PROCORK
THE NEW GLOBAL STANDARD IN CORK

July 5, 2004

PROCORK TOPS THE CLASS IN LATEST AWRI CLOSURE TRIAL RESULTS

Australian wine closure ProCork has topped the class in the latest round of results from the Australian Wine Research Institute's (AWRI) landmark 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_2 than screw cap and cork, better varietal characters, less oxidation than cork and less reduced characters than screwcap.

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

The positive results were released just weeks after ProCork signed an exclusive distribution agreement with wine packaging group Vinpac International which will see up to 20 million ProCorks hit the Australian market over the next 12 months.

The product will be officially launched at the Australian Wine Industry Trade Exhibition (AWITE) being held at the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre from July 25-28.

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.

"Our own internal testing over the last couple of years has consistently shown ProCork to be the best performing closure under all circumstances and these results reinforce that testing," Dr Christie said.

"We have now proven ourselves from a technical perspective and – following our agreement with Vinpac - a commercial perspective. Australian wine drinkers will be able to make up their own minds in coming months."

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.

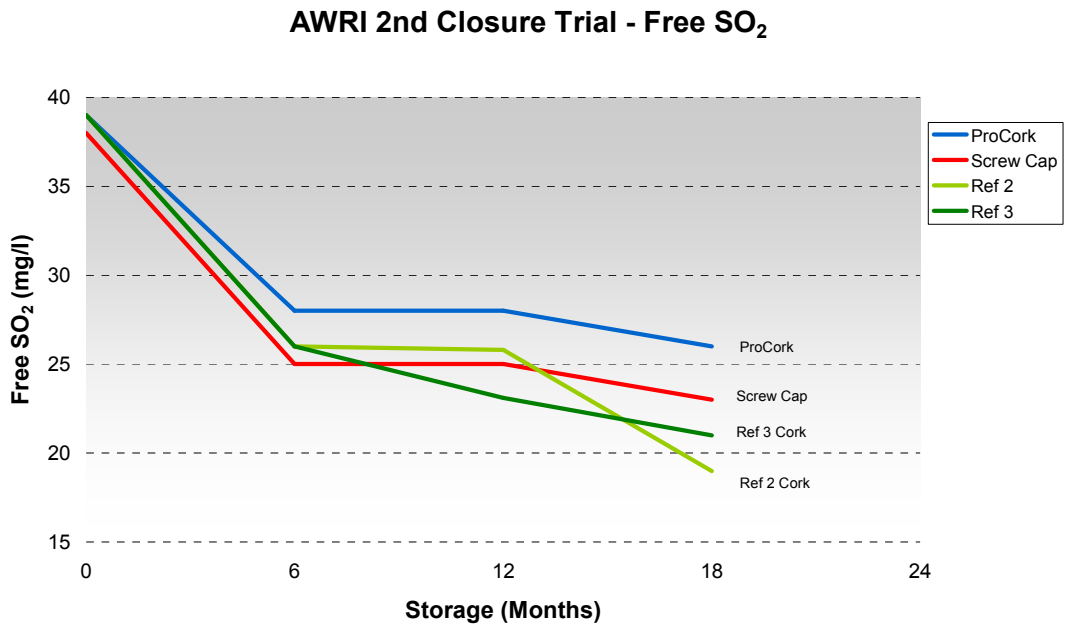
Telephone +61 (03) 9314 1361 Fax +61 (03) 9314 6381 PO Box 475 South Melbourne VIC 3205 Australia

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_2 levels (Figure 1) dropped by almost 50 per cent for the reference 2 and 3 closures, but by only 33 per cent 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.

Using chemical analysis, it was determined the ProCork samples contained a mean of 26 mg/L of free SO_2 compared to 23 mg/L, 19 mg/L and 21 mg/L for the screwcap, reference 2 and reference 3 closures respectively.



In the sensory testing, undertaken by a panel of 10 AWRI appointed judges, the performance of the four closures in the trial showed ProCork had the highest varietal and fruit scores, no oxidation and less reduced characters than screwcap.

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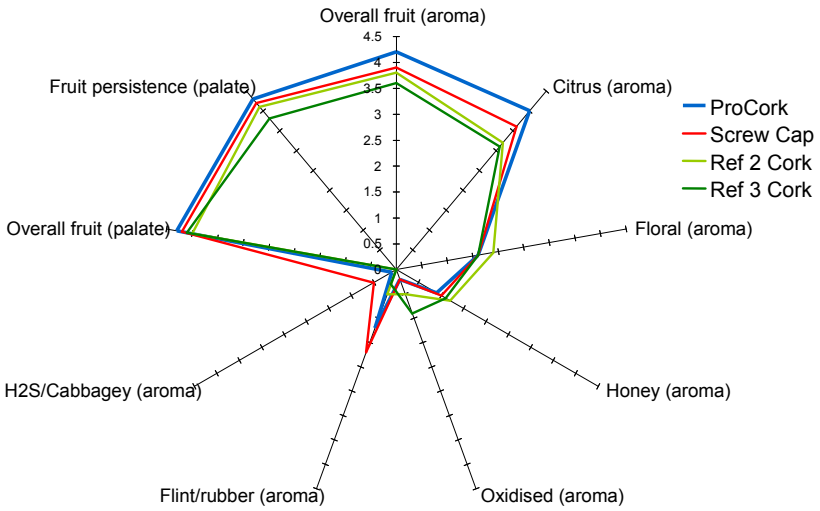
AWRI 2nd Closure Trial – Sensory Analysis



The AWRI Commercial Closure trial results come on the back of the release in May of results showing the company's technology can reduce the transmission of TCA (2,4,6-Trichloroanisole) from corks to wine by between 90 and 100 per cent.

TCA is naturally occurring and is widely regarded as the cause of "cork taint" and gives affected wine a musty, cardboard taste and odour.

As part of the testing Portugal's official cork research and development group *Centro Technologico Da Cortica (CTCOR)* deliberately contaminated corks with TCA and then coated them with ProCork's unique membrane. The results from this test confirm ProCork's ability to prevent TCA entering the wine at perceptible levels.

ENDS: Media enquiries to Dr Gregor Christie on (03) 9314 1361 or 0419 599 597

NOTE: A full copy of the report is available on request

Telephone +61 (03) 9314 1361 Fax +61 (03) 9314 6381 PO Box 475 South Melbourne VIC 3205 Australia