

# Bordeaux 2015 Weather Report

GAVIN QUINNEY



# Introduction

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As a backdrop to the official ‘en primeur’ tastings in Bordeaux in April 2016, here’s my report on how the weather had an impact on the 2015 vintage. The graphs and images should provide a Bordeaux enthusiast with a fairly thorough grasp of how this fine vintage came about, and also why there are regional differences.

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# 10 weather highlights for 2015

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2015 was a dry year, with every month from March to October being drier than average – except for a wetter August.

A cold January and February led to later budding at the start of April but the early growth in the vineyard accelerated through April with warm weather.

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The flowering in late May and early June, in close to ideal conditions, was the best for years, followed by useful rain in mid-June.

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The summer wasn't consistent – extremely dry in late June and July, then rain in August. At times, it was hot – 39 out of 92 days of summer saw 30°C or more.

Late August to 10 September was dry – handy for the dry white harvest and ripening of the reds.

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The fallout from 'Storm Henry' brought rain from 11-17 September, just before the Merlot harvest. The amount varied significantly – eg 87mm in the northern Médoc v 16mm in St-Emilion (see below).

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Crucially, it was pretty dry from 18 Sept-2 Oct for the bulk of the red harvest. Chateaux that harvested later had to contend with rain from 2-5 October.

2015 is an excellent vintage but unlike other top vintages in 2000, 2005, 2009 and 2010, the harvest brought plenty of anxiety for many growers over when to pick.

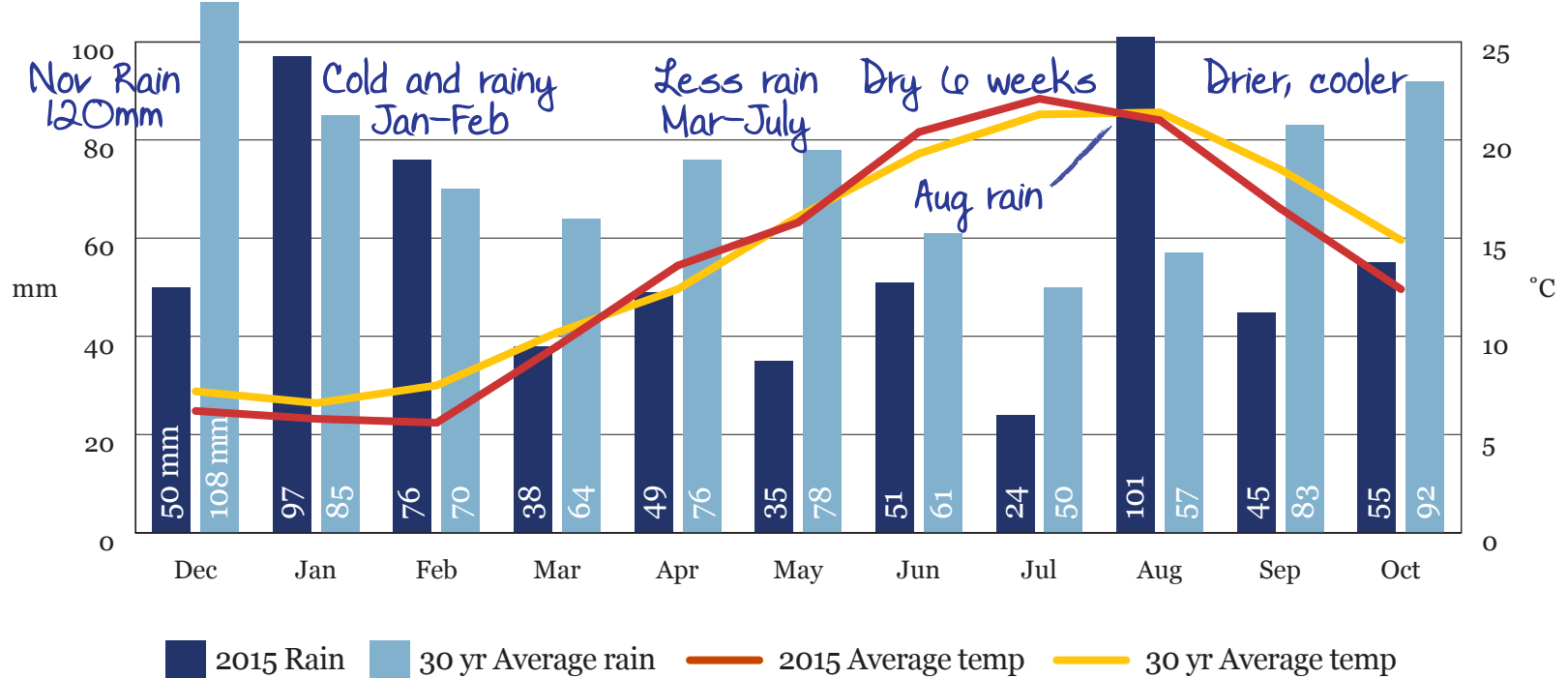
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The vines and bunches looked extremely healthy at harvest time, with no rot on the reds to eliminate.

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A very good vintage is supported by generally good yields on the reds, but lower yields on the whites.

## Bordeaux 2015 Rainfall and Temperature

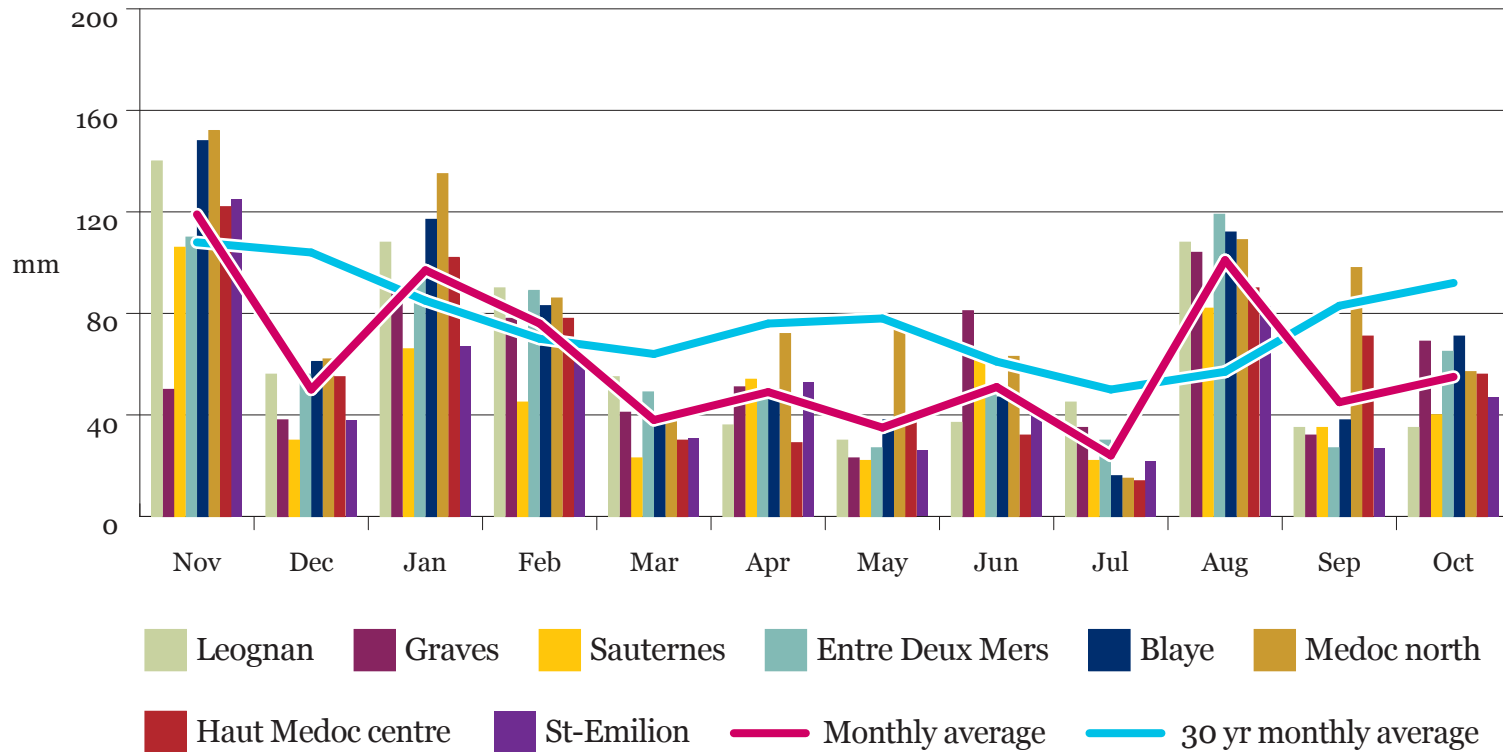


Figures from 8 sub-regions:

N Medoc, Haut-Medoc, Leognan, Graves, Sauternes, EDM, Blaye, St-Emilion.

