significant development occurred in 1934 when our grandfather acquired the Löwengang Estate in Magrè, where our headquarters are located today.

In the 1980s, our father set out to achieve a level of quality that was not only pioneering for our winery but also for the Alto Adige wine region. He was also committed to sustainable viticulture and converted all the family vineyards to biodynamic cultivation. As the sixth generation, we want to further develop our wines' identity and continue exploring methods of practising healthy and sustainable agriculture – while also considering the challenges posed by climate change.



We favour wines that are fresh and lively, the kind that invite you to enjoy not just one but multiple glasses. They are meant to bring joy and leave an impression.

WINES

Our wine range

Our wines are divided into three product lines: Crus, Compositions and Classical Grape Varietals. In addition to this fixed range, we also offer the Comets – wines that emerge from experiments in the vineyard and cellar and change every year. All vineyards are cultivated organically or biodynamically.

Crus. Our Crus receive extra attention and time to mature, allowing their character to fully develop. These wines undergo the most rigorous selection process, both in the vineyard and the cellar.

Compositions. In our Compositions, the components take centre stage. Grapes from different vineyards, old and young vines, various vinification methods and varied harvest timings – these are just some of the components that we play with and combine.

Classical Grape Varietals. With the Classical Grape Varietals, we aim to capture the diversity of our region. Working with vintner partners from across Alto Adige, we strive to make the most of this diversity.

Comets. With our Comets, we take the opportunity to experiment and work on the quality of our wines. These experiments encourage us to step out of our routine and comfort zone, fostering innovation and discovery.

Rarum. Beginning with the 1995 vintage, we have been holding a small batch of our wines in reserve each year. This has resulted in an exciting collection known as our Rarum wine reserve.

VINERIA PARADEIS

Vineria Paradeis embodies our vision and commitment to holistic, healthy agricultural practices.



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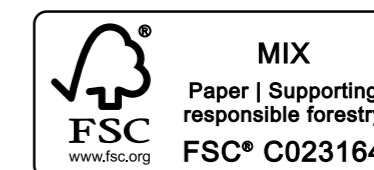
Further information:
Our wines: aloeslageder.eu
Vineria Paradeis: paradeis-aloeslageder.eu
Biodynamics: demeter.net

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