



**Press Release from Coal Pit Vineyard
29 May 2008**

New Central Otago Winery Operational for 2008 Vintage

Coal Pit Vineyard on Coal Pit Road in the Gibbston Valley, Central Otago, has almost completed their 30-tonne winery designed by award-winning architect Chris Kelly of the Architecture Workshop in Wellington.

The winery contains a temperature- and humidity-controlled barrel room, a loft apartment, laboratory and meeting rooms that face north toward the Crown Range mountains and the Kawarau River.

While the construction of the winery is still in progress, the winery equipment was in place in time for the 2008 harvest. Viticulturist Gary Crabbe and his wife, winemaker Lynn Horton – both long-time Gibbston Valley residents – advised that the 12-hectare site yielded 22.5 tonnes of Pinot Noir and 15 tonnes of Sauvignon Blanc this year.

The decision to build the winery on site, rather than sending the grapes away for production, was motivated by the desire to be able to hand-pick the grapes at their best and transfer them straight into the fermenting tanks within half an hour, thereby maintaining vibrancy and delicate flavours. [This is in contrast to waiting for the availability of winemaking space off site – a situation that often results in grapes being harvested at the wrong time or left in containers for long periods of time awaiting processing.]

Having had its first vintage in 2006, Coal Pit Vineyard is relatively new to the wine game in Central Otago. However, half of the property – 6 hectares – was planted in 1994 by former owner Alan Perry, making the vineyard one of the oldest in the region.

The current owner, Rosie Dunphy, purchased the property in 2001 and has since developed it into a 12-hectare vineyard.

While one of the oldest, it is also one of the highest vineyards in New Zealand – well over 400m above the sea.

Coal Pit Pinot Noir (RRP \$NZ 36.00) and Coal Pit Sauvignon Blanc (RRP \$NZ 20.00) are available direct from the winery for both trade and consumer accounts.

A cellar door facility is planned for opening in summer 2008.

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