

More than once I've heard biodynamic farming referred to as "organic farming on steroids" to convey the intensity of the approach. However, I think the description almost undermines the philosophy, which focuses on creating a self-nourishing ecosystem in which health and fertility are generated as much as possible from within the farm itself.

Although much of it makes common sense, including the use of animals to produce fertiliser, keep weeds at bay and significantly reduce the high carbon footprint of tractor usage, many people are spooked by talk of life forces and

This material has been copied under a DALRO licence and is not for resale or retransmission.



WINE OF THE WEEK

JOANNE GIBSON

BEYOND REASON

lunar rhythms, not to mention homeopathic preps that need to be administered in peculiar ways. But just because things can't necessarily be

scientifically explained doesn't mean they don't work and after a tour of Waterkloof with farm manager Christian Loots and a tasting with winemaker Nadia Barnard, I have greater faith in Mother Nature and the Circle of Life.

Waterkloof recently acquired full biodynamic certification through the Demeter organisation, a process that took 10 long years, partly because conditions in South Africa are so different from those in Europe. The requirement to add silica to boost brightness and dryness in the vineyard, for example, was initially unnecessary — in fact, potentially damaging — given our abundant sunshine.



What they're doing at Waterkloof is working, wine-wise, from their layered sauvignon blanc to their seamless Circle of Life blends. And recently they've taken two of South Africa's "workhorse" grapes, namely chenin blanc and cinsault (the latter best known locally as the "lesser" parent of pinotage) and bottled them under the Seriously Cool label. Perfect for foods with a bit of spice, the Cinsault 2014 (released last month at R95/bottle) is "seriously" intended for being served "cool" (around 14°C) and has remarkable floral, fruit and spice intensity despite its relatively "light" appearance.