

## Vignerons Créateurs

L'excellence en Terres Gardoises

### CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

#### Frédéric Sénac

Winery Director - Oenologist  
Jonquieres St Vincent - 30

#### Robin Vitry

Vineyards Manager



“

**Agreo Vigne & Vin provides traceability for our vineyard inspections, and also meets our production monitoring needs. It's more than a software suite it's a decision-making tool that saves us precious time.**



**F**ounded in 2009 via the merger of four cooperative wineries, Bellegarde, Jonquieres St Vincent, Manduel and St Gilles-the Vignerons, Créeateurs de Bellegarde operates 1000 ha of vine plots, located between Cévennes, Rhône et Camargue. The cooperative's winery bottles some 15,000 hl of wine, mostly red and rosé wines carrying the AOP ("protected designation of origin") label, including Costières de Nîmes and Clairette de Bellegarde, a dry white wine produced using organic agricultural techniques. The winery has been equipped with the Agreo Vigne & Vin production management software since 2009, which allows it to track and regulate operations carried out in the vineyard, as well as movements within its wine cellars. We sat down with Frédéric Sénac, Director of this cooperative winery, to look back over its successful digital transformation.

### Why did you choose to equip your operations with winemaking management software ?

Frédéric Sénac - We were ahead of the rest of the market when we started using the Agreo Vigne & Vin software in 2009. I think we were one of the first cooperative wineries in the region to equip ourselves with this kind of management solution. The objective was to have a global IT solution that could track all the operations carried out in our vineyards and cellars, and therefore be able to show that we were keeping up with developing regulations. This approach was crucial, in that we were given a very strict bill of specifications to obtain AOP status, and we had to justify our processes. It was becoming much too laborious to continue writing everything down on paper, with the added risk of losing essential information. We needed to make gains in productivity, streamlining administration, and transparency of our production information. What we were looking for wasn't just an input tool, but a solution that would give us a detailed overview of information. The important thing was to be able, at the end of the season, to use and analyse our data to calculate precise production costs for each of the vineyard plots being cultivated. At the time, there weren't a lot of software editors on the market offering this kind of tool. We tried the Agreo software, developed by a Montpellier-based developer called NEOTIC, which has since become SMAG. The tool has evolved significantly over the last 14 years.

### How does the tool help with managing your wine production facility ?

Agreo allows us to manage the vinification process for all 200 of our fermentation vats. The software is very useful for dealing with warehouse issues, which mainly involve incomings and outgoings. The display of the cellar map using different colour schemes means that in a few clicks you can visualise how full your vats are, and plan your work around this. The "Reservation" function has also been useful, as it lets us know exactly which vat has been presented to which customer. This leaves no room for error. We now have a vast amount of registry management (incoming and outgoing products) information at our disposal.

We use all the various functionalities of Agreo. We can now make personalised requests of our Accounting department when doing analysis. This gives our business a techno-economic approach. I use Agreo all year round, and I couldn't do without it now. When I see other wineries still using pen and paper to monitor their wine vats, I think how ahead of the game we are. It would be far too restrictive for us to go back to the way it was before. We've made enormous gains in terms of agility and time saving.

### Do all the winery's staff use Agreo ?

Our merger with three other co-ops from the Gard area has provided us with a team dedicated to integrating data into Agreo. Today, our seven permanent cellarmen all use the Agreo Vin module. During the harvest season we also regularly hire seasonal workers who are trained to use the tool as well. It's simple and intuitive, which means new staff can use it quickly. After a half-day of training, staff are able to use the tool on their own. And since August 1<sup>st</sup>, we've trained an additional seasonal worker following the recent merger with the Bouillargues winery, which is also located in the Gard.

### You've equipped your vineyard technician with the mobile version of the software, which allows input of data on interventions in and observations of vine plots. What has he gained from the use of this application in the field ?

Robin Vitry - time and independence! I head into the vineyards with my smartphone in my pocket. Plot localisation allows me to quickly enter my observations about the area I'm in. For example, I can record details of my fertilization inspections or checks for disease. These mobile tools are adapted to our jobs and help us gain in precision: in a few clicks, you can note the state of the leaves, the level of ground cover, products being used on plants, and the authorized dosage. It's as quick as writing a text message on my smartphone. My visits to the vineyard are now much more precise, and I don't have to re-record the information in the evenings.



Robin Vitry, Vineyards Manager

In the past, we only had an overall evaluation of the plot, which we would then transcribe onto paper or into an Excel file. Now the precise nature of our observations - and operations carried out as a result helps us gain recognition and command better prices because of our methods and practices.



Interview by L. Thierion