New Zealand wine exports slip 5.7% in August as major markets decline

Read online: https://nzwineexports.com/reports/2023-08

August 2023 · Generated 6 July 2026 · Source: Stats NZ overseas merchandise trade (HS 2204)

Wine exports fell to $189.8 million in August, dragged down by double-digit drops in the United States, Australia and Canada, though European buyers provided rare bright spots.

August exports retreat across value and volume

New Zealand exported $189.8 million worth of wine in August 2023, down 5.7 per cent on the same month a year earlier. Volume fell more sharply, declining 11.6 per cent to 23.3 million litres. The average export price rose to $8.13 per litre as the volume contraction outpaced the value decline.

The August result marked a modest recovery from the winter lows of recent months but remained well below the levels recorded through last spring. Exports to 52 destination markets were recorded during the month.

Rolling annual total defies monthly weakness

Despite the August decline, the rolling 12-month total to August 2023 reached $2.37 billion, up 21.4 per cent year-over-year. This suggests the monthly softness represents a normalisation after exceptionally strong comparables in late 2022 rather than a sustained downturn in annual performance.

Traditional markets falter while Europe surges

The three largest markets all contracted sharply. The United States remained the dominant destination at $66.2 million-a 34.9 per cent share of total exports-but fell 10.3 per cent year-over-year. The United Kingdom took $37.2 million (down 7.2 per cent) and Australia $33.4 million (down 14.0 per cent). Canada, the fourth-largest market, dropped 14.9 per cent to $14.6 million.

The weakness in these core Anglo-American markets was partially offset by striking growth across several European destinations. The Netherlands surged 264.3 per cent to $4.1 million, Belgium jumped 496.5 per cent to $2.6 million, and Ireland rose 40.3 per cent to $5.3 million. France increased 26.0 per cent to $4.0 million.

Among smaller markets, Italy posted extraordinary growth of 947.9 per cent to reach $0.8 million, while Singapore shipments climbed 288.8 per cent to $2.6 million. Scandinavian markets also strengthened, with Denmark up 78.7 per cent and Sweden rising 56.6 per cent.

Germany bucked the European trend, falling 34.4 per cent to $3.9 million. Japan declined 36.3 per cent to $1.4 million, while China was effectively flat at $3.6 million (down just 0.9 per cent).

Bulk shipments decline faster than bottled

Bottled wine in containers of two litres or less generated $146.0 million in August, down 3.2 per cent year-over-year. Bulk exports in containers larger than 10 litres totalled $43.8 million, falling 10.1 per cent and representing 23.1 per cent of total export value.

The average price gap between formats remained wide: bottled wine fetched $10.57 per litre compared to $4.60 per litre for bulk. The steeper decline in bulk exports suggests softer demand in markets where New Zealand wine is repackaged or blended, while the premium bottled segment showed relatively greater resilience despite challenging conditions in key markets.

Provisional data subject to revision

These figures are drawn from Statistics New Zealand's overseas merchandise trade data for August 2023. Initial monthly statistics are provisional and subject to revision in subsequent releases as late reports are processed and classifications are refined.