Source: @GavinQuinney

# Bordeaux Rainfall by Region 2015

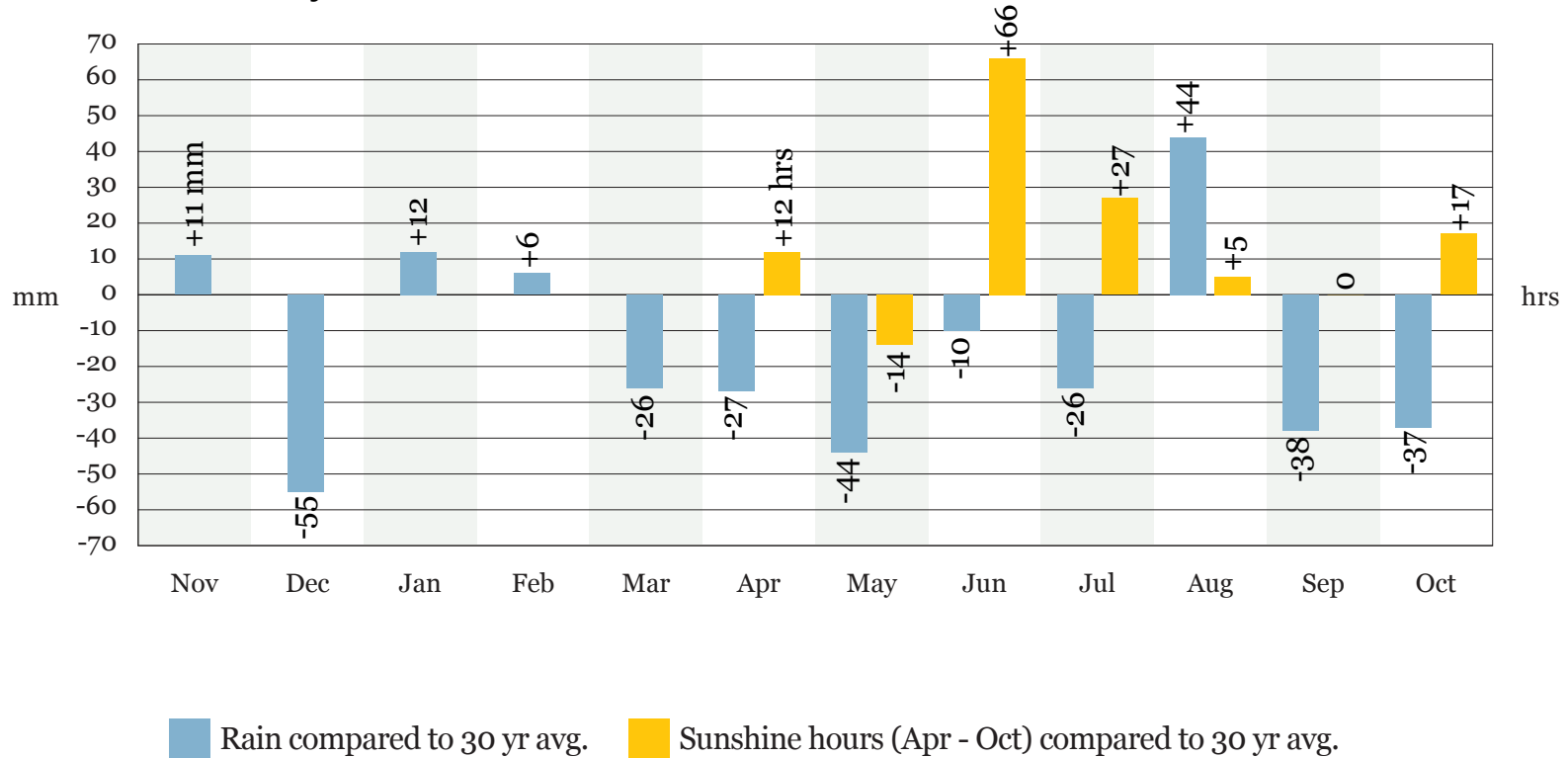


▲ Avg. rain for above regions Nov 14-Mar 15 = 380 mm. 30 yr avg = 431 mm

▼ Avg. Apr - Oct = 360mm. 30 yr avg = 497mm

Source: @GavinQuinney

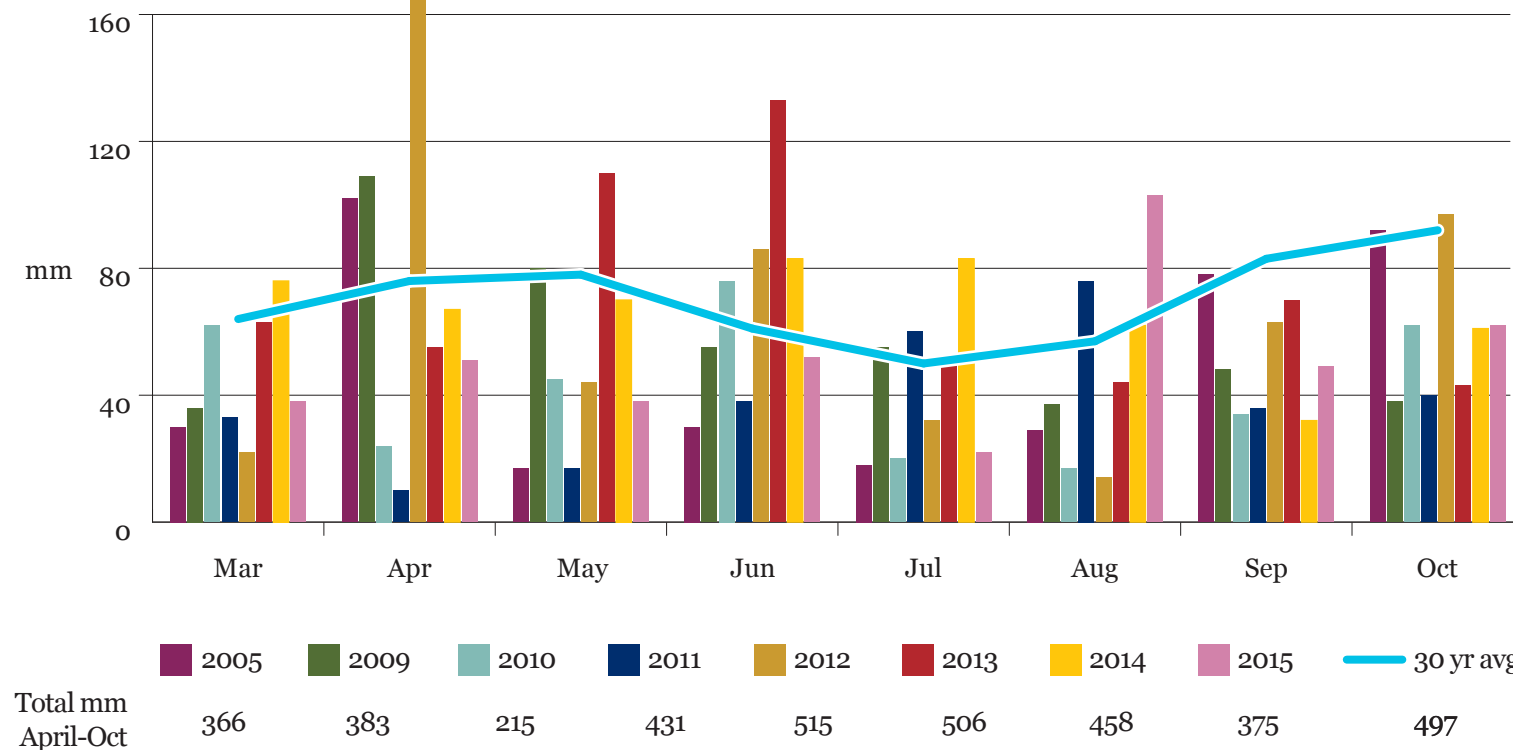
## The story of Bordeaux 2015



Source: @GavinQuinney

It's useful to note the lack of rain each month – and the reverse in August – and how sunny it was in June and July as the grapes formed.

## Bordeaux rain comparison 2005 & 2009-2015



Each month's figure is the average of 6 regions: Graves, St-Emilion, Haut Medoc (centre), Northern Medoc, Entre Deux Mers and Blaye.

Source: @GavinQuinney

Between April and October, 2015 was drier (375mm) than the 30 year average (497mm) and the four previous years. Compare this with the top vintages of 2005, 2009 and 2010.



## Bordeaux rain comparison 2005 & 2009-2015

	2005	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	30 yr avg
Mar	<b>30</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>62</b>	33	22	63	76	<b>38</b>	64
Apr	<b>102</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>24</b>	10	179	55	67	<b>51</b>	76
May	<b>17</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>45</b>	17	44	110	70	<b>38</b>	78
Jun	<b>30</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>76</b>	38	86	133	83	<b>52</b>	61
Jul	<b>18</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>20</b>	60	32	51	83	<b>22</b>	50
Aug	<b>29</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>17</b>	76	14	44	62	<b>103</b>	57
Sep	<b>78</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>34</b>	36	63	70	32	<b>49</b>	83
Oct	<b>92</b>	<b>38*</b>	<b>62*</b>	40*	97	43	61	<b>62</b>	92
April-Oct total	<b>366</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>215</b>	237	515	506	458	<b>375</b>	497

Each month's figure is the average of 6 regions: Graves, St-Emilion, Haut Medoc (centre), Northern Medoc, Entre Deux Mers and Blaye, except \* (local station EDM).

Source: @GavinQuinney

# Vines in pictures

It's probably useful to show what was happening in the vineyard between April and October. This was the same block of Merlot, with Pavie our Jack Russell for scale. You can see how dry it was, especially in late May and at the end of July, then how green it was in August and, importantly, dry again in September for the ripening.



