



Chairman's Report

2021

CBA Annual General Meeting: 12 November 2021 Chairman's Report



The Chenin Blanc Association is celebrating 21 years of promoting the variety and raising the image of Chenin blanc!

Despite ongoing lockdowns and sales restrictions, we have survived, forged ahead and even had the opportunity to execute a few physical events.

I have highlighted below only a few of the many events and accolades this past year.

Chenin Picnic in the Winelands

The Chenin in the Winelands picnic was hosted on the beautiful lawns of Spier wine estate on Saturday 10 April. We could not wait to bring some fun and energy back to the Winelands. The well-spaced outdoor tasting area was ideal for keeping distance and allowed the guests to safely taste over 60 Chenins and Chenin-based blends without any crowding. We had such a great response from our members and the available space was booked within 48 hours.

Karoo Stoep Tasting in Graaff-Reinet 27-29 May 2021

For the 2nd time, we attended the Karoo Stoep Tasting in Graaff-Reinet where we showcased the 2020 Top 10 Challenge winners. Again, it was a very successful event with some producers also showcasing their wines in Nieu Bethesda. We will again attend the event in 2022, taking place 26-28 May.

#DrinkChenin Day 18 June 2021

It's official. #DrinkChenin Day 2021 was by far the most delicious one yet! It seems that there wasn't a corner of the globe where South African Chenin wasn't opened and celebrated, and so many took our theme to heart and paired theirs with sensational sushi. International Sushi Day was also celebrated on June 18th.

#DrinkChenin was trending in South Africa on Twitter throughout the day (with one 5,1 million impressions). There was an incredible number of posts highlighting Chenin's home and importance in South Africa. We hosted 3 events on 18th June at the Ken Forrester Tasting Room, with one of the events co-hosted by Dan Nicholl and streamed live. Many thanks to WOSA Japan for the 2 videoclips of Taku Iguro, best sommelier in Japan (2020).

Wines of South Africa (WoSA) was always, also actively supporting the campaign by facilitating special Chenin tastings and activities.

The #DrinkChenin Day for 2022 is Friday, 17 June.

The Annual Standard Bank Chenin Blanc Top 10 Challenge

138 entries were received this year. (136 in 2020). Luckily all entries were delivered despite the restriction on deliveries. For the first time, we included some highly rated non-entrants as blind benchmarks as added calibration, further enhancing the rigour of the competition.

What stands out is the incredible quality of SA Chenin Blanc. We are the benchmark for this variety on the global stage and as such we see greater competition, leading to greater innovation with each new release! This is evident in the winemaker's exploration of new regions, the use of skin contact, natural fermentation and a myriad of fermentation and maturation vessels.

The winner wines in alphabetical order:

- Bellingham Bernard Series Old Vine Chenin Blanc Limited Release 2020
- DeMorgenzon Reserve Chenin Blanc 2020

- Donkiesbaai Steen 2020
- Ken Forrester Terre Noire Chenin Blanc 2020
- Kleine Zalze Wines Vineyard Selection Chenin Blanc 2020
- Kleine Zalze Wines Family Reserve Chenin Blanc 2020
- Le Belle Rebelle Solitude Chenin Blanc 2020
- Lievland Vineyards Old Vine Chenin Blanc 2020
- Simonsig Wines Avec Chêne Wooded Chenin Blanc 2019
- Stellenrust Old Bushvine Chenin Blanc 2020

The only wine to feature in the Top 10 seven years in a row:
DeMorgenzon Reserve Chenin Blanc (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021)

Eight appearances in the Top 10 Challenge:
Stellenrust (2014, 2015, 2 x 2017, 2018, 2019, 2 x 2020, 2021)

Seven appearances in the Top 10 Challenge:
Spier (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020)
Kleine Zalze (2014, 2 x 2016, 2 x 2019, 2 x 2021)

The announcement of Top10 winners was again made by Dan Nicoll on his Dan Really likes Wine show. Dan has subsequently also chatted to the winning producers on two subsequent shows.

Standard Bank awarded a cash prize of R25 000 for each of the winning wines, to be spent by producers on projects that reinforce economic and social benefits in the workplace. To date, a total of R1.85m has been utilised for these projects.

Again a dedicated Marketing & PR campaign around the 2021 Chenin Challenge is in place as there will be no physical handover events. A series of videos with Ken Forrester and Penny Setti, one of the judges, was also filmed and will be released in the next few weeks on social media.

North American Tasting Tour (15 September 2021)

WoSA USA and WoSA Canada together presented a day-long event consisting of three virtual tasting seminars. These were developed in coordination with three industry groups: The Cap Classique Producers Association, the CBA, and the Stellenbosch Cabernet Collective. Each had an hour-long and in a different format and each seminar will include 6 wines, which has been on the variety of expression and availability in the US/Canada.

