

T.W. Boswell grain recognition technology

Tonnellerie Radoux OakScan



PRODUCT FOCUS

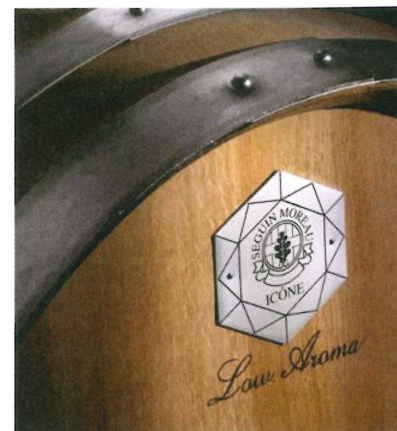
Barrel Stave Analysis

A few coopers are using specialized equipment to ensure barrel staves meet certain parameters for quality and consistency.

By Andrew Adams



Vicard Generation 7 barrel by Esprit de Dryades



Seguin Moreau Icone barrel

ESPRIT DE DRYADES

The Vicard Generation 7 barrel by Esprit de Dryades, which was founded by Jean Charles Vicard, was introduced to the North American market in 2013. The manufacturer scans barrel staves for their tannin content and then sorts based on low, medium or high levels of tannin. The cooper then assembles barrels with staves that have the same amount of tannin or with a blend of staves of varying tannin levels. The staves are then toasted using a computer-controlled process that applies an even level of heat to add another level of consistency. vicardg7.fr

TONNELLERIE RADOUX

Tonnellerie Radoux's OakScan system was the market's first stave-scanning technique. It was introduced in 2009 and incorporated into the cooper's full production process in 2012. The system scans each stave as it enters the production chain and uses a proprietary algorithm to assign each piece of wood a tannin rating of 0 to 100. Staves are then sorted into three separate "selections" based on tannin level. Radoux is now using the system to sort high-tannin wood chips for fermentation and lower tannin wood for wine aging chips, as well as to sort its oak alternative staves by tannin level. tonnellerieradoux.com

T.W. BOSWELL

T.W. Boswell uses "grain recognition technology" to calculate the exact number of rings per inch, which equates to the grain tightness. The machine can be set to certain parameters and will reject any staves that don't meet them. The process enables the cooper to ensure it is only making barrels with fine-grain staves that provide more desirable compounds and play a major role in the rate of oxygenation. The scanning helps ensure each barrel is produced with the maximum potential grain, and the grain parameters also provide consistency. twboswell.com

SEGUIN MOREAU

For its premium Icone barrels, Seguin Moreau doesn't use a scanning system but rather applies representative sampling for chemical analysis through gas and liquid chromatography. The cooper says this system provides data for the full "enological characterization of wood," which it claims is more detailed and accurate than scanning. seguinmoreaunapa.com