

Nepenthe Viticulture has announced that it will be adding a Pellenc multifunction harvester equipped with the exclusive Selectiv' Process system to its fleet for Vintage 2010.

Pellenc's Selectiv' Process On-Board system comprises a revolutionary in-line de-stemmer and an on-board sorting table – together, these elements produce a sample in the bin which was previously not thought possible from a mechanical harvester.

The high-frequency de-stemmer is extremely gentle on bunches, as evidenced by the intact bunch stems which emerge from the machine. The de-stemmer resembles a mini-shaking system, which operates at up to 1100 movements per minute, effectively resonating berries from the stem. An open-grid belt allows juice and fruit de-stemmed during harvesting to move straight onto the sorting table, meaning only whole bunches go through the de-stemmer, avoiding unnecessary processes on fruit and protecting berry quality.

De-stemmed fruit and loose berries move onto the on-board sorting table, which comprises two sets of rollers. The first set of rollers orients the petioles and other MOG so that it is at right-angles to the edge of the machine, to ensure petioles can be successfully eliminated. The second set of rollers allows berries to fall through into the on-board bins and carries the petioles and other MOG off the side of the machine and onto the vineyard floor.

Nepenthe Regional Manager, Mark Vella, who viewed the Selectiv' Process in France during the recent vintage in Europe, said that the company was keen to be amongst the first in Australia to take advantage of this exciting new technology, which offers a new level of harvest quality.

“Having seen the results delivered by Selectiv' Process first hand, I was convinced that this was something we needed in our fleet,” Vella said. “The Selectiv' Process offers a range of benefits which are of significant value to Nepenthe and to our contract customers.”

“The fact that the Selectiv' Process On-Board eliminates green matter from the load and is extremely gentle on fruit means that the quality of machine-harvested fruit is greatly improved. In particular, red varieties will benefit from the elimination of leafy, green sappy characters that the green material (petioles, rachis and leaves) can add in a harvested sample,” said Vella.

“We are so confident in the improvement in quality, particularly in red varieties, that we plan to machine pick fruit which we have previously had to hand-pick, which results in savings of around \$250 - \$315 per tonne.”

In addition to using the Selectiv' Process to improve quality and efficiency in its own business, Nepenthe Contract Services Manager Dan Polson is very excited to be able to offer the latest to contract customers. “As market leaders in the contracting business, it is vital that we keep up with the latest technology,” said Dan. “We want to offer our customers the best service possible and we are delighted to be the first contracting company in Australia to take up this exceptional technology from Pellenc.”

And the savings don't end in the vineyard. Nepenthe Wines Winemaker Andre Bondar is looking forward to receiving grape samples free from petioles and leaves, which in whites can lead to winery downtime due to blocked must pumps and in reds can compromise wine quality if present in ferments. “We believe that this technology has the potential to significantly

increase the quality of our normally hand picked super premium whites as it is delivering MOG free fruit at night when the grapes are at their coolest. This will decrease phenolic pick up and maintain fruit intensity. I am excited about the potential of increasing our quality even further," he said.

In addition the fact that fruit arrives at the winery de-stemmed and ready for processing results in significant savings in the winery as well. Further, wineries do not have to dispose of unwanted matter, as this is left in the vineyard where it belongs. There are potential savings (both in dollar and in the company's carbon footprint) achieved by not transporting green waste to and from the winery that can be significant.

For further information or to organise for your vineyard to be picked with Pellenc's Selectiv' Process On-Board, contact Daniel Polson on [dpolson@nepenthe.com.au](mailto:dpolson@nepenthe.com.au) or 0401 709 891 or Mark Vella on 0421 351 401 or [mvella@nepenthe.com.au](mailto:mvella@nepenthe.com.au); or Louise Fraser at Pellenc Australia on (08) 8244 7700 or [lfraser@pellenc.com.au](mailto:lfraser@pellenc.com.au).