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Constellation backs STS200 in USA

The STS 200 High Performance Solids Management system eliminates the need for racking of juices and wines and the consequent product losses and quality or value downgrades.

According to Ashley Whittington of Australian distributor, Separator Technology Solutions, the system relies on the STS200, a disk-type centrifuge with the capability to both:

- process entire tanks of juice & wine, including the lees
- eject the solids at such a thickness (eg. 95% v/v) that no further product recovery is necessary (eg. via lees filter or RDV filter).

A major USA wine group, Constellation Wines US, has successfully validated financial paybacks of less than one year for the STS200 system at their large super-premium winery Blackstone, in Monterey, California.

Hugh Reimers of Blackstone Winery and his winemaking team confirm the winemaking and cellar operations have benefited through integrating the STS 200 technology. He said there had been "significant performance uplift delivered by STS, when compared with the existing fleet of competitor centrifuges.

Whittington said the three principal sources of financial paybacks for the STS200 are:

- reducing juice and wine losses, associated with racking or de-sludge from older or under-performing centrifuges. This occurs in two parts:
  - where lees are sent to distillation
  - by reduced number of lees transfers, each of which lead to dilution or yield losses
- reduced juice and wine quality/value downgrades
  - this is where existing lees handling processes lead to loss of quality and value, by loss of freshness and oxidation, loss of varietal or regional integrity and character, or finally anoxic/reductive taints from prolonged exposure to high concentrations of yeasts and bacteria in the lees
- eliminating DE filtration, principally the lees filter and (RDV) Rotary Drum Vacuum filter.

Whittington also said there were modest savings through reduced DE consumption,

Thick sludge emerges from the STS200 High Performance Solids Management system

but the reduction of DE usage had OHS and environmental benefits.

"A key advantage of the STS 200 system over older centrifuges is very low oxygen pick-up, as low as 0.02 mg of oxygen per litre of wine. This means the same wine can be centrifuged multiple times during its maturation cycle,"he said.

The STS 200 system has been developed to handle a broad range of winery products, to ensure clients maximise the financial benefits of the technology. Key applications include clarification of:

- whole white juice
- cold-settled juice lees
- white wine ex-primary ferment (including yeast lees)
- white wine ex-bentonite (including bentonite lees)
- bentonite lees
- red wine ex-primary ferment (including gross lees)
- gross red lees
- red wine ex-malolactic ferment
- wines ex-cold stabilisation
- coarse polishing (prior to crossflow).

The STS 200 system is supplied by Separator Technology Solutions, based in Australia. The company has offices in California, USA and Stellenbosch, South Africa.

For further information contact Ashley Whittington (+61 3 9016 4330) or visit www.sts200.com