



## CLIMATE CHANGE AT SPANNOCCHIA

**The Villa Garden:** Chiara, Spannocchia's visionary gardener, has spent over a year transforming the old Villa Garden to an incredible mixed ornamental and herb garden filled primarily with native, drought-resistant perennials. Not only is this reimagined space a gorgeous and contemplative area for the entire community to enjoy, it was designed with climate issues in mind: it saves water, supports the local ecosystem, and reduces labor demands.

**The Wine Program:** In addition to his wise, witty, and wonderful guidance of the internship and apprenticeship programs, our Farm Education Director Niccolò has been working with staff and interns over the last year and a half to transition the farm's organic wine production to natural wine—beyond organic—for higher quality and reduced environmental impact. Improvements include the use of only naturally-occurring, indigenous yeasts for fermentation, an absolute minimum amount of sulphites, and no filtering or clarifying the wine throughout the aging process.

**Even with these advancements, unprecedented weather had significant ramifications on Spannocchia's farming operations this year.**

The vineyards were seriously compromised by mildew. Constant rainfall in the spring made it impossible to protect the vines from this blight, while creating the ideal warm, humid environment for fungal growth. As a result, wine production shockingly dropped from 2,200 liters last year to what looks to be as low as 130 liters from this fall's harvest.

The harsh spring weather also severely affected olive trees all over Tuscany. The timing of the rainfall coincided with the pollination period, but wet conditions prohibited this crucial step in the growing process. This left the property's olive trees nearly completely bare of the fruit. We're devastated about the impact to one of our very favorite products—Spannocchia's extra-virgin olive oil—and the effect this will have on the farm-to-table dining program and farm product sales.

**We're so grateful for our colleagues on-site at Spannocchia, who have worked so hard this year despite all of these challenges. We couldn't do any of our work without their partnership and dedication!**

