Benicia, CA (Newsworthy.ai) Monday Jul 1, 2024 @ 7:00 AM US/Pacific —

Cork Supply, a leading provider of high-quality corks and closures for the wine industry, proudly announces the successful conclusion of its Cork Harvesting events held at California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly) and the University of California, Davis (UC Davis). These educational events were designed to deliver next-generation cork education to students, fostering a deeper understanding of sustainable practices and the importance of cork in the wine industry.

“We have an obligation to educate the next generation of winemakers and wine consumers about the amazing properties of natural cork,” said Peter Hladun, CEO of Cork Supply in North America. “Having the opportunity to host these cork harvesting events at esteemed wine education universities is a perfect fit to bring the two together. Natural cork is the most sustainable product a winemaker can choose to close their wine with, and it has a direct impact on helping our environment. We are grateful to Cal Poly and UC Davis for allowing us to host these events and harvest their beautiful cork trees!”

The events, which took place on May 28th at Cal Poly and May 30th at UC Davis, saw enthusiastic participation from students, faculty, and industry professionals. Attendees were given a hands-on experience in cork harvesting, learning about the intricate processes involved in producing this vital component for wine and spirits closures.

“What a thrill it is to be able to host such a rare and insightful event,” said Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong. “This unique Learn by Doing opportunity for Cal Poly students, faculty, and others is invaluable. Our thanks to Matt Ritter, Cork Supply, and everyone else who took part.”

“Being able to see a cork harvest in person is such a terrific and unique experience for our students! Packaging, including cork, is a critical part of our curriculum and what our students will do when they enter the industry,” said David E. Block, Ph.D., Professor of Viticulture and Enology. “Normally, students would need to travel to Portugal to see this in person. We are very appreciative that Cork Supply was willing to bring their artisans to Davis for our students and our larger community.”

Highlights of the Cork Harvesting Events:

- **Hands-On Harvesting Experience**: Students and attendees witnessed the cork harvesting process, gaining practical knowledge about the sustainable harvesting techniques used to ensure the health and longevity of cork oak trees.

- **Fascinating Cork Harvest Facts**: Participants learned fascinating facts about cork harvesting.

1. Corkwood is gently harvested from the trees every nine years. The trees are not damaged in the process.

2. Cork trees can live for approximately 200 years and can be harvested multiple times during their lifespan.

3. Cork harvesting is predominantly done by hand from June through August.

4. A cork tree will produce cork used for wine stoppers starting with its third harvest.

5. Cork Harvesters work in pairs and their job is one of the highest-paying agricultural jobs in the world.

Cork Supply Scholarship Program

Following the success of these events, Cork Supply plans to continue its educational initiatives, furthering its mission to promote sustainable practices and support the next generation of wine industry professionals.

The Cork Supply Scholarship program is the next step in this initiative. The program, aimed at supporting students pursuing careers in the wine industry, will send 10 students from seven different countries to Portugal. “This year we launched the Cork Supply Scholarship, a program to bring students from viticulture and enology programs around the world to Portugal for a week to see the cork harvest, learn about cork production, and network with students in similar programs,” said Greg Hirson, Global Director of Innovation for Cork Supply. “The program complements the cork bark harvest events that we organized this year with Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and UC Davis; both evince our deep commitment to building knowledge, awareness, and appreciation for cork.” The first Cork Supply Scholarship winners traveled to Portugal in late June.

About Harv 81 Group (previously The Cork Supply Group)

Experts in closures, oak and labels, Harv 81 Group is the starting point of a culture of expertise within the winemaking industry. With a deep commitment to quality, the Harv 81 Group supports customers through several entities that collectively provide consistent and reliable solutions to leading global wine and spirits producers: Cork Supply, Tonnellerie Ô,

and Studio Labels. harv81.com

About Cork Supply

Cork Supply specializes in natural and technical closures for still and sparkling wines through its innovation, technology, global infrastructure and team. A technological and innovative specialist in natural and technical closures, it has 40+ years of experience and was the first to launch a natural closure free from detectable TCA and with an individual guarantee. With four production units in Portugal and five in key wine markets (USA, Australia, South Africa, Argentina, and China), Cork Supply produces cork closures in Portugal before distributing them to the global markets.

Cork Supply's operations in North America are based in Benicia, CA in the heart of the North Coast winegrowing region. Cork Supply's California cork harvest initiatives and student scholarships align with the company's Harvesting for the Future strategy, an overarching approach to better business that includes GHG emissions reduction, efficient use of raw materials, and the incorporation of cork manufacturing by-products into innovative new products.

With continuous learning and R&D key priorities, together with social responsibility and sustainability, Cork Supply continues to demonstrate its promise: trusted from forest to bottle. corksupply.com/us