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The first analyses of the 2009 Swiss wine vintage, in November, showed them to be very promising, but the federal agriculture department's end of the year gift to the wine business 31 December was its confirmation that 2009 was not just very good, but excellent: one for the records in terms of both quality and quantity.

The quality of 2009 Swiss wines deemed "excellent"

The growing season came close to perfection for most producers. A long, cold, snowy winter was followed by an April that brought the vines to life quickly. The summer was hot and dry, starting in June, which led to quick flowering in most wine regions. July was humid, followed by a dry spell that allowed the grapes to mature well. And it remained warm and dry throughout the harvest period, to growers' delight.

Switzerland produces more red than white wine, including some of the world's top Pinot Noirs. Here, one at the Mondial du Pinot Noir competition.

The only problem was a patch of golf-ball size hail that hit some areas in July, notably around the Geneva Lake.

Grape-growing regions harvested 1.1 million hectolitres (1,000 litres, a common unit of wine production measure) of wine grapes, some 35,000 more than in 2008. The growing area remained stable, with 14,841 hectares of vines.

Switzerland's four largest wine-producing regions in 2009, with over 100,000 hectares of vines:

Canton, growing area in hectares / wine produced (hectolitres)

- Valais, 509,234.38ha / 449,733.54hl
- Vaud, 381,861.48ha / 290,500.91hl
- Geneva, 129,213.00ha / 94,098.53hl
- Ticino, 103,982.90ha / 58,987.09hl