

Prepared by: Wine Packagers of Australia

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This WPA Guideline contains information for the manufacture of natural cork and cork style closures, and information on their supply to third party contract packagers.

Where bottling customers are supplying their own natural cork or cork style closures they should contact their contract packager to discuss whether this Guideline is sufficient for them or whether they have their own Specifications.

1. Guidance

All queries regarding this information should be discussed with the bottling customer's contract packager.

2. Responsibility

Customers must ensure that corks provided to contract packagers are manufactured with reference to the information contained in this Guideline.

⚠ The cork diameter must suit the neck of the wine bottle to be used and cork length must allow for legal wine fill volume and recommended vacuity (see WPA_C01_49mm Cork Use for further information).

We recommend that customers check and approve their cork artwork/or branded cork samples at their supplier's premises or receive samples for approval prior to delivery to their contract packagers.

3. Requirements

All natural corks, agglomerate and technical corks, cork stoppers, sparkling corks and synthetic cork style closures should comply with International Standard ISO 9727 series of standards and must be free from harmful microbial growth and residues that would affect the colour, odour, taste, or related characteristics of the bottle content.

In general, contract packagers do not recommend the use of colmated cork.

Corks and closures must comply with WPA_012_Food Safety Declarations for Food Contact Dry Goods. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Surface coatings or treatments
- Inks used for printing
- Products used for agglomeration and disc adhesion

4. Criteria and Tolerances

Criteria	Tolerances
Extraction	Still Wine Corks - The quality and coverage of the surface coating for natural and technical still wine corks must allow extraction with independent extraction force values between 180 and 400N (Newton) with a recommended average between 200 and 350N.
	Sparkling Wine Corks - The extraction with independent extraction force values must be between 180 and 350N with a rotation between 90 degrees and 900 degrees.
Surface Coating	Adhesion of the surface coating to the cork shall be sufficient to prevent coating material flaking from the cork during bottling. No oily residue shall be present on the wine after using the treated closure. It should also ensure total impermeability with no signs of capillaries either along or through the cork. Any coating must perform adequately at temperatures between -10°C and 70°C.
Contamination	To reduce the risk of contamination, no open or incorrectly sealed bags, dirty bags (inside) or punctured bags are accepted.
Use By Date	All Cork shall have the use by date clearly marked on each bag and carton outer. Contract packagers do not recommend using out of date cork without testing and retreatment by the cork supplier.
Batch Numbers	As cork is a wine contact dry good, all bags supplied must have a batch number (or means of identifying specifically treated lots) on each bag and the carton outer. This must be noted in English.

5. Packing and Delivery

Detailed information on the packing and delivery of dry goods is contained in WPA_09 Dry Good Packaging and Delivery Requirements.

6. Recycled Material and Packaging

Each contract packager has sustainability objectives. Where practical, dry goods are made using recyclable or recycled materials, packed using recyclable materials and all packaging materials minimised.

7. References

Winemakers Federation of Australia – Wine Packaging Guidelines November 2012
www.wfa.com.au