

Consumer Attitudes and Expectations about Organic Wine

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Abstract

Within the European Union–funded research project ORWINE (Organic Viticulture and Winemaking) a qualitative consumer study was carried out in 2006 in four case-study countries: Italy, France, Germany, and Switzerland. The aim of the study was to identify consumers' attitudes and expectations with regard to organic wine. In all case-study countries, organic wine has a positive image regarding grape production and wine processing. Furthermore, organic wine is perceived as being healthier compared to conventional wine. However, with regard to sensorial quality, organic wine still faces image problems, although the taste image has improved. Consumers organic wine to be healthy, pure, and naturally produced. A majority are skeptical about the use of sulphites and other additives and processing aids in organic wine processing.

If organic wine processing is regulated on the EU level, consumers will expect that these rules governing organic wine fit with their image and expectations about organic wine being a "natural" and healthy product, which retains as much as possible its original attributes and quality.

The survey has pointed out interesting elements to be considered for a common organic wine processing regulation on the EU level, especially regarding the use of sulphites.

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