19 April - Shoots 'n leaves



31 May - Mid-flowering



21 June - Grapes forming



28 July - Minimal rain 6 weeks





3 Aug - Colour change



26 Aug - Rain refreshment

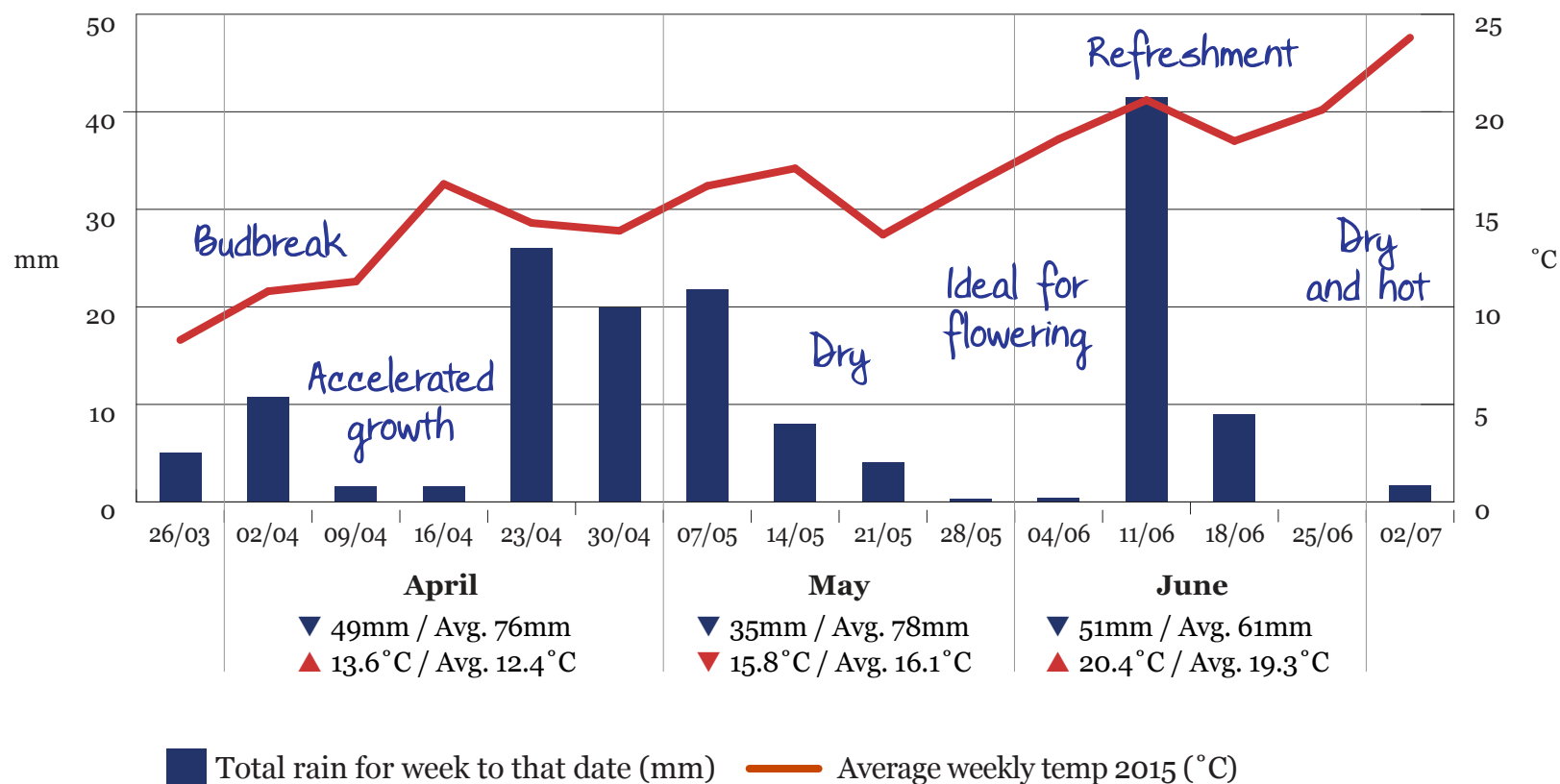


28 Sept - Ready and ripe



29 Sept - Merlot harvest

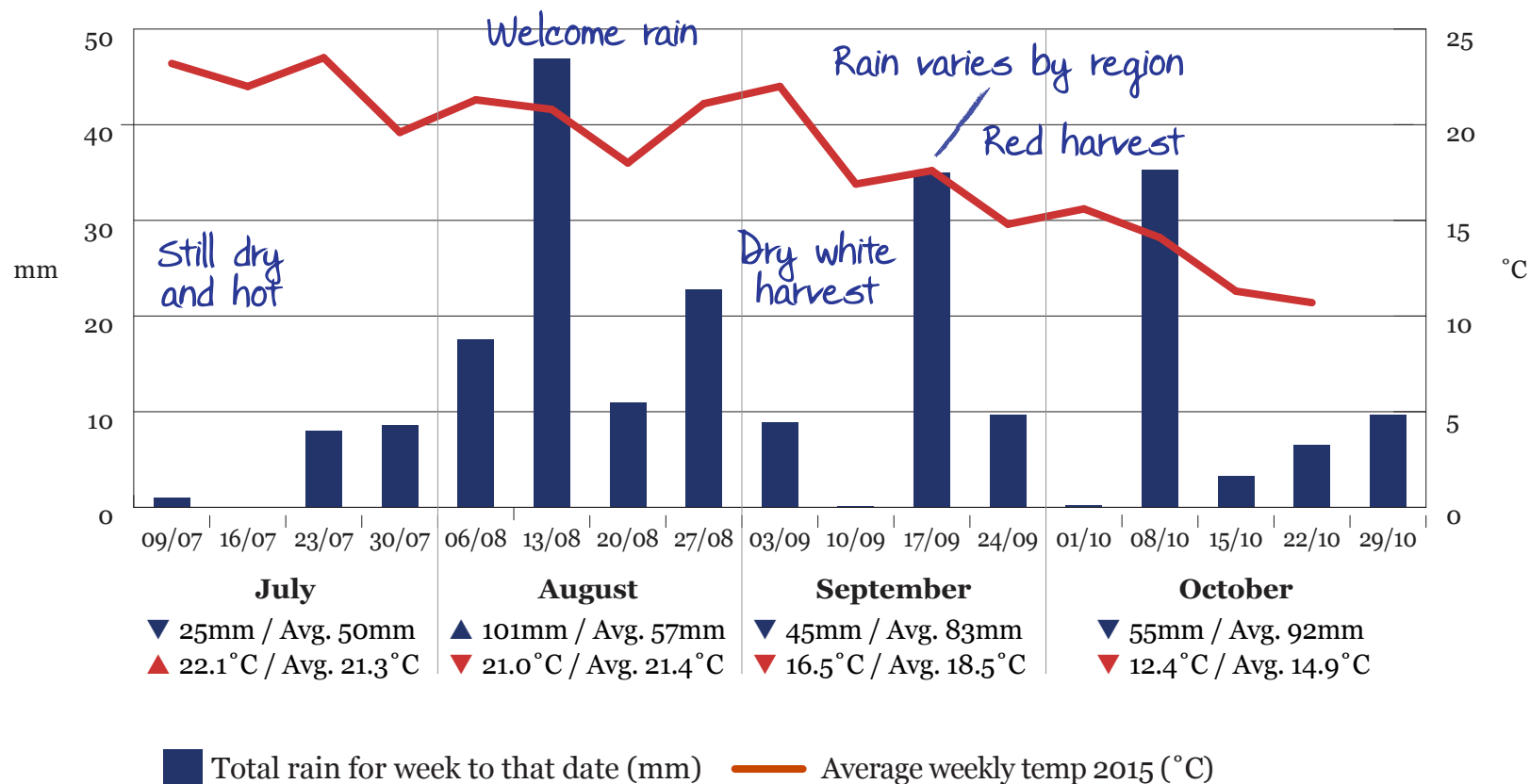
## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, April - June



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux. Figures from 8 sub-regions:

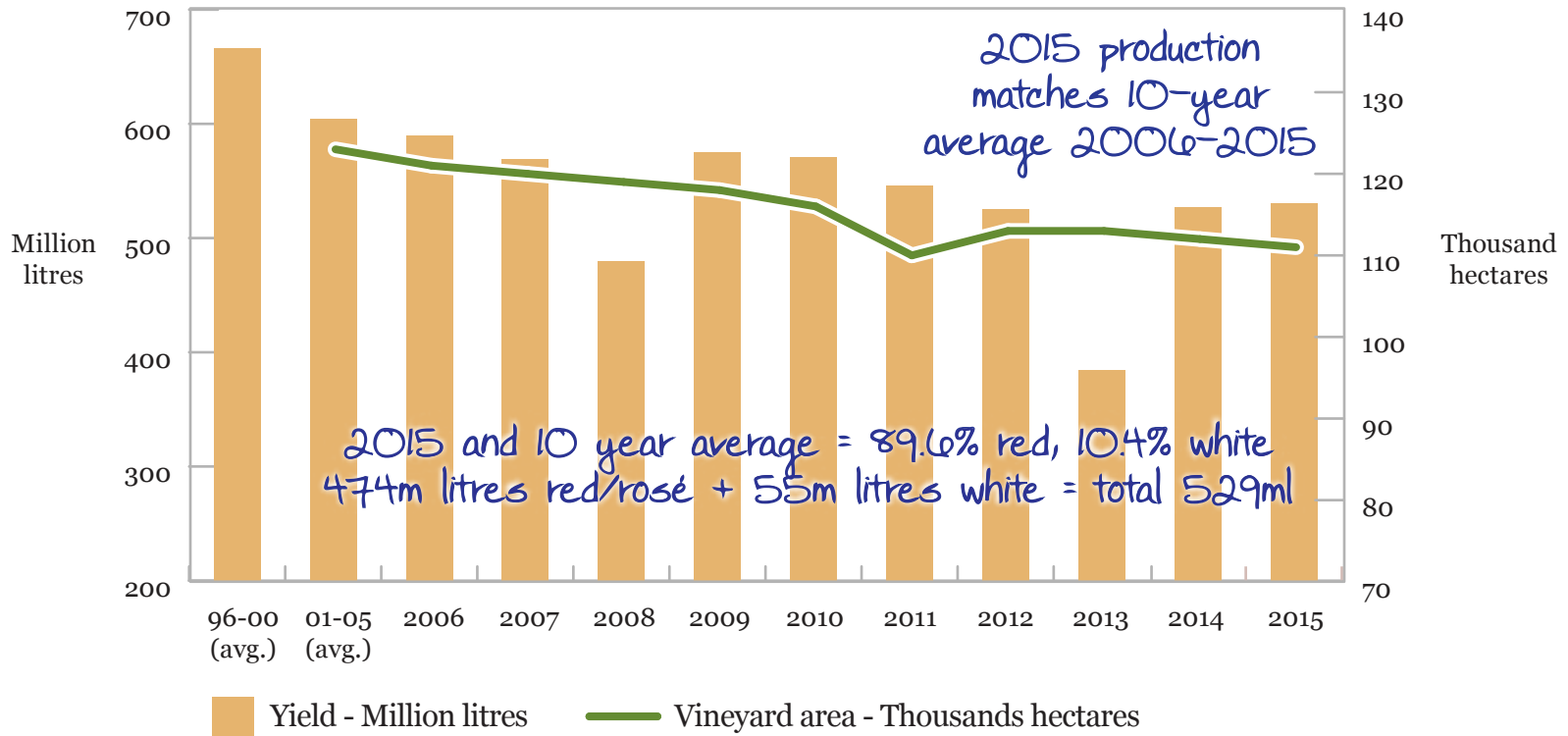
Here is a week-by-week summary, combining figures from 8 sub-regions divided into two graphs – April to June, and July to October. You can find each sub-region's graphs in the appendix.

## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, July - October



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux. Figures from 8 sub-regions:

## Bordeaux Yields 2006 - 2015



Source: CIVB/Douane

@GavinQuinney

The production in 2015 of 529 million litres (equivalent to 700 million bottles) was just above 2014 and exactly matched the average of the last 10 years. Red accounts for more than 85% of the total.

Of the appellations most involved in selling 'en primeur', 2015 saw the highest yields for some years. Notably Margaux and St-Julien (highest since 2007), St-Estephe (2006), Pauillac (2010) and the large appellation of St Emilion Grand Cru.



## 10 year yield for top appellations - hectolitres per hectare

	Hectares 2015	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Margaux</b>	1530	46.5	<b>47.8</b>	40.9	42.9	42.4	37	42.1	31.9	43.2	<b>47.1</b>
<b>St Julien</b>	908	<b>48.2</b>	<b>47.9</b>	45.4	45.8	43.5	38.9	39	32.1	38.5	<b>47.9</b>
<b>Pauillac</b>	1213	<b>47.1</b>	<b>46</b>	43.8	<b>46.6</b>	<b>44.6</b>	43.6	38.3	29.8	38.2	<b>44.5</b>
<b>St-Estephe</b>	1229	<b>49.7</b>	46.1	44.1	49.3	43.9	46.3	43	32.9	42.9	<b>49.4</b>
<b>Pessac Leognan</b>	1491	43.6	43.6	35.1	43.2	41.9	39.4	41.7	32.4	<b>46.8</b>	42.6
<b>St-Emilion GC</b>	4160	42.5	43.6	35.9	37.4	40.5	43.5	41	29.9	41.4	<b>44.2</b>
<b>Pomerol</b>	792	41.1	43.2	36	41.1	37.5	<b>43.1</b>	36.4	28	41.6	<b>42.6</b>
Sub total	11323	7 Appellations as % of total area - 10%									
Total surface Bordeaux	111148										

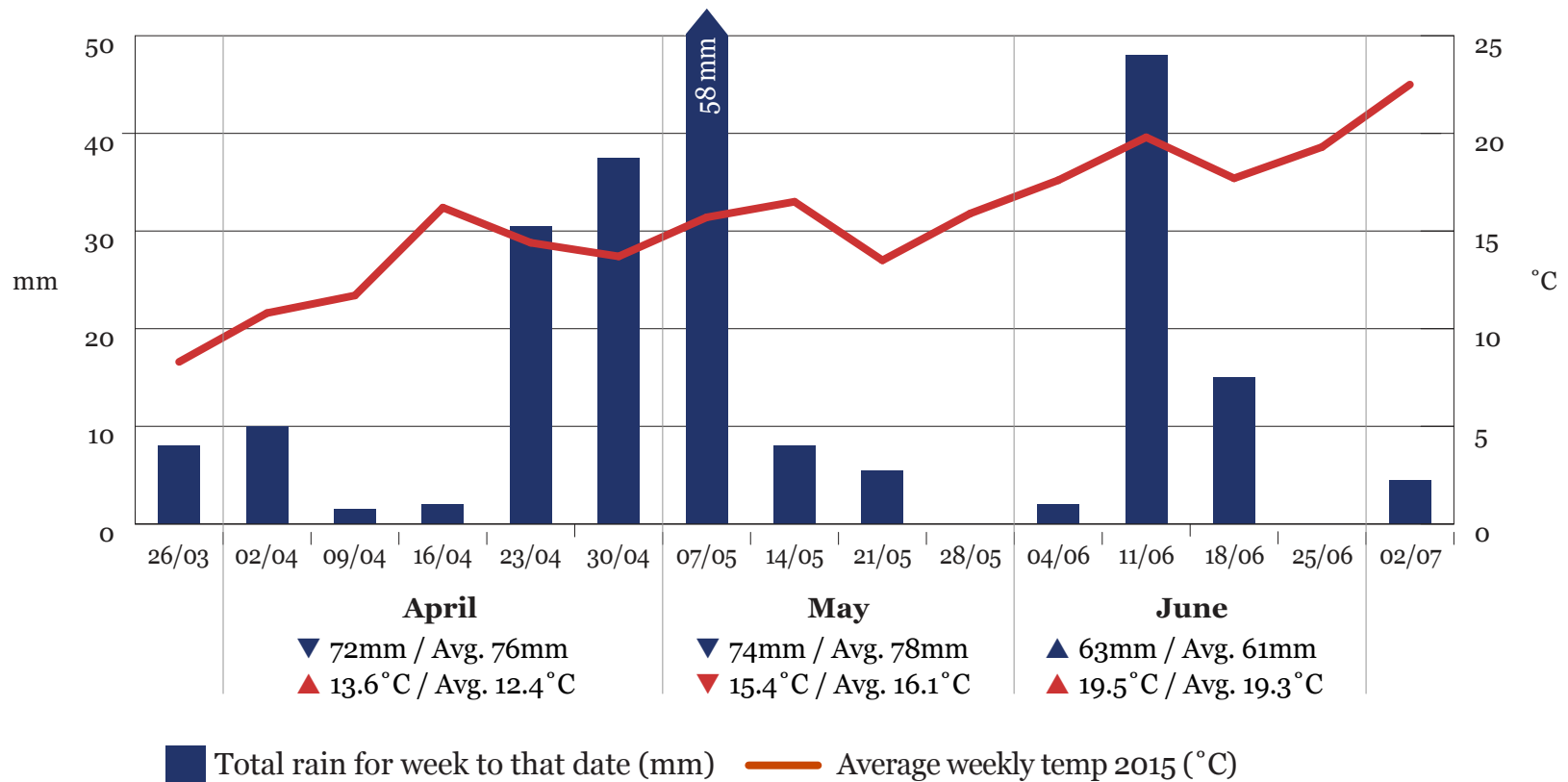
Source: Douanes/CIVB

The entire surface area and production of these high profile appellations accounts for just 10% of Bordeaux. The en primeur campaign is largely concentrated around these areas but there'll be quality and value elsewhere as well – as and when the wines become available.

