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News



Prosecco in New Zealand?

In New Zealand, winemaker Steve Voysey is about to plant 160 hectares of Glara grapes, and two years later he will be legally allowed to call it Prosecco, according to a WTO ruling that recognized the right of New Zealand and Australia to do so. This does not mean that the world is going to be fair game for this kind of Prosecco. According to Luca Giavi, Director of the Consortium, "we have already signed agreements with the States, Canada, Russia and Europe, and we are ready for a fight". It is a dangerous precedent, but one that has not diminished the success of the Venetian sparkling so far, even in France, where in 2015 Prosecco grew more than Champagne.

First Page

Genetics, a key component for wine's future

Many experts, like Attilio Scienza, Professor of Viticulture at the University of Milan and one of the most renowned in the field, have long been advocating that genetic research is one of the key components for the future of both Italian and global winemaking. In the last few months, Professor Scienza has repeatedly told WineNews that "in order to create truly "organic" and quality wine" one must look towards researching new varieties with a higher resistance to diseases. Not resorting to GMOs, but through "the technique called genome editing, which comes from human medicine", Scienza explained, "through which, in layman's terms, one simply accelerates the natural selection process of new varieties with a higher tolerance to both diseases and climate change, not changing their organoleptic qualities, thus reducing the use of pesticides, with positive results for the environment, for the health of those working in the vineyards or living near them and for the economy of the producer as well". It is a crucial theme that will be tackled during a conference titled, "Towards a new alliance between genetics and grapes", which will take place in Susegana next March 4th. The conference was created by CREA, the Centre for Winemaking Research of Conegliano and Valdobbiadene, and will both illustrate studies in progress and showcase new research. Attilio Scienza will attend together with Vasco Boatto (University of Padua), Mario Pezzotti (Italian Society for Agrarian Genetics), Riccardo Cotarella (President of Assoenologi), Diego Tomasi and Salvatore Parlato (Director and Commissioner of CREA), Domenico Zonin (President of UIV-Unione Italiana Vini), Paolo De Castro (member of the European Commission of Agriculture and winemakers such as Angelo Gaja and Oscar Farinetti. Moreover, Italian Minister for Agriculture Maurizio Martina will also be there, and it should be noted that 21 million Euros have been officially set aside to be used for research projects for "the most important public research project ever in Italy on such a pressing and delicate matter - that is, genetic strengthening through sustainable biotechnologies" in agriculture.



"Gentleman" wines

The 2016 "Top 100" ranking of the Milano Finanza Gentlemen magazine is out, and Sassicaia 2012 Tenuta San Guido, I Sodi di San Niccolò 2011 Castellare di Castellina and Galatrona 2012 Fattoria Petrola are at the very top. The ranking collected data from Italy's most renowned wine guides (Gambero Rosso, Bibenda - FIS, L'Espresso, Veronelli, Doctor Wine - Daniele Cernilli, Luca Maroni and Vitae - AIS) and joined them with the results of Wine Spectator and The Wine Advocate. The top 10 also includes Oreno 2012 Tenuta Setteponti, Tignanello 2012 Antinori, Grattamacco 2012 Grattamacco, Guado al Tasso 2012 Guado al Tasso, Chianti Classico Gran Selezione Sergio Zingarelli 2011 Rocca delle Macie, Brunello di Montalcino 2010 Il Poggione and Barolo La Rosa 2011 Fontanafredda.

Focus

Wine "better than bonds", says CENSIS

According to data of the Italian investment bank, Mediobanca, from a research conducted by CENSIS and commissioned by Ornellaia, Italians would rather invest their savings in the wine & food industry (30.6%) than in tech firms (19%), multinational (9.8%) and traditional "Made in Italy" firms (29%). In the last 10 years, furthermore, Italian wine exports have gone up 23% in volume and 84.3% in value and between 2009 and 2014 investments in government bonds have gone down 17.2 billion Euros, while those in banking bonds have gone down 144.7 billion Euros. The data was presented last week at Sotheby's in Milan, together with the 2013 "Ornellaia Vendemmia d'Artista" project, with which every year the prestigious winemaker chooses an international artist to create the label of the new vintage. This year, Japanese artist Yutaka Sone authored the label of the 2013 vintage of Ornellaia (pictured right). And, one must add, it consistently outperforms both gold and the FTSE index, with volatility index 0.11 since 2007 and Sharpe index 0.49. Not to mention its spectacular performances at international auctions in London, New York and Hong Kong.



Report

More records for Brunello

Thanks to the success of the 2010 vintage, things are going great for Brunello di Montalcino, with turnover going up 10% year-over-year, to 187 million Euros. 70% of production goes abroad, of which a full 30% went to the States, followed by Europe (mainly UK, Germany and Switzerland) a further 20%, Asian markets 15% and Canada a further 12%. Production has also gone up: 14.6 million bottles were put on sale in 2015, an 11% growth over 2014, and 9.8 of those were Brunello (17% growth).



Wine & Food

New and old join hands for "Opera Wine" with 101 wines

The fifth edition of "Opera Wine", the grand tasting of some of Italy's best wines chosen by "Wine Spectator", which will open the 50th edition of Vinitaly next April 9th, will feature 101 wines. Famous "old-timers" will join less-known producers from some of the top Italian wine territories and for 8 of these it will be their debut, Tenuta Il Palagio, Sting's Tuscan winery (who is expected to attend), Ippolito 1845, Schola Sarmanti, Binomio, Castello d'Albola, Elvio Cogno, Bellenda and La Tunella, together with brands like Di Majo Norante, Bisol, Cusumano, Castello Banfi and Bertani.

For the record

22% of organic vineyards are Italian

According to data from AIAB, the Italian Association for Organic Agriculture, Italy holds no less than 22% of all organic vineyards in the world, with 72.300 hectares

managed by 10.000 firms and used by 1.300 winemakers. In the last 10 years, AIAB added, organic vineyards in Europe (83% of the total) have grown 249%.

