II.3.5.12.1 Ageing in small capacity wooden containers

Definition:

Ageing of wine in small capacity wooden casks during a set period of time, of a wine suited for an evolution through a natural process, in compliance with the usual practices of each viticulture region.

Objectives:

a) To obtain a natural evolutionary process of wine, with improvement of its sensory characteristics through an oxidative and/or biological or diffusion pathway, according to usual practices for each wine,

b) To favour natural physical and chemical mechanisms through the controlled and continuous oxygenation and the progressive contribution of substances released by wood.

c) To obtain a total or partial physico-chemical stabilisation of the wine.

Prescriptions

a) It is recommended, in order for the ageing to be efficient, that the volume of the recipient not exceed 600 litres;

b) The most commonly used botanical species are: Quercus petrea (sissile oak), Quercus robur (pedunculated oak) and their hybrids and Quercus alba (white American oak). Locally, other botanical species than oak may be used. The traceability of wood origin is recommended

c) For the making of the container, one will only use woods that retain their natural structure. Cooperage techniques defined for the making of new casks will be used to optimise the objectives. The traceability of wood is recommended, and at the very least, the manufacture date should be visibly engraved;

d) The inside surface of the containers may be regenerated with usual cooperage techniques. In that case, the date on which this is carried out will have to be visibly engraved;

e) Environmental conditions (temperature, humidity, and isolation) allow for the modulation of oxygen supply to the wine to take place;

f) During the ageing process, continuous control of the casks' condition, their level of filling and the degree of modification of the produced sensory characteristics are recommended. The casks are maintained in compliance with hygiene rules and are eliminated after a few years.

Recommendation of the OIV:

Admitted