# Appendix

Here are the week-by-week stats for 8 sub-regions, divided into two graphs – April to June, and July to October. There is considerable variation in the rainfall between regions, notably in August and September.

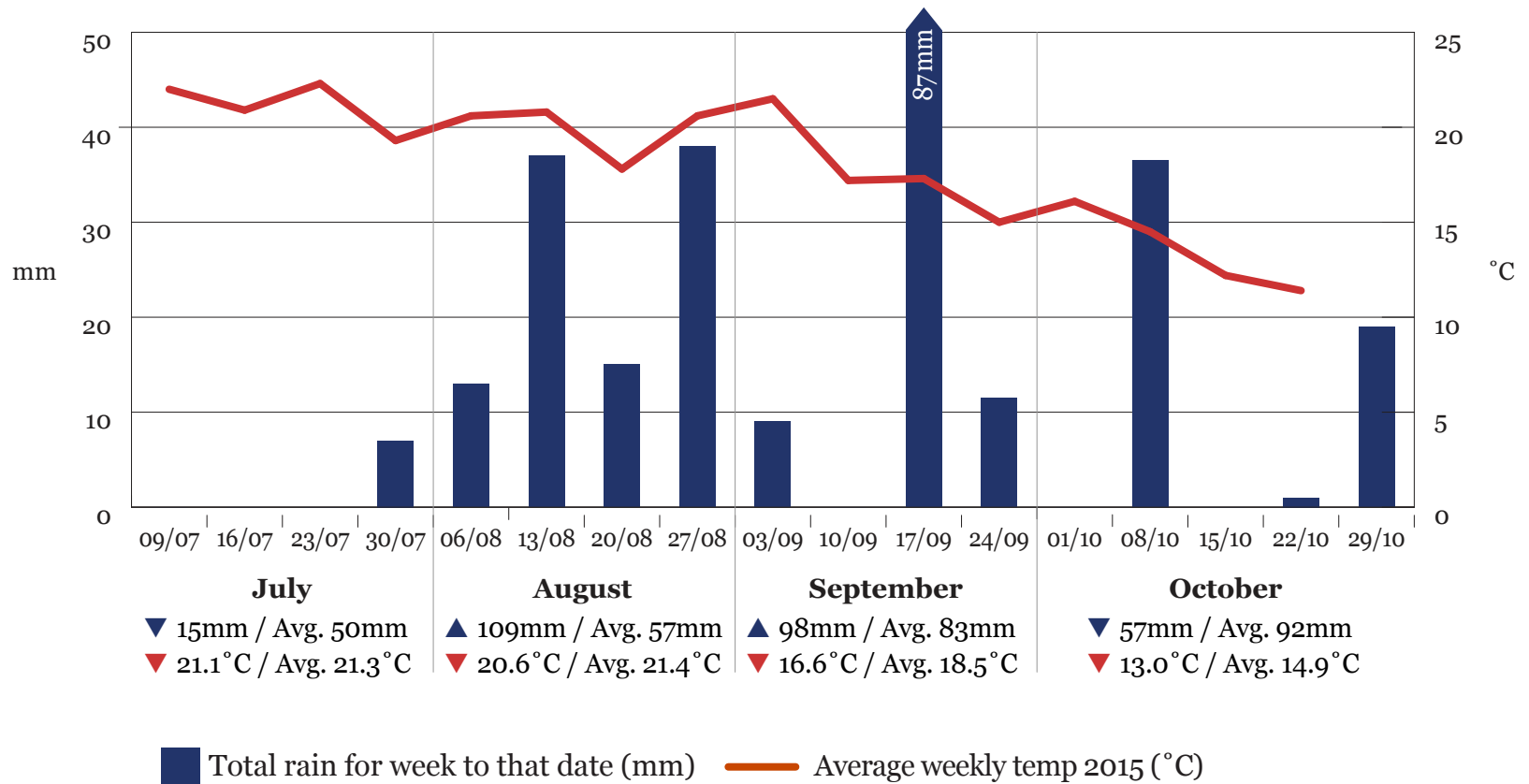
## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, April - June: N Medoc



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney

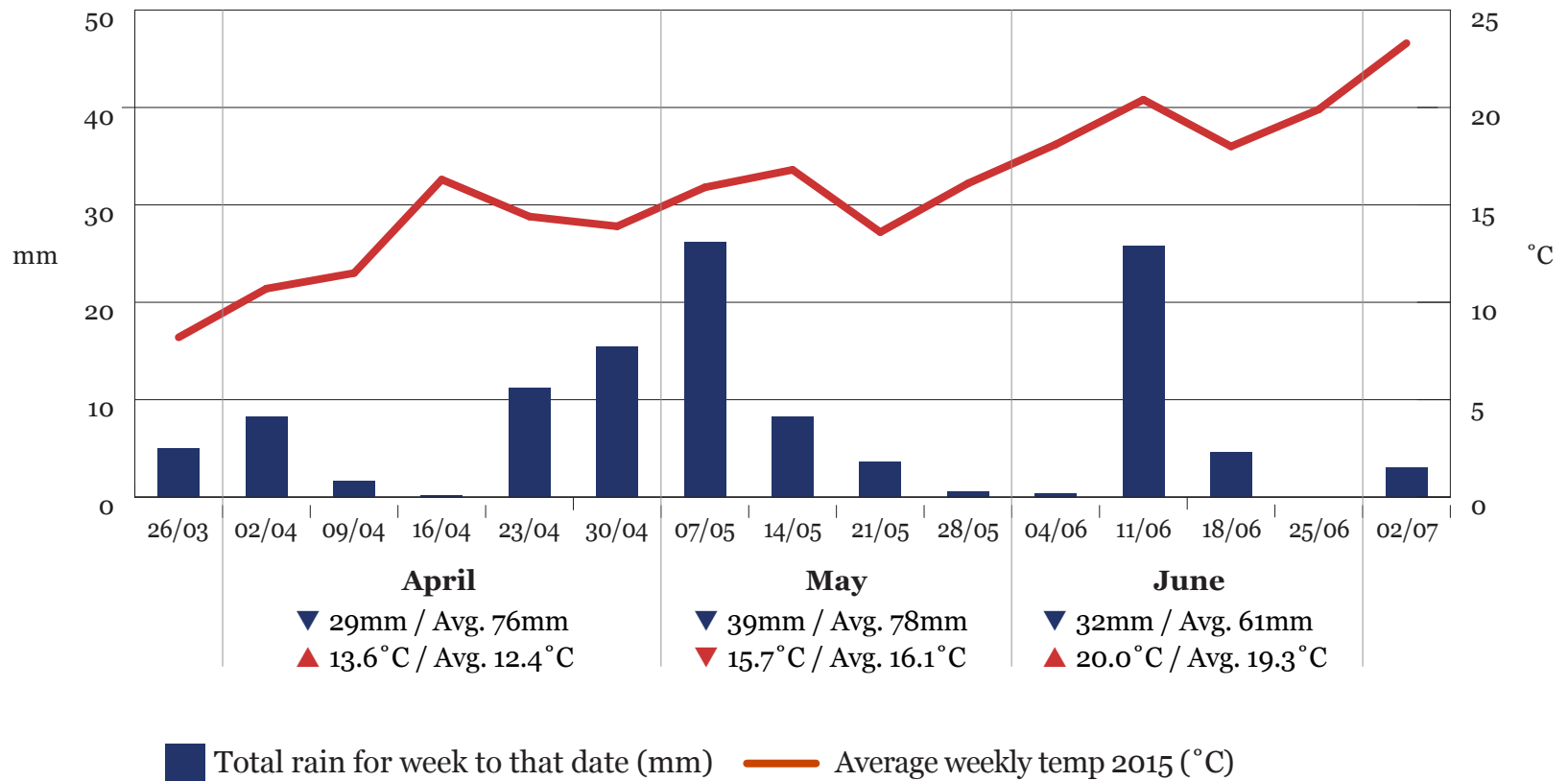
## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, July - October: N Medoc



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney

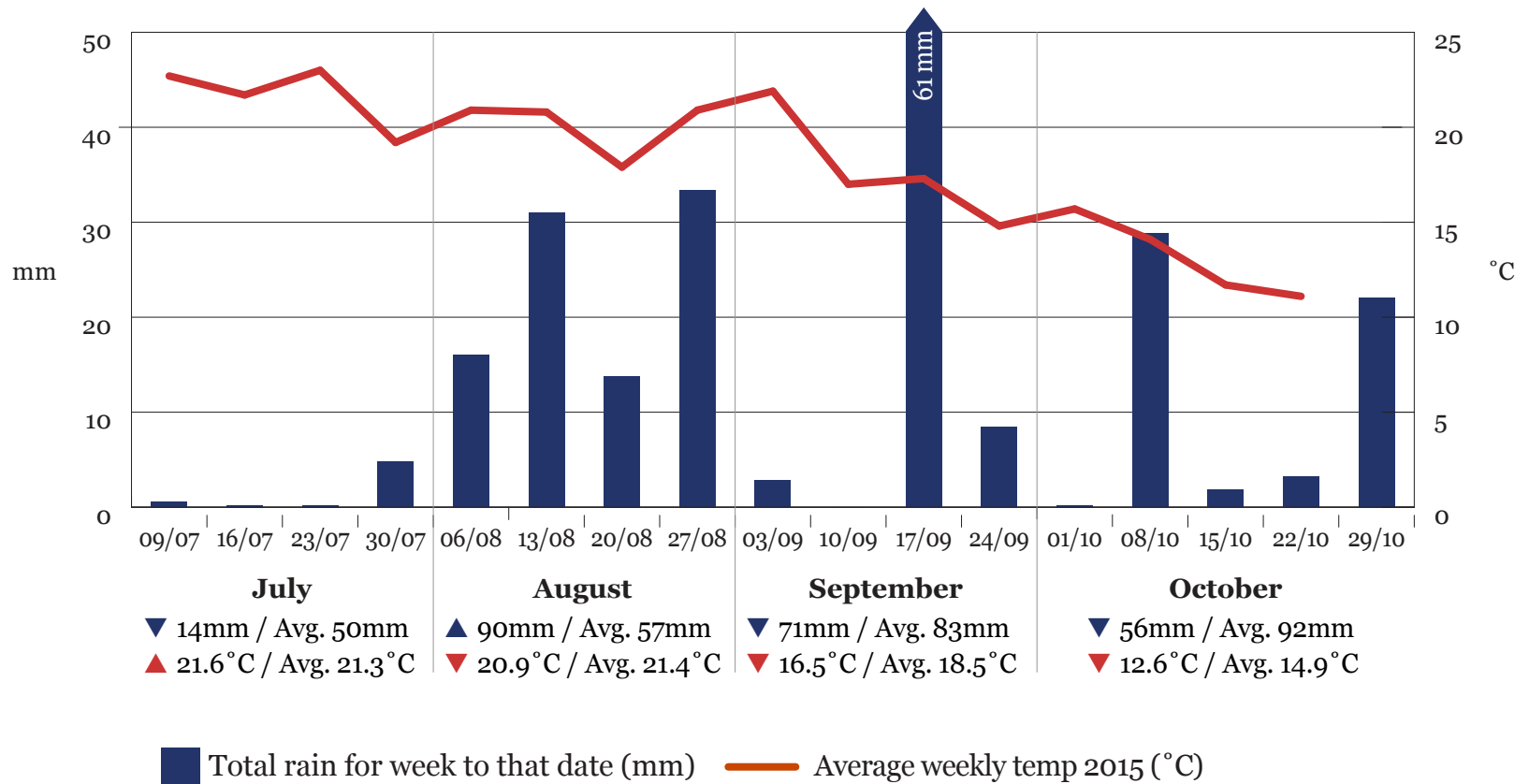
## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, April - June: Haut Medoc



