BevZero leads non-alcoholic wine boom in South Africa

The BevZero Paarl team with their de-alcoholisation equipment in the background.

By Diane Silcock

THE no/low alcohol market globally is on an upward trajectory with volumes forecast to expand at a CAGR of +4% between 2024 and 2028, with no-alcohol driving this with a +7% volume CAGR. This is according to IWSR's No/Low Alcohol Strategic Study, which also states that 'the no-alcohol category alone is expected to deliver incremental growth of US$4bn+ by 2028'.

It's not surprising, therefore, that BevZero, a Paarl-based operation specialising in de-alcoholisation and alcohol reduction, is experiencing a greater demand for their services.

With over 30 years of experience globally, BevZero employs advanced vacuum distillation technologies and processes that remove alcohol from beverages gently and efficiently. This approach preserves the essence of the original product, ensuring that non-alcoholic versions retain their intended flavour profiles. The company, based in California, with offices in South Africa and Spain, pioneered the use of Very Low Temperature Distillation (VLTD) as a tool for winemakers.

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Gustav Fouché, MD of BevZero South Africa, says, "In South Africa, globally we are rated as one of the top producers of non-alcohol and de-alcoholised wines because of the excellent wine selection available to us, as well as our choice of wine as the base product. We choose more high-end wines, compared to other global wine regions, for instance, so our starting product is high end, and this results in a better final product. Our aim is to mimic an existing wine thereby giving our customers a non-alcoholic or de-alcoholised counterpart as well."

Focusing on wine and cider, BevZero South Africa serves winemakers, distillers and non-alcoholic beverage producers in this fast-growing sector. Their expertise ranges from de-alcoholisation (down to below 0.5% alcohol by volume (ABV) to below 0.05% ABV), to alcohol reduction, cross flow filtration, flavour management, and product development.

The latest research by YouGov, an international online research data and analytics technology group, shows a growing demand for non-alcoholic alternatives particularly among younger adults.

Fouché says that they have definitely noticed less traditional wine drinkers, and the younger adult generations' shift towards de-alcoholised and alcohol-free beverages has a lot to do with them being more health-conscious. Drinking low or alcohol-free beverages is also more socially acceptable as it's no longer stigmatised.

BevZero has been successful in helping winemakers to be ahead of the curve. Due to their advanced technology and international experience, as demand peaked for low/alcohol-free beverages, they were very quickly able to assist local winemakers in introducing quality products onto the market to compete with the international products. This was around 2017/2018 even prior to the COVID pandemic.

"The sector is growing exponentially, especially in terms of alcohol-free wines and even wine-based drinks. And what's evolved significantly in our industry, is the product development side," says Fouché. "In particular, we work with an already de-alcoholised wine product to improve it even further. Our team has expertise in winemaking, distillation, food science and beverage development, which gives us a unique understanding of how to make exceptional innovative beverages to meet the growing trends of the market."

Manual or automatic tank cleaning – which is better?

THE shift towards automated tank cleaning is becoming increasingly critical in today's industrial landscape. This article offers insight into how automation not only surpasses manual cleaning in efficiency and effectiveness, but also aligns with the pressing need for sustainability and safety in operations.

Monitor Engineering (sole agent for Spraying Systems Co. USA) has for over 75 years been helping its customers to keep their tanks clean.

Manual vs automatic tank cleaning

Whether dealing with chemicals, food and beverage processing remnants, or other industrial by-products, ensuring tanks are thoroughly cleaned is crucial for operational success.

> "With an automatic tank cleaner, such as a rotating spray ball, total coverage of the tank is achieved, with minimal water use."

Traditional manual cleaning methods often fall short due to variability and inefficiency and can also pose safety risks for workers if they need to enter tanks to clean them. From reducing labour costs to enhancing sustainability, automated systems offer a compelling alternative for the future of tank cleaning.

Green cleaning: How tank cleaning choices affect the environment

Tank cleaning is a water intensive process and overuse can accumulate into thousands of gallons wasted annually. With an automatic tank cleaner, such as a rotating spray ball, total coverage of the tank is achieved, with minimal water use. The following section explores how the different methods of tank cleaning align with sustainability goals, focusing on water and energy usage, chemical use, and waste management.

Water and energy usage

Automatic tank cleaning systems are significantly more efficient in terms of water and energy conservation. Recently, a chemical manufacturer implemented TankJet® nozzles in their cleaning process. This switch led to a 65% reduction in water usage and halved their cleaning time.

Similarly, food processing plants have seen substantial savings in water and energy with automated tank cleaning. Key benefits include more efficient use of cleaning fluids, consistent and safer cleaning processes, and a notable decrease in maintenance and downtime. Automated systems offer reliability and repeatability, crucial for maintaining high hygiene standards in the food industry.

Chemical use and waste management

Manual cleaning often requires large amounts of chemicals, which poses environmental risks and raises concerns about worker safety. Automated systems, however, can be precisely calibrated to use the exact amount of chemicals needed for effective cleaning thereby reducing the volume of chemicals used and the amount of hazardous waste generated.

Moreover, the wastewater from tank cleaning processes must be treated before disposal. Automated systems result in less contaminated wastewater. This is crucial in complying with increasingly stringent environmental regulations.

Why automate your tank cleaning operations?

- Better and more consistent cleaning results
- Increased production time
- Reduced energy consumption
- Reduced cleaning fluid consumption
- Reduced manual labour

What's the verdict?

Automatic systems stand out for their efficiency and resource conservation, offering consistent and thorough cleaning that aligns with the growing focus on sustainability. The initial investment in these systems is often balanced by long-term savings in labour, resources, and operational downtime.

To find out more about automatic tank cleaning options, contact Monitor Engineering for a no charge site audit.

grant@monitorspray.co.za