

Sparkolloid Fining

Sparkolloid is a proprietary material manufactured by Scott Laboratories. It contains a polysaccharide substance dispersed in diatomaceous earth, and comes in hot-mix and cold-mix forms - **the hot mix form is preferred for mead clarification** (fining).

IMO, Sparkolloid is the material of choice for clarifying mead, white, and blush wines. It is one of the more benign fining materials, and when used in reasonable quantities, it seldom strips flavors or aromas. It is also used as a topping material, following bentonite or carbon treatment. The photo below dramatically illustrates the effects of its proper use.

Sparkolloid does have a significant disadvantage. It produces very fine lees, which settle out slowly. Consequently, this material should not be used less than 30 days before bottling time, or small amounts may precipitate later in the bottles. Many winemakers allow an eight-week settling time just to be on the safe side.

Dose levels range from 1/4 to 1 gram of dry Sparkolloid powder per gallon of wine - ~1 gram per gallon is considered a nominal dose. A solution is made by stirring Sparkolloid powder into boiling water. After the powder is added, the mixture should be boiled for an additional 5-10 minutes. **The Sparkolloid solution is should not be allowed to cool.** The hot solution should be added to the wine /mead and stirred in carefully.

FYI - I use 2.4g Sparkolloid boiled in 100ml water for a 5 gal batch, which creates ~ a 127ppm solution - the mfr recommends a range between 125-500 ppm.

