

# CONSUMERS

## **Cork Quality Council Announces Natural Cork Rated “Most Appropriate” Closure for All Occasions**

By  
Feb 5, 2007 - 4:16:48 PM

U.S. suppliers of natural cork received good news at the 2007 Unified Wine & Grape Symposium in Sacramento. Based on a recent survey of French, British, Australian and American consumers, conducted by a leading market research and sensory analysis firm, natural cork remains the closure of choice for U.S. consumers for all occasions.

The survey results were presented by Jane Robichaud, a well-known food and wine sensory expert and Vice President of Global Business for the Tragon Corporation of Redwood City, California. “We were interested in measuring the importance of variables that drive consumer purchasing decisions,” said Robichaud. “These included price, region, closure type, and varietals. The U.S. market is very different from the others. In the UK and Australia the acceptance of screwcaps and synthetics is greater, while in France and the U.S. natural cork is still the closure of choice. Although we have seen an increase in acceptance of both synthetic and screwcap closures, cork is still number one.

Another interesting survey result was the fact that while price was the first and most important factor for consumers purchasing wine under \$8.00 a bottle, the second most important factor was having a natural cork. For consumers purchasing wine above \$15.00 and on a frequent basis, natural cork was the single most important factor in their buying decision.

Tragon 's UK research also indicated that retailers like TESCO might be in part responsible for driving the acceptance of screwcaps in the UK, not the consumers. The Tragon survey pointed out that the consumer doesn 't necessarily understand the trend of switching from natural cork to screwcaps. It 's often not linked to a problem with natural cork; it 's perceived as a matter of price.

Billed as the largest wine and grape trade show in the nation, the Unified Wine & Grape Symposium draws attendees from around the world to hear industry experts share their views on winemaking, grape growing, finance and business, public relations, and market trends.