OEnoppia
Oenological Products and Practices
International Association

PRESS RELEASE

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INFORMATION ABOUT WINE REGULATION

Paris, 25 August 2015

New oenological practices adopted by the OIV – their authorization in Europe is not automatic!

The General Assembly of the OIV held last July 10 in Mainz voted the adoption of two new oenological practices : the treatment of wines with malolactic fermentation activators and treatment of musts and wines with glutathione. But beware, these practices are not allowed in so far in 2015 for harvest in European countries. If European regulation is based on resolutions of the OIV for any new oenological practice, these products can not be used in the wineries before the insertion procedure in the list of authorized oenological practices (Regulation of the Commission (EC) 606/2009). This procedure takes several months.

In the interests of promoting international standardization and technical consistency, European wine legislation (Council Regulation [EC] 479/2008, replaced by Parliament and Council Regulation (EU) 1308/2013) explicitly stipulates since 2008 that the International Vine and Wine Organization's (OIV) recommendations should be referred to for adopting any new oenological practice. Nevertheless, since the OIV is a 46-country intergovernmental organization enacting international standards, its role as a point of reference for regulations does not lead to automatic authorization of new oenological practices in European Union countries. Any new practice must be incorporated into European regulations. The European Commission consults member countries to submit revisions of enactments and ensure that new oenological practices comply with specific criteria established at European level (food safety, protection of wine's natural characteristics, environmental impact, etc). It usually takes between 6 and 12 months to amend European regulations. This includes 2-4 months needed to consider proposals in the European Parliament and Council. In addition, we

should stress that establishing a new oenological practice (Code of Oenological Practices) always goes hand in hand with a corresponding product monograph written by the OIV (Oenological Codex). A monograph may be adopted after a practice. In such cases, the European Commission waits until the monograph has been adopted before introducing the new practice. The monograph gives product purity specifications and is an essential guarantee of oenological quality and food safety.

The European Parliament and Council are currently considering regulations to introduce oenological practices adopted by the OIV at its 12th General Assembly in Mendoza on 14 November 2014 (adoption of PVI-PVP to reduce an excess of metals, silver chloride to correct the reduction in wines and treatment of wines with a membrane coupling technique and activated carbon to reduce excess 4-ethylphenol and 4-ethylguaiacol). This bill is available in the Commission's document register[1] and is expected to come into force in November 2015 if no objections are raised by the European Parliament or Council.

New oenological practices adopted at the OIV's 13th General Assembly on 10 July 2015

Two new oenological practices – representing major oenological progress – were adopted at the OIV's last General Assembly in Mainz, Germany: treatment of wines with malolactic fermentation activators (OIV-OENO Resolution 531-2015), and treatment of musts and wines with glutathione (OIV-OENO Resolution 445-2015; OIV-OENO Resolution 446-2015).

The option to use malolactic fermentation activators has opened up a new way to improve control of malolactic fermentation, just like alcoholic fermentation. The following products can be used: inactivated yeasts and yeast autolysates for lactic acid bacteria nutrition, yeast hulls for detoxification, and microcrystalline cellulose for support.

Glutathione has long been known to have a role in grape metabolism. Scientific research has shown its protective function (by its quinone-blocking action) in oxidation phenomena. Directly adding pure glutathione will enable this action to be reproduced if wines are exposed to oxygen.

When will these new practices be authorized in Europe?

[1] http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/3/2015/FR/3-2015-4510-FR-F1-1.PDF
http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/3/2015/FR/3-2015-4510-FR-F1-1-ANNEX-1.PDF

These new practices will be authorized in European countries as soon as the product specifications have been adopted by the OIV and they have been incorporated into Regulation (EC) 606/2009. Although product specifications for malolactic fermentation activators are already in the OIV's International Oenological Codex (monographs on autolysates, inactivated yeasts, yeast hulls and microcrystalline cellulose), glutathione specifications are still in the process of being adopted.

Malolactic fermentation activators are therefore due to be authorized in Europe some time in 2016.

European authorization for glutathione depends on two other conditions, for which it is currently hard to make time-scale commitments (at least 2 years): the adoption of the monograph by the OIV, and a food-safety risk assessment for use as a European food additive (assessment carried out by the EFSA).

How do you know whether or not an oenological practice is authorized?

It is vital to remember that all new oenological practices must be listed in Regulation (EC) 606/2009 to be authorized in European countries. Please consult the consolidated version of Regulation 606/2009[2] directly on the European Commission's Official Journal website (eur-lex.europa.eu) to check if a new practice is officially authorized.

About Oenoppia

Oenoppia is a professional association under French law, bringing together the main designers, producers and distributors of specialist oenological products. Specialist oenological products cover all ingredients, additives and processing aids involving specific oenological expertise and use and that are based on scientific knowledge of grape and wine constituents. Oenoppia's member companies have signed an ethical charter for regulatory compliance and responsible use of oenological products.

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[2] Latest version consolidated on 27/08/2015: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02009R0606-20150419&qid=1440668873225&from=FR