

WINES & VINES

DNA Markers to Foil Counterfeiters

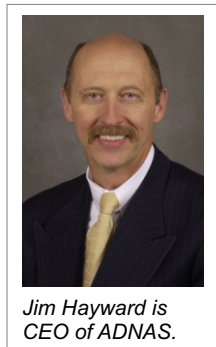
Long Island's Paumanok partners with Applied DNA Sciences for premium wine protection

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by Hudson Cattell

Aquebogue, N.Y. -- With counterfeiting an increasing concern for premium wine producers, Paumanok Vineyards in Aquebogue is partnering with Applied DNA Sciences of Stony Brook, N.Y., to guarantee the authenticity of its wines. Applied DNA Sciences will use one of the unique complex codes embedded in plant DNA to mark the labels of three premium wines in such a way that they cannot be removed or copied. These markers will be added to the ink when the labels are printed, and they can be checked for authenticity at any stage along the shipping pipeline.

Charles Massoud, president of Paumanok Vineyards, was becoming increasingly concerned about counterfeiting in the wine industry after reading reports in the press. When he attended a meeting for business innovations hosted by Stony Brook University on Long Island, and met representatives of Applied DNA Sciences, he thought that at some point he could use DNA technology to protect his customers by guaranteeing the authenticity of his premium wines.



According to Jim Hayward, CEO of ADNAS, DNA ensures authenticity and is a means of detecting fraud. Two basic kinds of services are available; one called SigNature DNA is used to mark products, and BioMaterial Genotyping detects genomic DNA in natural materials to authenticate finished products ranging from cotton to wine.

SigNature forensic DNA markers can be added to printing inks, paper or other packaging elements as part of the existing manufacturing process. Paumanok's premium wines retail for as much as \$60 per 750ml bottle. Although an ADNAS spokesperson could not specify pricing, since each project is a custom job, the DNA labels will add as little as a few cents to the cost of each individual package.

"We work with each client to tailor an authentication program," the company states. The DNA marks are not limited to labels, they also can be applied directly to bottles or corks. According to the company's website, they incorporate environmentally friendly, "green" technology based on botanical DNA, and cannot be copied, viewed under a microscope or re-engineered. The company recommends regular audits and authentication of products throughout the logistic and supply chain.

The first three Paumanok wines to bear the new labels will be the 2008 Late Harvest Riesling, the 2007 Merlot Tuthills Lane Vineyard and the 2007 Petit Verdot Apollo Drive Vineyard Limited Edition. Massoud plans to advise customers on the Paumanok website, in the tasting room and in the media that when they buy these wines, they will be buying trusted and distinctive products.

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