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney

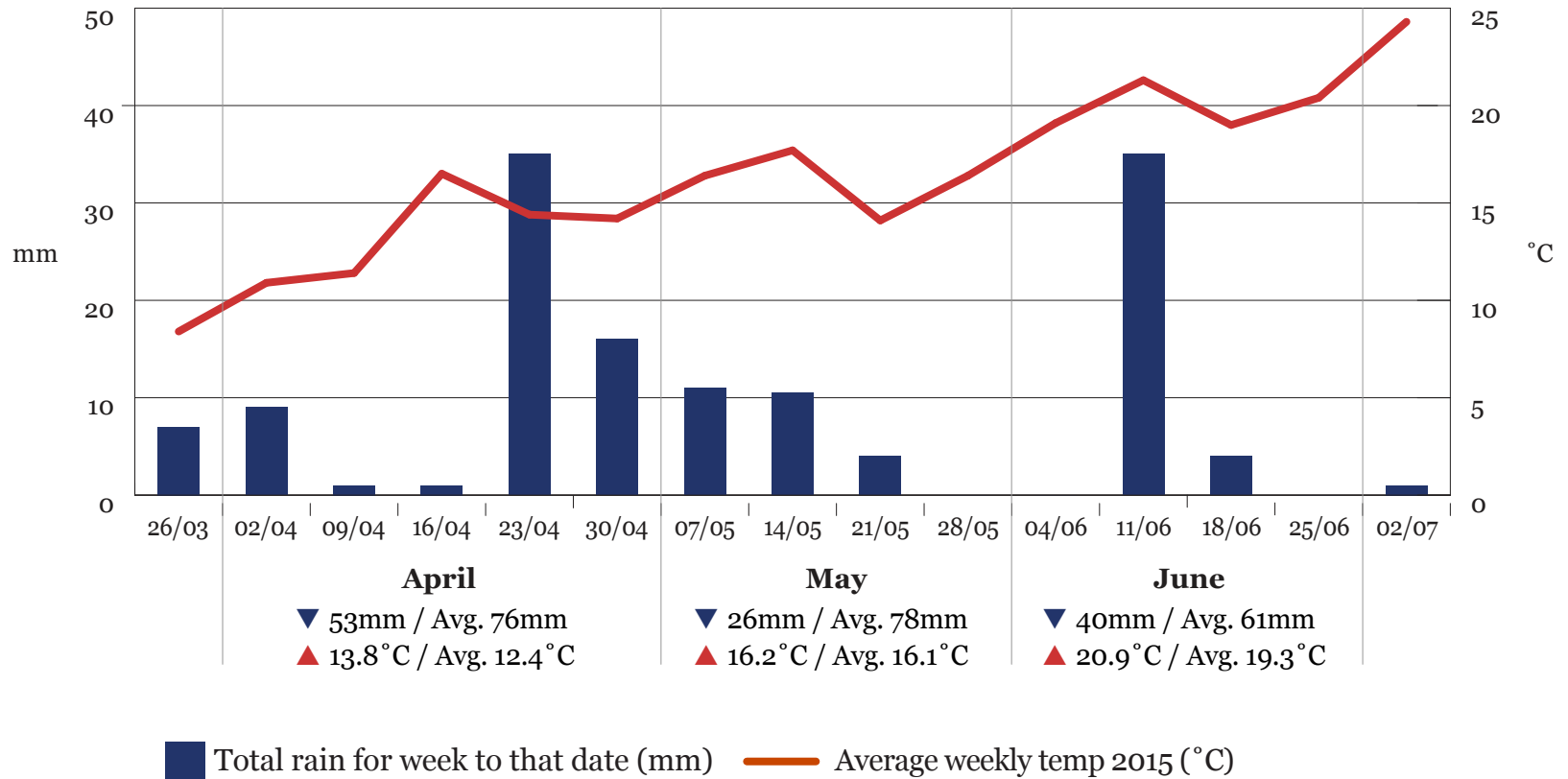
## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, July - October: Haut Medoc



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney

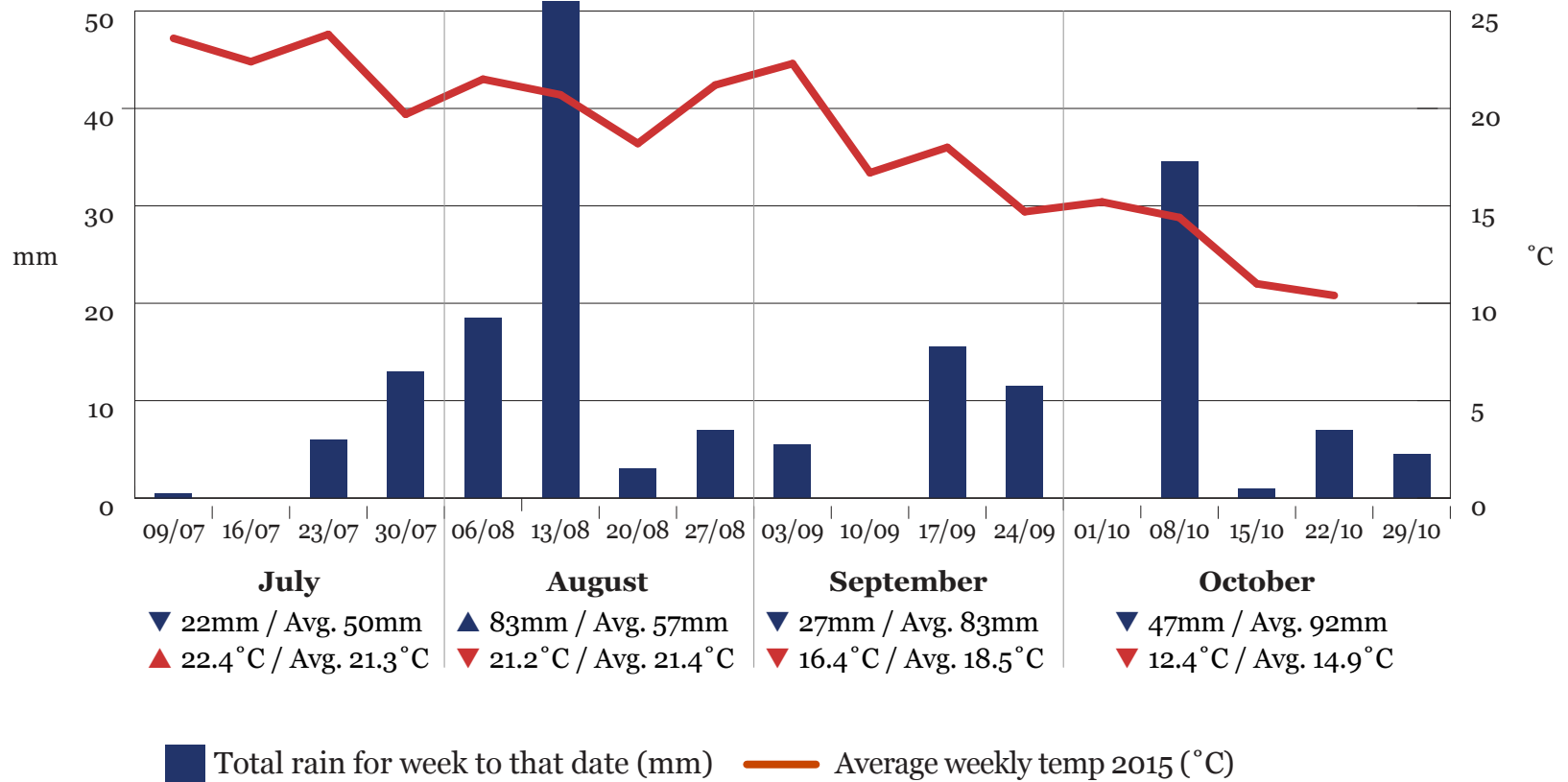
## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, April - June: St. Emilion



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney

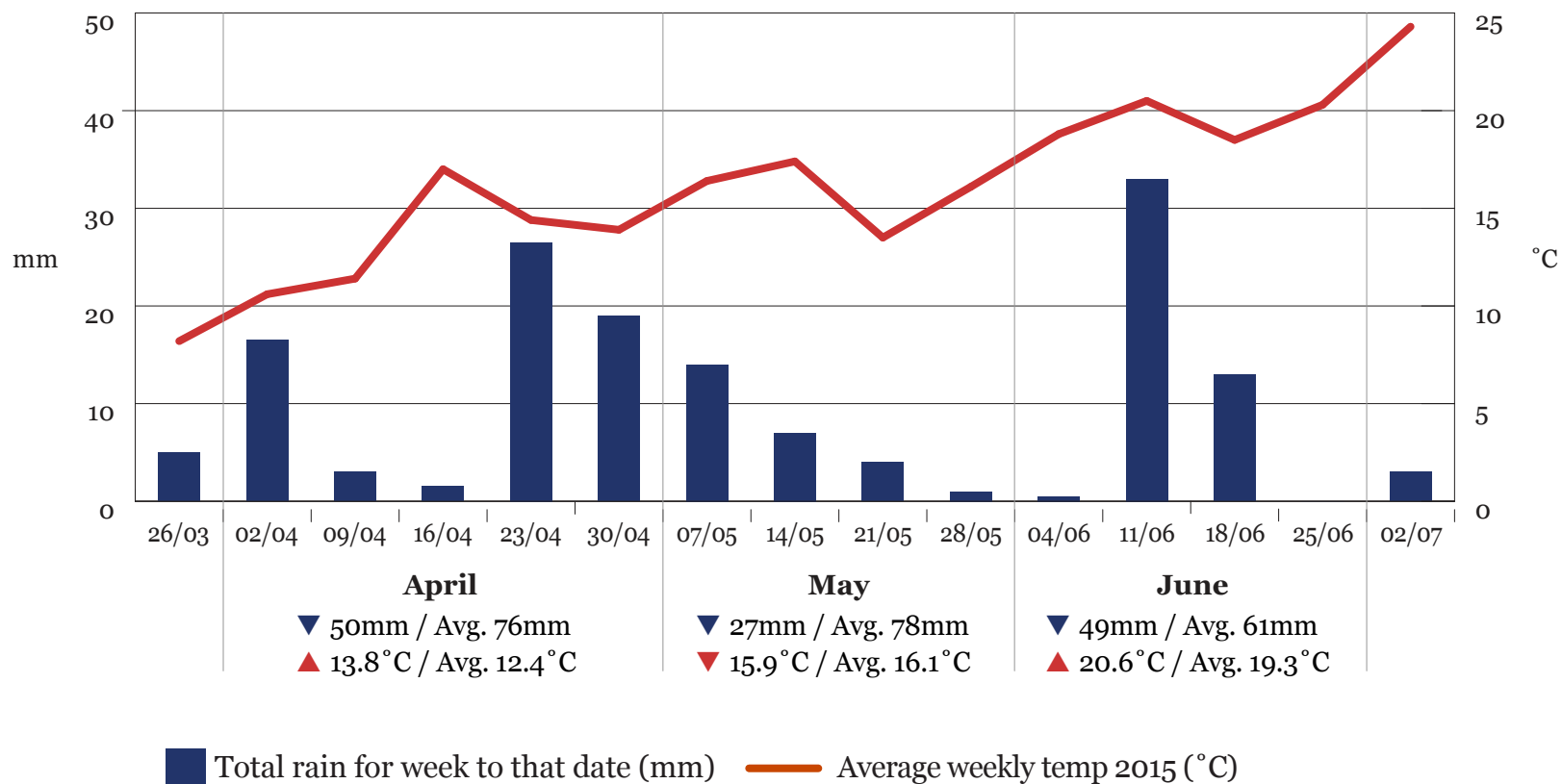
## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, July - October: St. Emilion



