

Vinelink International ?

A link for wine research.

“...a production based on quality and variety is not antagonist to the use of sophisticated technologies” Paillotin & Rousset (1999)

In 1992, several wine professionals and public researchers of diverse nationalities created “Vinelink International” gathering international scientists and professionals convinced with the importance of developing innovation within the wine production and trade.

The Association was based on the evident need of a joint international innovative effort. It was created after seeing that beyond commercial competition, many major problems of the wine profession are often the same in different regions or countries like for example many serious grapevine diseases. Therefore it is desirable that research associates countries or regions concerned with common problems in order to make the best use of limited financial means and combine complementary expertises in various regions.

From that time, Vinelink International has organized many research programmes mainly oriented in two sectors: grapevine diseases and grape berry ripening (see below).

But several operations have been also developed on the communication for the wine consumer: the themes being Wine & Health, Jeunes Amis du Vin, Goût et Santé, stimulation sessions for new consumers.

GRAPEVINE DISEASES

We all know that wine business is now confronted to a serious situation since some vine diseases increase dangerously, while at the same time their chemical treatments have been or will be soon prohibited.

From its creation, the Association has started very important research programmes regarding wood decay diseases, backed by the European Commission: Eutypiosis (\$ 2,4 Mio) and ESCA (\$ 1.8 Mio)

Another objective of ours aims at the pesticides reduction especially for Botrytis, Mildew and Powdery Mildew treatments, 3 diseases for which the wine business is spending 130.000 tons/year today and only for Europe!. A few years ago we launched and financed an international coordination on Powdery Mildew and Botrytis. At the moment, a project of fundamental research analyzing grapevine defence against those 3 diseases is under way.

GRAPE BERRY RIPENING

The development of new tools for a better control of wine maturation adapted to each terroir is essential for improving the quality of wine thru out the world.

The Association has decided to investigate this research domain thru 2 paralleles and complementary programs:

First a fundamental program: looking for a better understanding of the ripening phenomenon. In 2003 we obtained the EU financial aid for our “Development and ripening of grape berry” project , gathering 14 European countries.

And secondly an industrial program: targeted to create new tools for the vineyard. In December 2004 the French Ministère de l’Agriculture selected our project “New tools for the optimisation of grape ripening in the vineyard” (gathering 3 research centres and 3 technical institutes) for an important grant.

HEALTH AND WINE COMMUNICATION FOR THE CONSUMER

In 1993 when the scientific works of Pr Serge Renaud (on what was later called the “french Paradox“) was produced on T.V. in the States , it was clear that Wine & Health could be a major promotion tool for the wine business .

Consequently our Association moved to support the domain altogether concerning the scientific field but also its communication to the consumer : many operations have been organised in France, Japan ...

From that time we have joined with the Provence Association COREVI to back researchers’ efforts and their publications in this field , and more recently to help a better communication of the wine business toward young consumers.

The Association schedule

Two annual plenary meetings allow the members to determine what has been done and decide which actions to undertake in the future. At the same time technical lectures on current news are given. Last topics were “Precision viticulture”, “Viticultural intrants reduction” and in March 2005 “Evolution of the oenological practices”; all stressing the importance of the technological evolution of our business.

Who takes part in the Association?

Vinlink International is a free multinational association, without national or industrial dependance : It is a neutral ground for proposals and for setting up technical or marketing concerted actions on stategic themes.

The Association strives not to take themes already treated elsewhere.

In 2005, the Association counts 90 members and 280 partners of 25 nationalities, in 2 colleges:

- 1) A Public Research College gathering scientists in order to organise and implement research programmes. They come from INRA (Bordeaux, Montpellier, Colmar ...), universities (Poitiers, Dijon, Cornell and Davis in the USA, ...), wine research centres (Geilweilerhof in Germany, Changins in Switzerland, ...), specialized research institutes (Australian GWRDC, Portuguese ADVID, American Vineyard Foundation, ...)

2) And a Professional College sponsoring the activity of the Association and at the same time guaranting the Association independence. This college will define priority problems of the business to be solved thru research. Among them are Schenk (Switzerland); Freixenet, Torres (Spain); Amorim, Calem (Portugal); R. Mondavi (USA); Villa Banfi, CAVIT (Italy); Hennessy, Moët & Chandon, Château Léoville las Cases, Rémy Cointreau, Vaslin-Bucher, Rémy Martin, Pernod Ricard, Roederer (France); Centres Interprofessional de Champagne (CIVC), Cognac (BNIC), Inter-Rhône, Interloire, ...

Membership

The annual subscription fee is € 850 for private members, free for public members.

If interested, please ask for a form to fill out to:

- Vinelink International Association , 18 rue d'Aguesseau , F-75008 Paris (France)
- Or e-mail to jpmegnin@wanadoo.fr