



## **Technical Notes**

### **The use of grape variety names in the European Union- Montepulciano and Prosecco**

Before a grape variety name can be used in the description of an Australian wine marketed in Europe, a number of conditions must be satisfied. In particular:

- The variety name must be included on the list published by the International Organisation for Vine and Wine (OIV). The list can be found through the “publications” section of the OIV’s website <http://www.oiv.int> or by consulting our export market guide for the European Union [www.wineaustralia.com/winefacts](http://www.wineaustralia.com/winefacts)
- The variety name must not include the name of a European protected designation.

In July 2009 the European Union adopted a regulation (607/2009) which would have prevented Australian usage, in European markets, of a large number of grape variety names, including the increasingly common Sangiovese and Nebbiolo.

Following strong representation in the context of the ratification of the wine treaty between Australia and the EU, regulation 607 has been amended to allow for continued Australian usage of the following names;

Aleatico, Ansonica, Barbera, Brachetto, Cesanese, Cortese, Fiano, Fortana, Freisa, Greco, Grignolino, Lacrima, Maceratino, Nebbiolo, Pignoletto, Primitivo, Rossese, Sangiovese, Teroldego, Verdicchio, Vermentino and Vernaccia.

Furthermore, “Verdejo” has been removed from the restricted list of variety names and it is also available for use in relation to Australian wine sold in Europe.

However, we have not been successful in gaining continued usage of either “Montepulciano” or “Prosecco”, the latter grape variety having been recently renamed in Europe as “Glera”.

Exporters should be aware, therefore, that whilst these two variety names can continue to be used in our domestic market, Australian wines bearing these designations will not be accepted in Europe.

## **The term “Preservative free”**

The Food Standards Code requires the declaration of the presence of added sulphites in concentrations of 10 mg/l or more.

This does not imply, however, that wines containing less than 10 mg/l can be labeled “preservative free” or “no added sulphites”. A reasonable interpretation of these unregulated terms would be that the wine is entirely free of preservatives.

Certain yeasts can produce significant quantities of sulphur dioxide, up to 100 mg/l in some cases. Hence, even if no sulphur dioxide has been directly added, the wine could contain relatively high levels of this preservative.

Wines labeled with terms such as “preservative free” are refused export approval unless analysis shows they are entirely free of sulphur dioxide.

## **Allowable Additives in the Japanese Market**

We have recently revised the export market guide for the Japanese market and urge all exporters to Japan to review this document. In particular, we indicate how certain items, such as tartaric acid, are treated as processing aids and, therefore, can only be used prior to the end of fermentation.

Copper sulphate is one of the items listed in this guide as being unavailable for use in products marketed in Japan. The AWBC is continuing to work with WFA in order to change this situation. We have recently made progress with our ongoing submission to the Japanese authorities but expect it will be at least another 18 months before it will be possible to use copper sulphate on products destined for Japan.

## **Wine Based Beverage**

Australian wine cannot contain any added flavours or colours and extraneous water content is limited to the unavoidable consequences of the winemaking process such as for the incorporation of allowable additives.

“Wine Products” on the other hand may contain added flavours and colours and up to 30% water.

In order to prevent the possibility of deceptive behaviour, and consumer confusion between “Wine” and “Wine Products”, imminent amendments to the AWBC regulations will prevent the use of vintage, variety or geographical indication claims in relation to grape products other than wine, brandy or grape spirit.

## **Moscato**

The AWBC is of the view that “Moscato” is an indicator of variety and therefore can only be used in compliance with the AWBC Act and Regulations. That is, “Moscato” can only be used in the description and presentation of wines where at least 85% of the wine consists of “Muscat” varieties.

There are many Muscat varieties, of which Muscat a Petits Grain and Muscat Gordo are the most commonly planted in Australia. Any of these, or a combination of them, can be used to produce Australian “Moscato”.