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney

## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, April - June: Entre-Deux-Mers

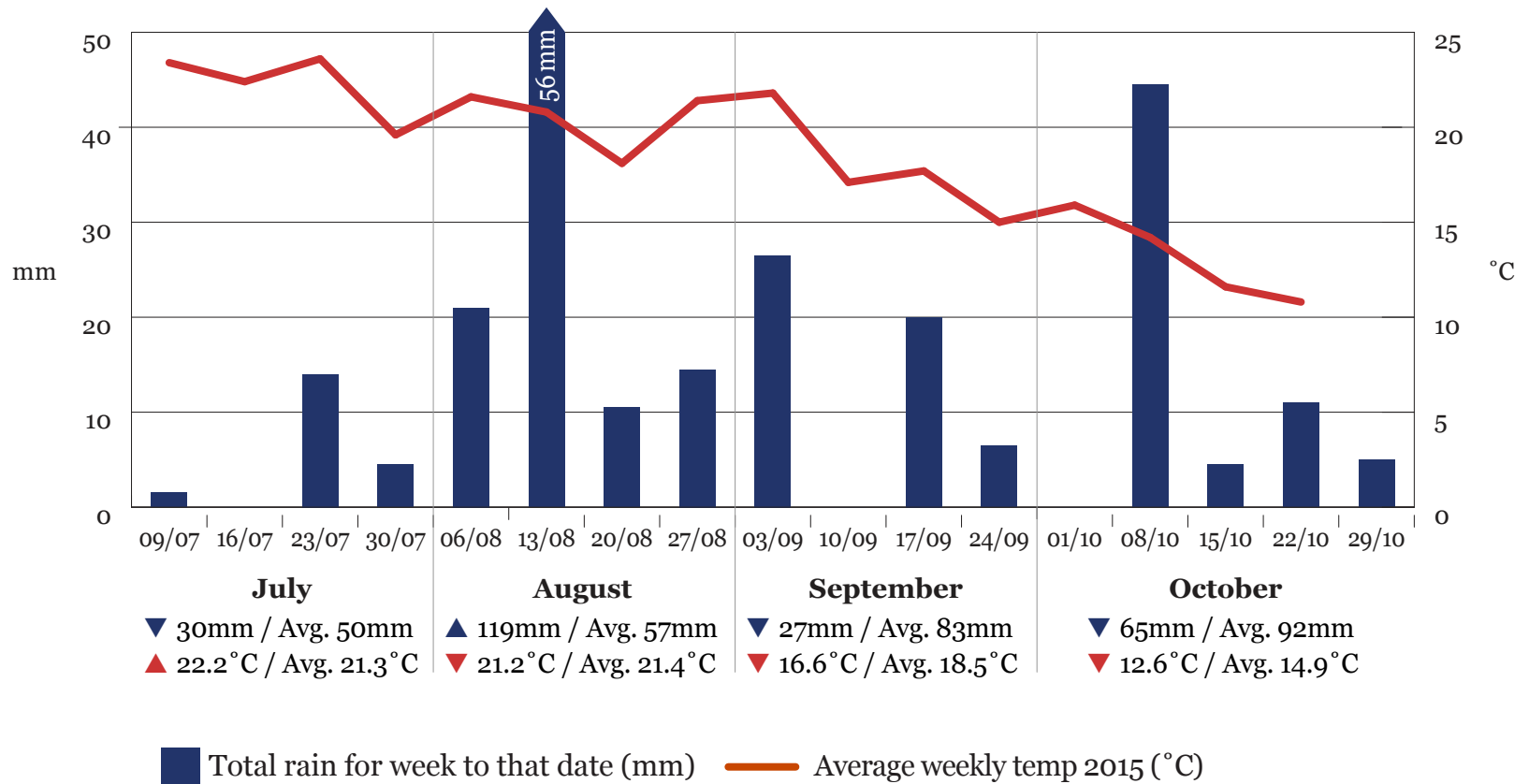


Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney



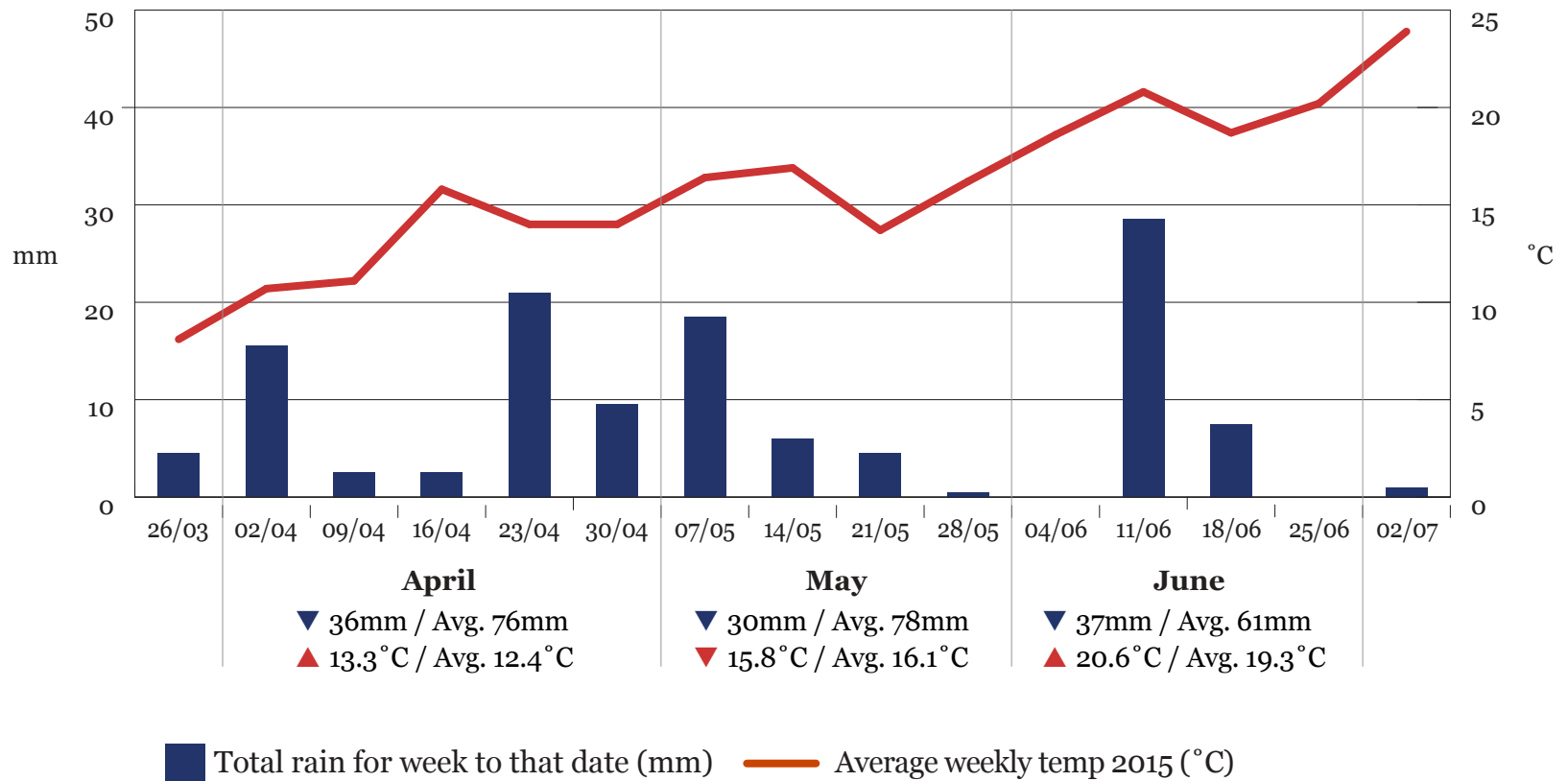
## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, July - October: Entre-Deux-Mers



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney

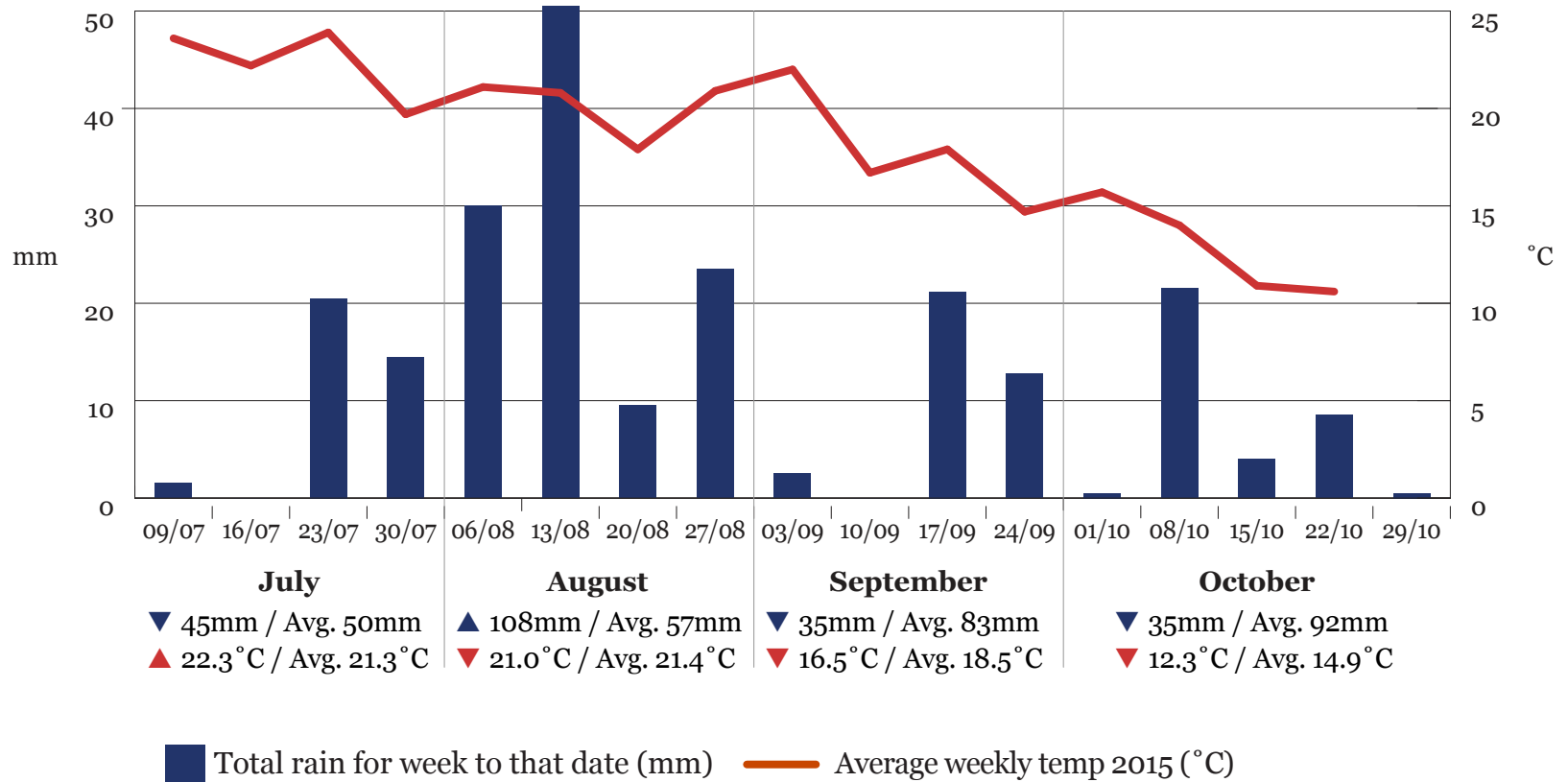
## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, April - June: Leognan



