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The Australian Wine Research Institute



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MEDIA RELEASE

New service from the AWRI gives greater control for wine style and quality to winemakers

The AWRI has shown that in wine, the loss of fresh fruit characters and the development of 'reductive' and 'oxidised' characters can be the result of poor management of oxygen transmission through wine bottle closures or packaging.

The AWRI has developed a brand new method for measuring the oxygen transmission rate (OTR) through packaging materials such as closures while still in contact with wine. This method enables accurate OTR determinations on materials whose properties are influenced by contact with wine (e.g. natural cork), or whole multi-component packaging geometries whose properties previously could only be estimated. The AWRI has recently taken out a provisional patent on the method.

The AWRI's Commercial Services Group Manager, Dr Vince O'Brien, said, "We've shown definitively that OTR has a dramatic impact on wine style evolution after wine is packaged. We're excited to say that we can now accurately quantify this key packaging performance parameter without opening the bottle or box." He said "We are assessing the property of the package, exactly as it determines the wine quality presented to the customer."

To our knowledge traditional tools to quantify OTR, such as those using the MOCON technology, cannot completely characterise the oxygen transmission properties of a pre-packaged bottle containing wine. The new AWRI method completely encapsulates the closure or package with the OTR device, which contains an oxygen sensor. Vince said "This new service gives winemakers the ability to make informed decisions on how packaging material will influence their wines after they are packaged."

Anyone interested to learn more about this service should contact the AWRI's Commercial Services. Email: CommercialServices@awri.com.au; telephone 08 8303 6600 or visit our website: http://www.awri.com.au/commercial_services/packaging/