New Zealand wine exports slip 14.7% in December as US shipments plunge nearly half

Read online: https://nzwineexports.com/reports/2024-12

December 2024 · Generated 6 July 2026 · Source: Stats NZ overseas merchandise trade (HS 2204)

The sector closed 2024 with $188.4 million in December exports, pulled down by a 44.9% slump in shipments to the United States, while the United Kingdom surged 42.8% to claim second place among destination markets.

December shipments fall on lower volume and weakening US demand

New Zealand exported $188.4 million worth of wine in December 2024, down 14.7% on the same month a year earlier. Export volume fell 6.9% to 27.2 million litres, with the average price across all formats at $6.93 per litre. The December result brought the rolling 12-month total to $2,008.0 million, down 4.7% year-over-year and marking the sector's continued struggle to recover earlier ground.

Annual decline accelerates as vintage peak passes

December's double-digit percentage decline represents a steeper fall than several preceding months, though the absolute value of $188.4 million sits close to November's $193.6 million. The comparison with December 2023's $220.8 million highlights the scale of the year-over-year retreat. Wine reached 57 destination markets during the month, underlining the sector's geographic spread even as headline numbers contract.

United States collapse offsets United Kingdom gains

The United States remained New Zealand's largest single market by value despite a dramatic 44.9% drop to $63.4 million, accounting for 33.6% of December exports. The United Kingdom posted a contrasting 42.8% surge to $52.1 million and a 27.6% share, narrowing the gap with the US significantly. Australia, the third-largest destination, declined 10.3% to $23.5 million (12.5% share), while Canada rose 12.7% to $13.2 million (7.0% share).

Germany fell 19.2% to $5.1 million, but several smaller markets recorded sharp gains. South Korea jumped 72.3% to $3.8 million, France climbed 54.2% to $3.0 million, and China rose 26.7% to $4.4 million. The standout movers among markets exceeding $0.5 million included Sweden, up 260.3% to $1.0 million, Poland up 111.4% to $0.6 million, and Spain up 103.5% to $1.3 million. The Netherlands grew 76.2% to $1.4 million and Denmark rose 54.5% to $1.2 million. Belgium bucked the trend among smaller European destinations, falling 49.5% to $0.9 million.

Bulk gains ground as bottled wine retreats

The packaging breakdown showed diverging trends. Bottled wine in containers of two litres or less, including sparkling, generated $120.9 million but fell 20.7% year-over-year. Bulk shipments in containers exceeding 10 litres contributed $67.4 million, up 1.3%, and accounted for 35.8% of December's total export value.

The pricing gap between formats remained stark: bottled wine averaged $10.81 per litre compared with $4.21 per litre for bulk. This nearly threefold difference reflects the distinct market positioning of finished, branded bottles versus commodity-grade wine destined for blending or third-party packaging offshore. The resilience of bulk exports suggests continued demand for New Zealand wine as a blending component or own-label input in offshore markets, even as premium bottled sales soften.

Provisional data subject to revision

These figures are drawn from Statistics New Zealand's merchandise trade data for December 2024. As with all initial monthly releases, the numbers are provisional and subject to revision as late declarations are processed and classifications finalised.