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney

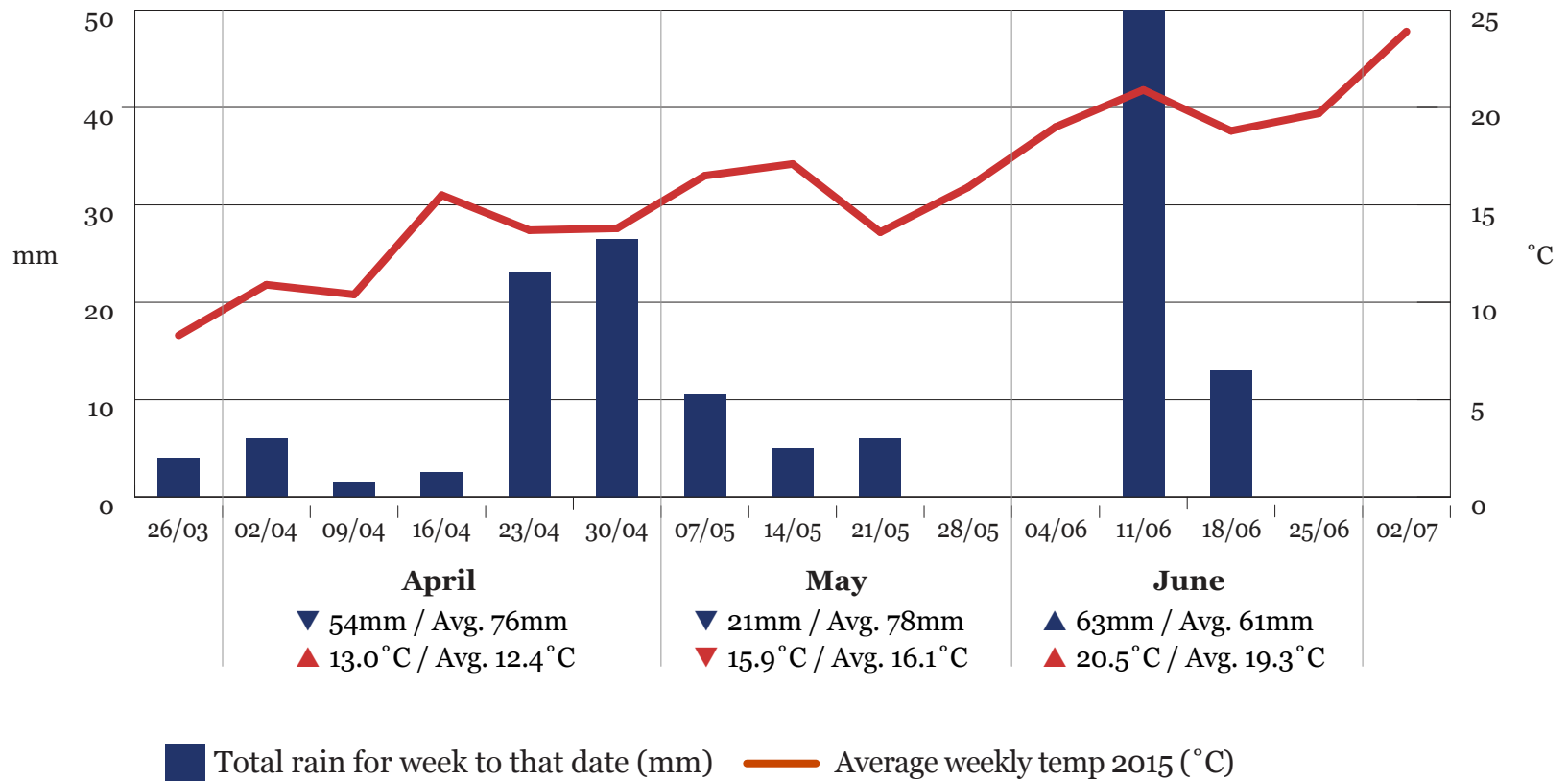
## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, July - October: Leognan



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney

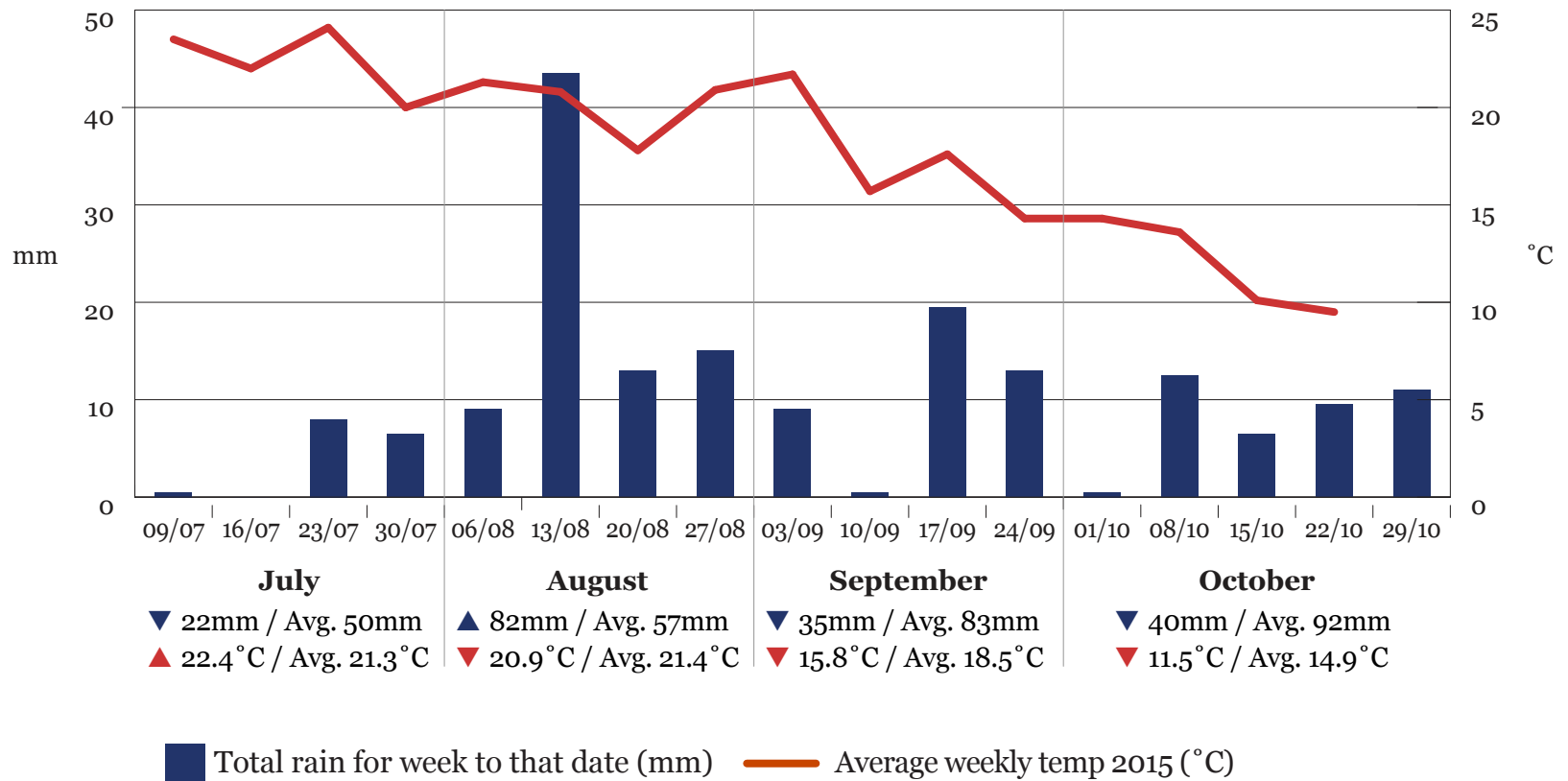
## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, April - June: Sauternes



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney

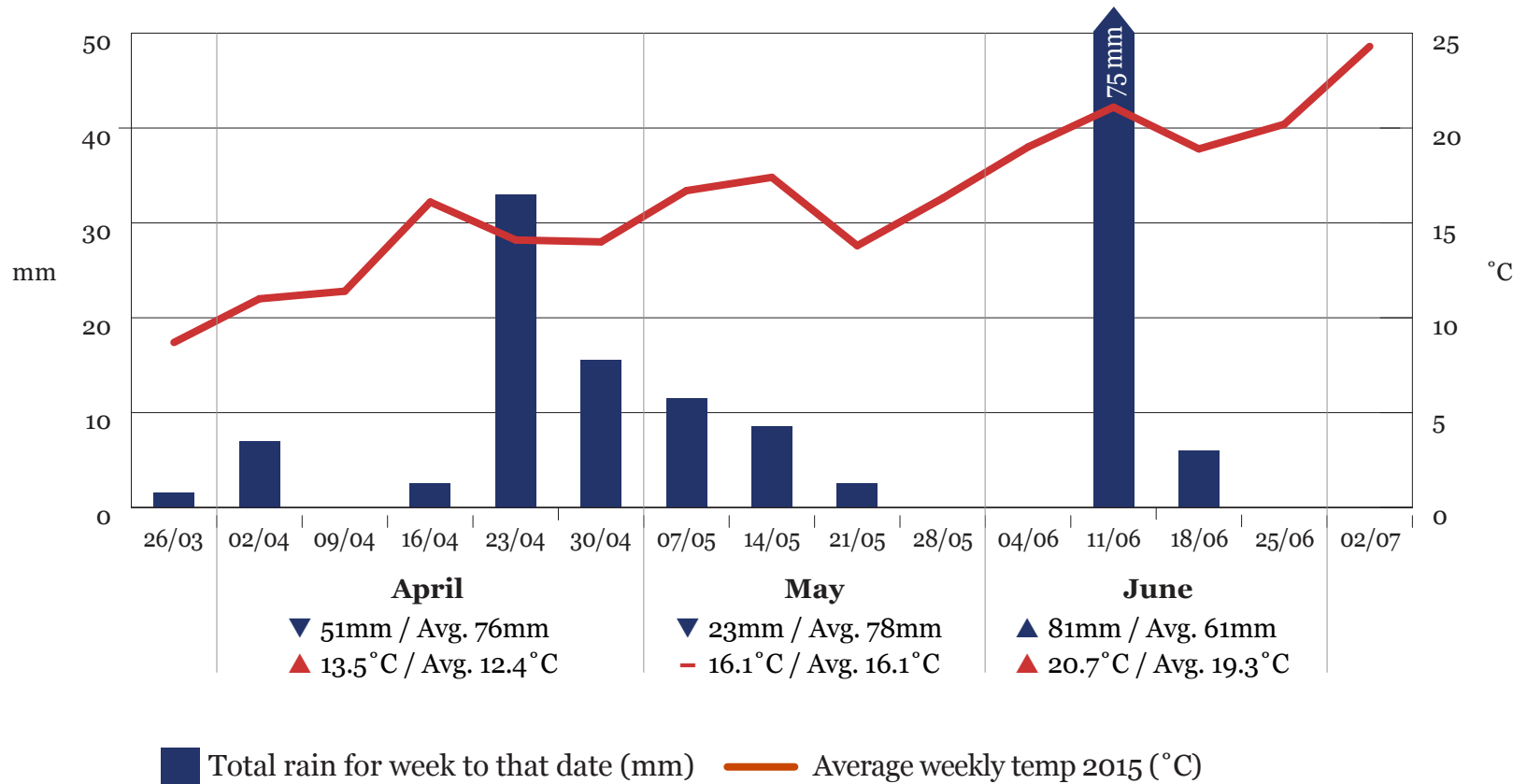
## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, July - October: Sauternes



