

# AWITE delegates positive on ProCork

Australian wine closure ProCork has topped the class in the latest round of results from the Australian Wine Research Institute's (AWRI) second commercial closure trial.

The latest round of sensory and chemical testing by the AWRI conducted after 18 months of cellaring clearly placed ProCork as the standout closure with more retained SO<sub>2</sub> than screw cap and cork, better varietal characters, less oxidation than cork and less reduced characters than screw cap.

The trial commenced in September 2002 to compare the performance of natural reference 2 and 3 corks, screw caps and ProCork's revolutionary membrane cork.

Former CSIRO scientist and ProCork founder Dr Gregor Christie said the AWRI trial results reinforced ProCork's ability to mesh all the benefits of natural cork with the latest technology to create a product which gives winemakers confidence their wine will develop as they intended.

The product was officially launched at the Australian Wine



Laurie Martin (right), advertising consultant, *Viticulture News*, tastes wine closed under the new generation ProCork, with ProCork founder and chief executive Gregor Christie, centre, and Ben Ready, marketing, at the technical conference held in Melbourne in July.

Industry Trade Exhibition (AWITE) in July.

"The AWITE was a huge success for ProCork. It was the first real opportunity to explain our technology and its benefits to all the different levels of the wine industry from small winemakers right through to the biggest names in the country," Christie said.

"With an increasingly competitive market for closures I think we proved to a lot of people we have the technical and commercial expertise to deliver the best-performing closure.

"We spent a lot of time explaining to people the technical aspects of ProCork but

the proof was really in the tasting. Using the same wine used to collect 18-month data in AWRI's second closure trial we showed ProCork's ability to keep wine fresher and fuller without experiencing any reductive characteristics.

"On the commercial side our ProCork machine has now been shipped and commissioned at Vintners' Angaston factory and we look forward to announcing some major clients in the near future."

ProCork's technology revolves around the membranes that are applied to each end of the cork and designed to significantly reduce flavour modification by reducing the amount of chemicals entering the wine, regulating the passage of oxygen through the cork and retaining cork moisture to prevent cork breakage.

The new technology will enable natural cork to be used by winemakers with high certainty that the membrane will reduce any off-character imparted by the cork and allow true flavour development.

The AWRI results at 18 months showed free SO<sub>2</sub> levels (see Figure 1) dropped by almost 50% for the reference 2 and 3 closures, but by only 33% for the ProCork closure.

The level of free sulphur dioxide in wine is considered to be critical to the stability of the wine and provides protection against oxidation and therefore accelerated development of the wine.

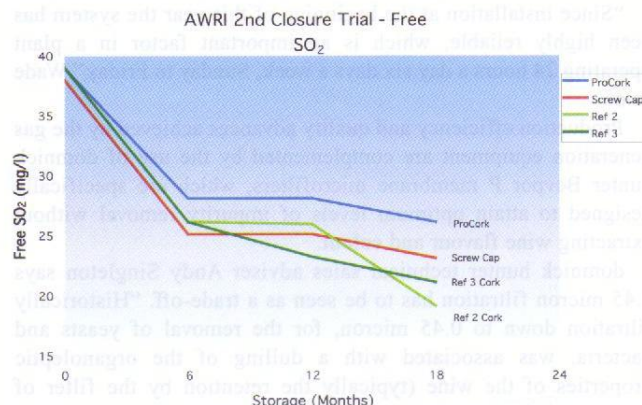


Fig. 1. AWRI 2nd closure trial - Free SO<sub>2</sub>.