

Oregon Wine Advisory Board Research Progress Report

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Industry Wine Panel

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INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

A sensory panel, consisting of approximately 10 Oregon winemakers will be established to evaluate experimental wines. Their evaluations will allow us to draw conclusions regarding the sensory qualities of the wine from viticultural and enology research trials. The sensory properties of experimental wines will be described by free choice profiling, a technique where winemakers can use their own words to describe the sensory characteristics of the wines. No training is necessary and winemakers are not forced to adopt the same language. The data will be analyzed using sophisticated statistical techniques. The result is a mapping of all samples in relation to each other. Their place on the map is dictated by how they differ from other samples. It is a good technique to use when extensive training and language development is not possible.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Our plan is to meet at least twice during the year, once in the winter and once in the spring. The first panel will meet this March. Approximately 10 experienced winemakers will take part each time. Each winemaker will generate his or her own list of descriptors and use those descriptors to rate the wines under study. Because no training is required, the industry members will be able to use the descriptors they have used for years and for which they have a precise meaning.

The wines to be evaluated come from viticultural and enology experimental trials including the comparative yeast trials on Riesling, Pinot noir, and Chardonnay; wines produced from fruit with varying light exposure in the vineyard; Pinot noir wines made using fermentation variables which affect wine color and phenolics; and wines produced from the trellis trial experiments.