

Azienda Agricola Stefano Massone

No systemic plant protection products (products which act by systemic transport – through the sap of the plant) are used. Prevalence of sulphur and copper base products. As there are no problems due to insects, no insecticides are used.

No herbicides are used. Natural cover crops (grass cover) are left between the rows of vines. The grass is then mowed between every other row of vines and left to form humus, while the rest of the rows are tilled. No fertilizers are used.

Appendix

Use of cover crops (*inerbimento* in Italian) in viticulture

Cover crops are planted between the rows of vines or the spontaneous crops (grass cover) are left. This can be done between all the rows, or between every two or only in certain plots. This naturally depends on the soil conditions and also on the type of grape varietal (more or less vigorous).

Why is this practice carried out?

First of all there is competition for nutrients and water between the cover crops and the vines, therefore the production of the vines is lower (i.e. higher quality of the clusters). In fact this practice cannot be carried out when the vines are young nor, for example, when the area is very hot in the summer to prevent hydric stress of the vines.

Due to this agronomical practice, the roots of the vines are compelled to go deeper in order to find water (in this way the vines are less subject to hydric stress).

The roots of the cover crop “explore” the soil, permitting better aeration, drainage and life of micro-organisms.

Nutrient complexes are formed which are more easily absorbed by the root system of the vines.

This is a very efficient mean to control erosion (water drains into the soil without flowing on the surface).

The cover crop is usually mowed (a few times) and the plant substance forms compost which is left on the ground (the turf is left in place) or the crop can be mowed (a few times) and the soil can be tilled so to work the plant substance (compost – green manure) into the soil.

Other advantages of this practice is that no herbicides are utilised and it is possible to enter the vineyard with machinery during wet weather (while it would be impossible on tilled ground).