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney

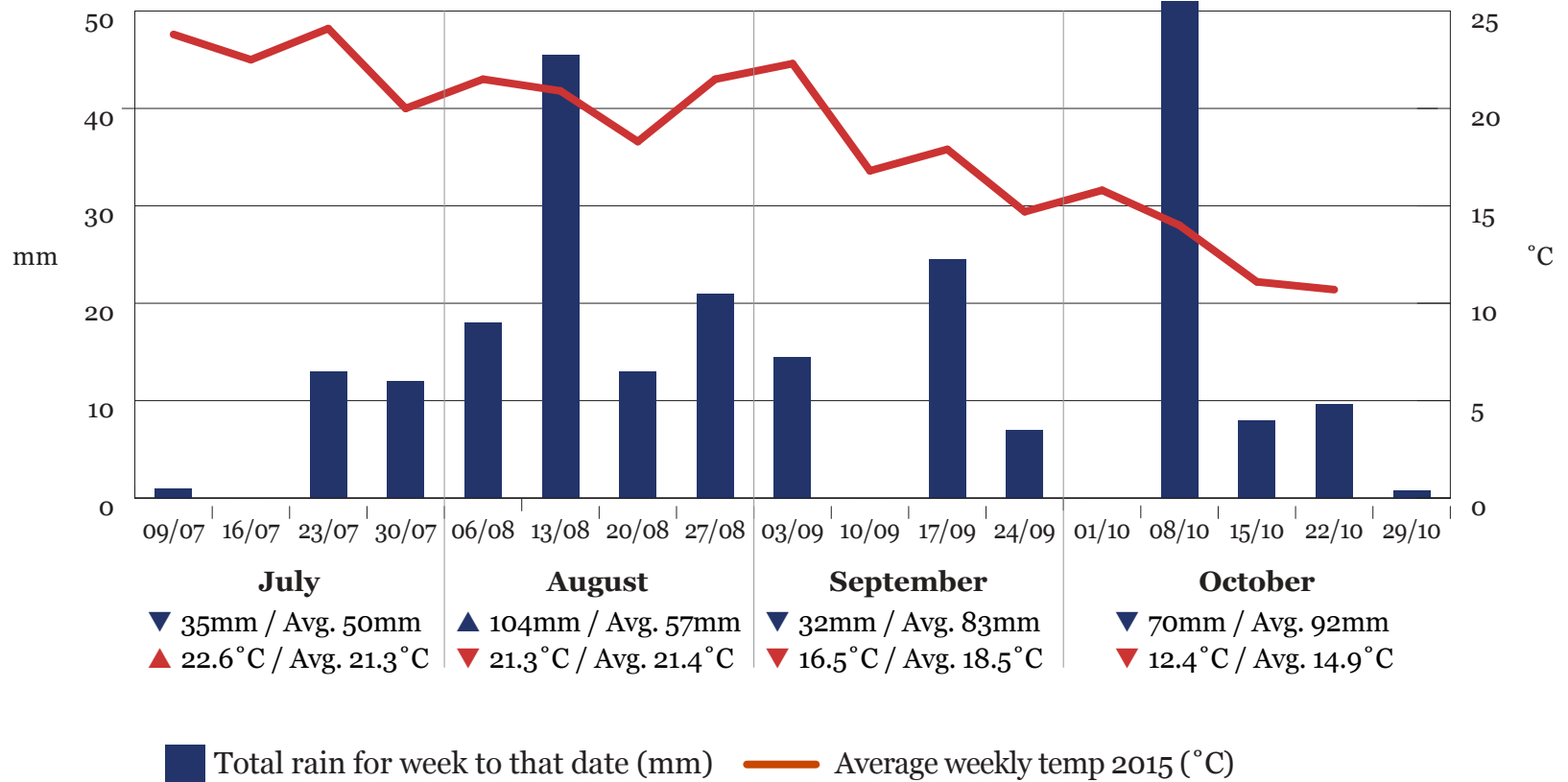
## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, April - June: Graves



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney

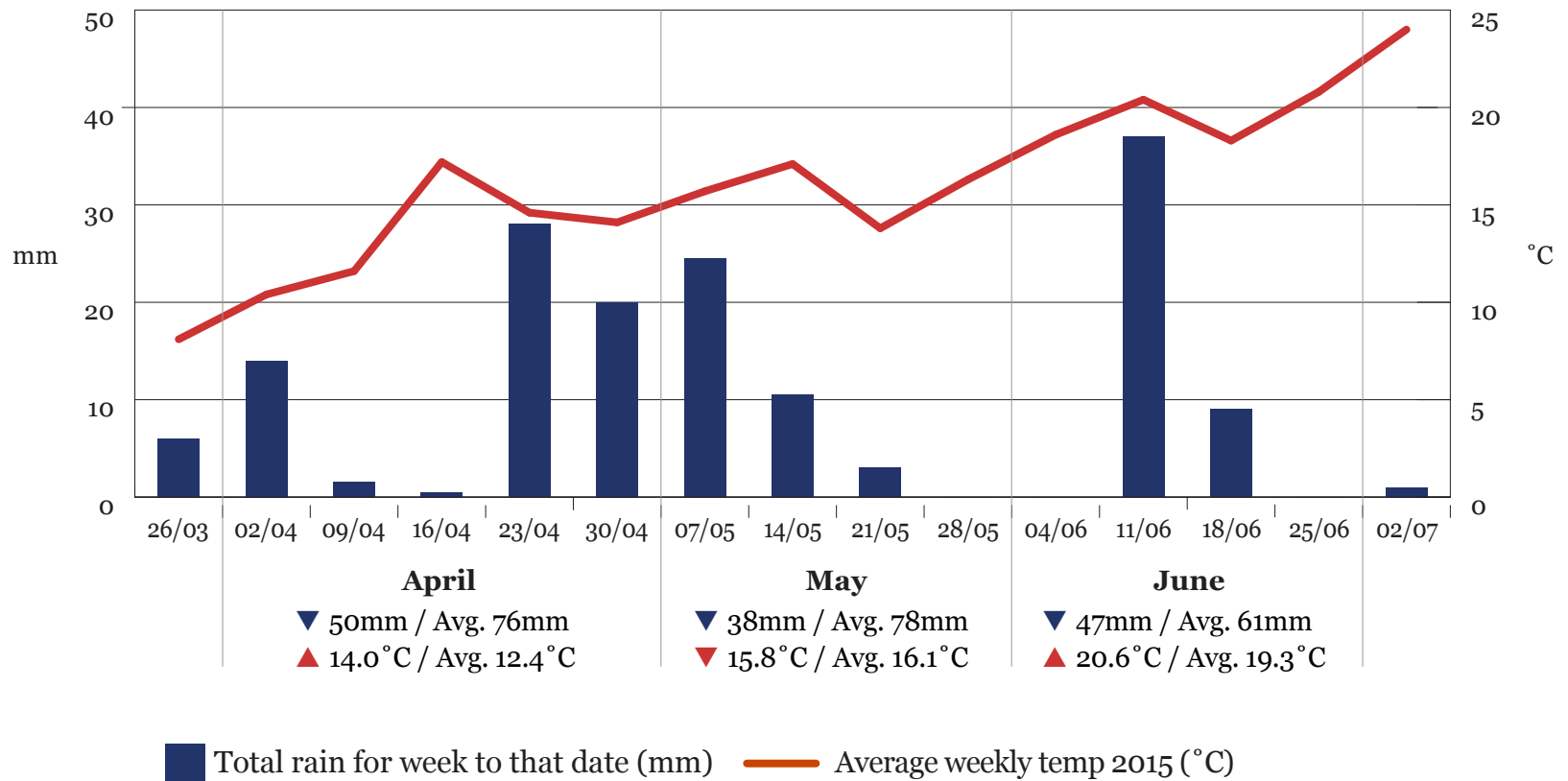
## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, July - October: Graves



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney

## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, April - June: Blaye

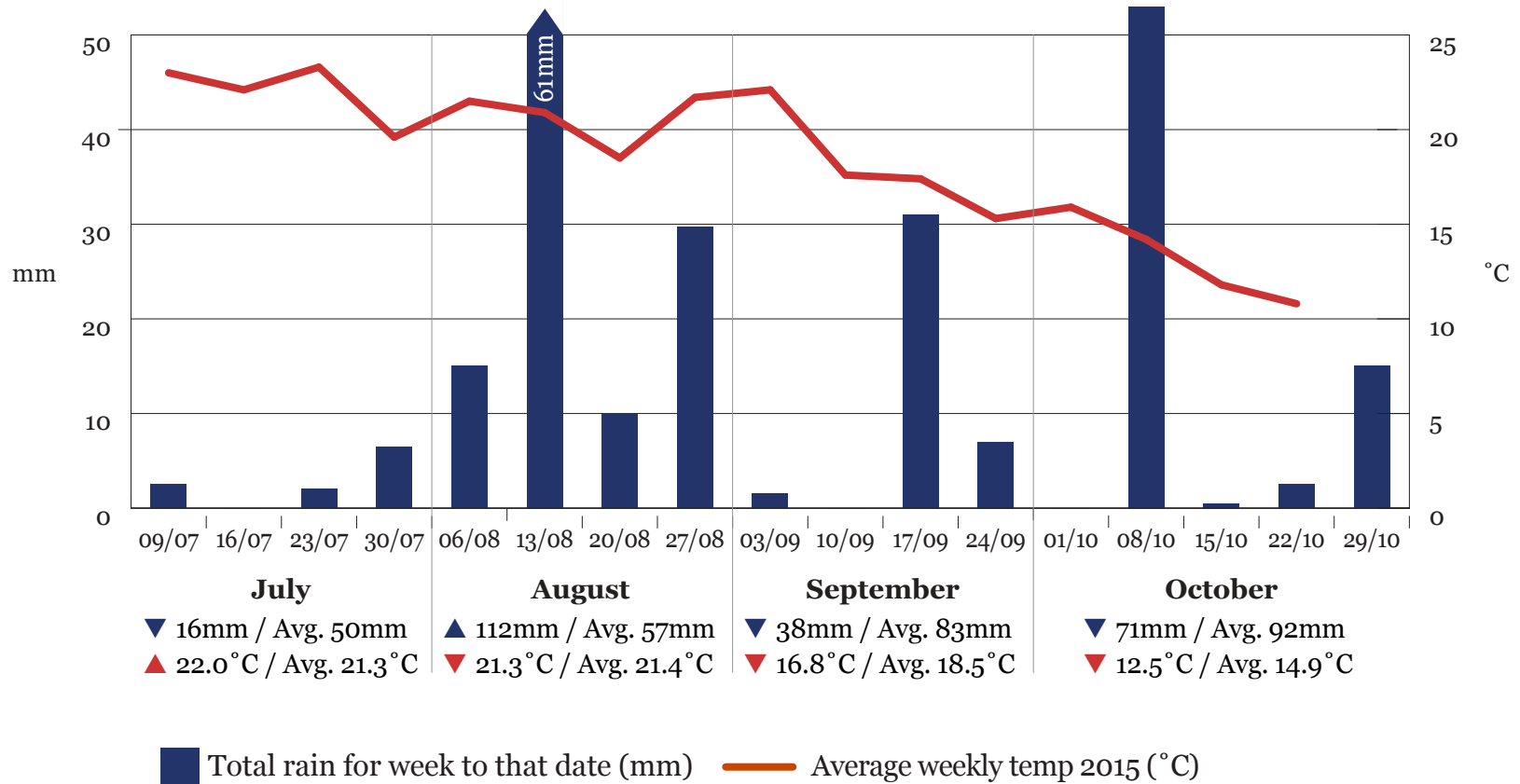


Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney



## Bordeaux 2015 Rain and Temperature, July - October: Blaye



Average is 30 year average, Bordeaux.

Source: @GavinQuinney

# The End

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