The Chenin tasting was co-presented by Ken, Adi and Lauren Buzzeo. (Managing Editor: Wine Enthusiast). In the U.S. participants from eight different cities took part. In the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles, attendees received sample-size tastings and Houston local sommelier groups hosted tastings together. In Boston, New York, and Washington, D.C., WoSA is hosting tastings at local venues. WoSA Canada hosted attendees in Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver.

Summer of Chenin Campaign (October – December)

Chenin Blanc will be under the spotlight with a nationwide campaign running from October 2021 to December 2021. The aim is to spread awareness by bringing restaurants to share their love for Chenin with their customers and promote and offer chenin by the glass. The campaign will be extended to the trade next year.

More information: <http://www.chenin.co.za/soc.html>

Research projects

1. SA/France Clone project

A reliable genetic test to identify Chenin blanc clones could play an important part to protect and enhance the future value of grapes and grape products of our Chenin blanc vineyards. Such a reliable genetic test that can assist in identifying and discriminating 'clones' in a standardised fashion could be used to guide future decision-making in the planting and growing of Chenin blanc grapes. The accuracy of such a standardised test should inform better predictability of the nature of clones planted and expected vineyard outcomes in a variety of environmental contexts.

In July 2021 the French research team completed the genetic analysis of the Reference Clone 220 and assembly of data will commence as soon as data cleaning and preparation is completed. The next phase entails the mapping of clones from France and SA against the reference clone to introduce a genetic perspective on Chenin blanc Intra varietal diversity.

Prof. Johan Burger of the SU will present short feedback & updates at the AGM.

2. Translation of SA Chenin Aroma Wheel (Winetech funded)

With 11 official languages, South Africa has very diverse consumer market segments also reflected in the profiles of our educators, learners and sommeliers. With the aroma wheel currently available in English only, it is possible that the essence of the sensory attributes can get lost due to semantic differences or purely lack of recognition This project is funded by Winetech) and will focus on the translation of the aroma wheel into three proposed languages, namely Xhosa, Zulu and Shona.

Three workshops will be held later in November. The groups are not only sommeliers but also include winemakers, people in the wine trade from the Pinotage Youth Development Academy. Dr. Helene Nieuwoudt and Dr. Jeanne Brand of the US are also involved, together with Nolene Nel as Project Manager.

It is ground-breaking work and a new field for the CBA. The project needs to be concluded by Feb 2022.

The Accolades

We are waiting in anticipation for the Platter 2022 results, in the 2021 guide there were 33 #CheninBlanc five-star winners, by far the biggest category. In the Tim Atkin SA report of 2021 chenin was the standout grape (again) with 31 Chenins scoring 95 points or more. He also comments: 'The best South African Chenin Blancs are world-class'.

The following are the 10 most highly rated South African Chenin wines over the past 10 years: (<https://topwinesa.com/top-sa-wines-and-cellars/sa-wine-classification/#CheninBlanc>)

Beaumont Hope Marguerite
Botanica Chenin Blanc
DeMorgenzon Reserve Chenin Blanc
Ken Forrester FMC
Kleine Zalze Family Reserve Old Bush Vine Chenin Blanc
Kleine Zalze Vineyard Selection Chenin Blanc
Perdeberg Dry Land Barrel Fermented Chenin Blanc
Sadie Skurfberg
Spier 21 Gables Chenin Blanc
Stellenrust Barrel Fermented Chenin Blanc

Social Media and other media coverage from across the globe

In the June edition of Decanter, an article by Christian Eedes was published on SA Old Vine Chenin and Jancis published a lengthy #chenin article on 15 May on her blog called "A transhemispherical marvel".

Social Media: current followers:

- Facebook: 5061
- Twitter: 6611
- Instagram: 4081

Events/projects 2022

Cape Wine 2022 (5-7 October 2022)

The Standard Bank Chenin Blanc Top 10 Challenge winners of 2022 will be showcased at Cape Wine. The theme is "Sustainability" which ties in with how Top10 prize money is utilised.

Second International Chenin Congress (November 2022)

The initial date proposed for the second conference was July 2021. However, the COVID-19 challenges impacted the planned physical congress. We have had several discussions with our French colleagues and our EXCO and the new date is now set for **1 to 3 November 2022**.

Finances/Membership

We now have 142 members. We propose an increase of membership dues from R1500 to R1750. There has not been an increase in the past 5 years and the additional income is to be allocated for day-to-day operations and campaigns like #DrinkChenin and #SummerofChenin.

Support Partners

WOSA, as always, has been a wonderful supporter of the CBA. In the past year/two we have been liaising more with the Old Vine Project as 54% of all old vines are chenin.

Thanks also to all the members of the Working Committee, manager Ina Smith and Christina Harvett, who manage our finances and assist with many of the events/campaigns. Thanks also to Nolene Nel, to Tessa de Kock (Tessa de Kock PR), and August Collective, who assisted with the news releases and PR Campaign.

2022 will be a busy year for us and includes major events such as Cape Wine and the 2nd International Chenin Congress.

Kind regards,

Ken

Ken Forrester Vineyards: 9 November 2021