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AMORIM LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE NATURAL CORK

The world's leading cork producer, Amorim, has today launched the second phase of a campaign in Australia to promote the environmental qualities of cork oak forests and natural cork products.

Rolled-out with a teaser promotion under the banner "Save Miguel" the campaign has now entered an educational phase designed to inform consumers of the social, environmental and economic benefits of using cork.

The educational elements of the campaign include a website and on-line video featuring Hollywood actor Rob Schneider that can be viewed at www.savemiguel.com

Amorim Australasia general manager Kym Wilsdon said it was important that consumers had a clear understanding of the environmental benefits of purchasing wine with natural cork closures.

"Natural cork is the only wine closure that is truly environmentally friendly — renewable, recyclable and biodegradable, it also plays an important role in carbon dioxide retention," he said.

Mr Wilsdon said the Australian wine industry was now placing greater emphasis on environmental sustainability and this was an area where natural cork could play an important supportive role.

"Amorim is the natural CO₂-retention partner for the Australian wine industry in its growing efforts to make the industry more environmentally friendly and sustainable," he said.

Environmentalists argue that a decline in cork manufacturing — which could result from an increase in the use of alternative wine closures — would jeopardise the future of cork forests and lead to a loss of habitat and increased emissions of CO₂.

It is estimated that the cork oak forests of the Mediterranean basin help offset a massive 10 million tonnes of CO₂ every year, making them a significant carbon sink.

“Many people think cork oak trees are cut down to produce cork, but this is not the case and that is one myth we are keen to dispel,” said Mr Wilsdon.

“Rather, the bark of the tree is harvested once every nine years and the average lifespan of a cork oak is 170 years.”

The forests also support a great natural biodiversity and prevent soil degradation across large areas of Portugal, Italy, Spain and North Africa.

The production of cork wine stoppers creates thousands of jobs and it has been estimated that more than 100,000 people in the Mediterranean depend directly and indirectly on the cork industry.

Last month Corticeira Amorim released its second Sustainability Report that outlined the company’s policies and practices in sustainable manufacturing and the environmental benefits of using natural cork stoppers over alternatives.

It follows the company’s award-winning 2006 report that highlighted the crucial role of cork forests in carbon dioxide retention, preserving biodiversity and combating desertification as well as the role of cork manufacturing in sustainable development.

One of the key ingredients of Amorim’s sustainability program is a commitment to forest preservation, biodiversity and land stewardship.

A full copy of the 2007 Corticeira Amorim Sustainability Report is available at www.corticeiraamorim.com/en

More information on the “Save Miguel” campaign can be found at www.savemiguel.com

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CORTICEIRA AMORIM, SGPS, S.A.

Tracing its roots to the 19th century, Corticeira Amorim has become the largest cork and cork-derived company in the world, generating over Euro 450 million in sales through more than 100 countries. Corticeira Amorim and its subsidiaries are an integral part of a conservationist effort to guarantee the survival of hundreds of thousands of cork oak trees throughout the Mediterranean basin. We are proud of our contribution to the correct utilisation of these important forests that represent a key role in CO₂ retention, preserving biodiversity and preventing desertification. We encourage you to learn more by visiting informative websites such as www.corkfacts.com or www.realcork.org