

HIDDEN BENCH



## 2014 TÊTE DE CUVÉE CHARDONNAY

### WINEMAKING DATA

**Harvest Dates:** 14<sup>th</sup> of October, 2014

**Brix at harvest:** 20.6

**Blend and grape source:** 100% organically certified and estate grown Chardonnay from the Locust Lane and Rosomel Vineyards

**Alcohol:** 13.0%

**pH:** 3.22

**Residual Sugar:** 1.7g/L

**T.A.** 6.14g/L

**Bottling Date:** March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016

**Oak regime:** 100% French Oak: 0% new, 70% 2<sup>nd</sup> fill, the remaining neutral for the 1<sup>st</sup> 9 months, racked to 20% stainless steel barrels and neutral oak for a further 5 months

**Vine age:** Planted 1976 to 1998

**Time in barrel:** 14 months

**Un-fined. Unfiltered**

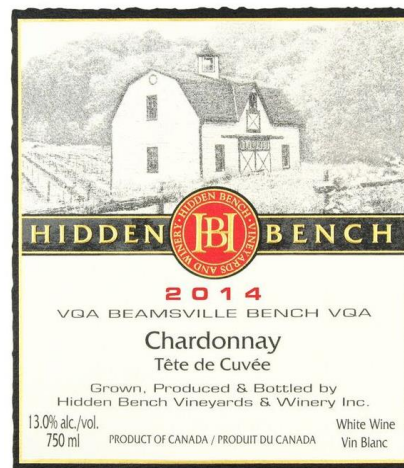
### WINEMAKER'S NOTES

The vines for the 2014 Tête de Cuvée Chardonnay were meticulously maintained to showcase our Beamsville Bench *terroir*. All grape bunches were exposed to sunlight at fruit set by removing shading leaves on the East side and partially on the West side of the canopy to maximize ripening. Green harvesting – the removal of under-ripe bunches – was performed at the first sign of colour change in berries from green to gold. This is known as *véraison*. In 2014, yields were very low due to winter injury at 15hL per hectare or 0.9 ton per acre.

All fruit was hand picked, sorted and whole bunch pressed to yield the highest quality juice. After cold settling for 24 hours, the juice was racked, warmed and transferred to barrel. The wine was fermented with indigenous yeasts reaching a peak of 20°C. Malolactic fermentation occurred naturally and all barrels were stirred weekly during fermentation. Blended in late 2015, the wine was bottled unfiltered in March 2016.

### TASTING

A classic cool climate Chardonnay, this wine shows a rich, toasty nose with aromas of apple and hints of melon, giving way to a layered palate of baked apple pie, nutmeg and lemon custard. Very lush and creamy, this wine is balanced by stony minerality on the palate. The mouth-watering finish of this wine leaves you wanting more. Ready to drink now, this Chardonnay will reward those who have the patience to age it carefully for 5-10 years.



### TERROIR SERIES

#### THE GROWING SEASON

Wines from the 2014 vintage show the complexity of our unique Beamsville Bench vineyards. The winter of 2014 was severely cold and snowy. With the ground in deep freeze, the cold temperatures prevailed well into spring and temperatures only returned to normal in the month of May.

As a result of the cold winter, we experienced damage in our more sensitive varieties and vineyard locations, making for a reduction in yields. Fortunately, most of our focus at HB is on less sensitive varieties. This and the general good health and care of our vines will ensure that yields return to normal in the next few years.

June and July stayed cool with ample moisture, which gave the vines a chance to mature at a steady rate. Due to the late start to the growing season, harvesting started 14 days later than normal. At HB we started picking on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October and finished on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

As we saw in 2009, August and September days were warm and sunny with cool nights giving a good diurnal temperature range. Beautiful weather prevailed into October when we started picking. Fruit quality was exceptional with minimal disease pressure and good phenolic and sugar ripeness. Our vineyard team did an excellent job ensuring the health of our vines, keeping crop levels down, in order to ripen the fruit and ensure a productive vineyard in subsequent years. Meticulous shoot positioning and leaf removal to open the canopy to maximize sunlight ensured perfect ripening. Sound picking decisions and minimal, timely intervention in the cellar has resulted in elegant, balanced wines that are true to the vintage.