RESOLUTION OENO 3/99

CHEMICAL MUST ACIDIFICATION

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

HAVING CONSIDERED the work of the expert groups "Wine Technology," "Wine Microbiology" and "International Code of Oenological Practices,"

DECIDES

BASED ON the proposal by Committee II "Oenology" to replace the following sheet 2.1.1 in Part II of the aforementioned International Code:

PART II

Chapter 2: Musts

2.1.1 Acidification (chemical) of musts

Definition:

Increasing the titration acidity and the actual acidity (decreasing pH) by adding organic acids.

Goal:

a. Produce balanced wines from the gustatory point of view

b. Favor a good biological evolution and good maturation of wine

c. Remedy insufficient natural acidity caused by:

- climatic conditions in the viticulture region, or
- oenological practices which lead to a decrease in natural acidity

Procedure:

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a. Lactic acids, L(-) or DL malic acid and L(+) tartaric acid are the only acids that can be used;

b. The addition of acids should not be done to conceal fraud;

c. The addition of mineral acids is forbidden;

d. Chemical acidification and chemical de-acidification are mutually exclusive

e. The acids used must conform to the International Oenological Codex standards

OIV Recommendation:

Accepted on the condition that acidification levels are set up and approved by the General Assembly by 2001 at the latest.

STATEMENT OF THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COUNTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The Member States of the European Union had great difficulties to accept the resolution on acidification for the following reasons:

- at the time being the new acids are not used and not allowed for Community wine production and there still has been the feeling among us that these acids are not necessary for good wine making: even if now OIV will start to reflect on possible levels of acidification, there are other concerns, as for example the impact on wine market and the consumer perception of the product.

Nevertheless, in a spirit of compromise, taking into account the efforts made by other Member States of OIV with this regard, and in order to further strengthen the role of the OIV in the framework of international organizations, we accept the resolution as it stands.

STATEMENT OF THE ITALIAN DELEGATION

Italy would like to make a statement concerning its abstention from the voting on these draft resolutions with regard to the proposal of other countries from the European Union and the preliminary statement of the Finnish president stating a certain number of concerns shared by Italy.

Both projects have been examined by the O.I.V. but were also the object of a debate in

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Italy as this is a very important problem for our country.

Italy has stressed its preference not to see these draft resolutions presented before the General Assembly and that they be sent back, with no time limit, to the competent working groups for additional study which would allow to determine beforehand:

- the possible limits for acidification,
- the methods of controlling the presence and amount of acids which should be admitted,
- the economic impact of the use of different acids, especially in the field of appellation of origin.

We are of the opinion that synthetic acids do not correspond to the concept of wine as a natural product as well as to the consumers' expectations.

For these reasons, Italy cannot give a favourable opinion on these draft resolutions and therefore abstains from voting.

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