

California wine grape harvest 9% less than 2010

By Chris Macias, Sacramento Bee

After a second year of unseasonably cool temperatures, the grape tonnage has been tallied and the results are ready. According to the California Department of Food and Agriculture, 3.3 million tons of wine grapes were harvested in the 2011 growing season, a 9 percent drop from the previous year.

That's not too much of a surprise considering the cold shoulder that Mother Nature gave to Northern California this year, with its wet spring and temperate summer. The grape harvest started about three weeks late in Lodi, with growers hoping for warm weather to help their grapes reach ripeness.

This year's total pales compared with 2009, when 3.7 million tons of grapes were harvested – the second largest amount in California's history. But as the saying goes, good things come in small packages.

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