



WILLAKENZIE ESTATE

Winemaking - 'Big Foot'

Created in 1995, 'Big Foot' was designed at WillaKenzie Estate to punch down the cap gently and consistently during grape fermentation and manage tannin extraction. Today there are similar devices commercially available, but that was not the case in 1995. A 1,000-pound, pneumatically controlled, microprocessor-driven grape stomper, 'Big Foot' simulates the gentle action of human feet trampling the cap, which may be more than 1 foot thick, to mix it with the juice.

Bernard drew on his technological background to design the device. It is a very simple, but extraordinarily effective robot that is moved on a rail system from tank to tank during harvest. The invention was widely publicized by Newsweek magazine in a special issue devoted to technological innovation in April 2002 (see a copy of the Newsweek article).

In 2001, a replica of 'Big Foot', called 'Little Foot' was created to fit smaller fermentation tanks. In 2007, our French oak fermentation tanks were fitted around the outside with stainless steel rings and supporting arms in order to accommodate 'Little Foot'. After success with the first two oak tanks in 2007, three more were built and installed in 2008.



To find more information on WillaKenzie Estate, please visit the Trade Toolkit section of our website at: www.willakenzie.com/trade/toolkit