

Filterable 100% Long-chain Arabic Gum Protects Color While Enhancing Wine's Roundness and Softness

Color is one of the consumer's primary considerations when tasting wine, especially red wine. Whether a beginner or a wine connoisseur, consumers consciously or unconsciously pick up on color cues when tasting and buying wines. Where the hue sits in the red-violet-blue range can reflect the wine's acidity, the degree of opacity can indicate tannin level, and color intensity can suggest age.



A pet peeve for many winemakers is seeing the color they spent so much time and money creating disappear as the wine ages.

Producing an appealing and true-to-type color begins in the vineyard, where the varietal, soil, temperature, canopy, and other factors work together to yield the wine's color. Climate change has added unpredictability to the mix, disrupting tried and true vineyard management techniques. After harvest, winemakers begin extracting color at crush, where temperature, use of whole-cluster fermentation or cold-soaking, and added compounds all impact the color that goes into the bottle—and the color that comes out years down the road.

Leo Facini, technical expert, and General Manager at **JUCLAS USA**, VASONGROUP's direct subsidiary for the United States, believes winemakers should expend the same effort on saving that color. "If you swirl the wine, you'll notice color in the glass itself – that's unstable color the winemaker could have saved. The same is true when washing a tank, and the color comes out purple, or the tartrates turn red after cold stabilization because of the color drag during the formation of the crystals."



Performance reliability is of crucial importance, such as color stability: in the image ICON Gum (tube 3) is compared to the control sample (tube 1) and to a levorotatory (long-chain) competitor gum arabic available in the market (tube 2)

Arabic gum is one of the critical tools winemakers use to stabilize and retain color and reduce tannin astringency for a more pleasing round and smooth mouthfeel. Two species of Sub-Saharan African trees produce gum naturally, harvested by tapping the trunk—Acacia senegal, which yields long-chain gum, and Acacia seyal, which results in short-chain gum.

“Many people don’t realize how different long-chain and short-chain arabic gums are,” notes Facini. “They just think, ‘I have arabic gum, and it will give me extra sweetness and roundness.’ Sometimes I’ll swirl the wine in the glass and ask them, ‘what about all this color you’re leaving in the glass after all the time, effort, and money you spent extracting it from the grapes? Wouldn’t it be worth keeping that chain of effort to bring the color to the customer?’”

Long-chain gum is much more effective at stabilizing color in the wine, while short-chain gum moves better through the final microfiltration. Most gums on the market blend the two species, using only a modest proportion of long-chain while relying on the short-chain variety to move through the final microfiltration stage.



Enologica Vason, the ingredients division of the VASONGROUP, decided to change that equation and developed a new, patented, 100% long-chain arabic gum that is filterable.

“We implemented quality control of the gum from the raw material in Africa throughout factory production,” says Gianmaria Zanella, who is responsible for the laboratory, R&D, and QC at Enologica Vason. “Then, we developed and patented Smart Filtration, the process that makes the gum stable, high-performing, and filterable.”

The result is Icon Gum, which allows winemakers to preserve color stability without reducing the wine brightness and increasing its turbidity, as can happen with other gums on the market.

“We started five years ago and released it in Europe for the first time in 2019 after ensuring its performance and filterability,” Zanella adds. “Then we worked with our JUCLAS R&D team in the US to collect feedback from long-term customers since the grape matrix and soil are different than in Europe. They loved it and found that Icon Gum requires a 50-60% lower dosage than other gums on the market.”



Solubilized product before and after the SMART FILTRATION stage. The product is now filtered and stabilized, ready for packaging.

“Our technological process delivers a product that is all long-chain gum,” Facini notes. “There is a huge gap between Icon Gum and most available gums, which

mix short-chain and long-chain. It is a handy tool for winemakers to have in their toolbox.”

Icon Gum’s filterable 100% long-chain arabic gum gives winemakers more effective protection against the precipitation of coloring compounds while enhancing the sensations of roundness and softness on the palate.

To learn more, [contact your local technical expert](#) and read up on more [additional product info](#).

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