New Zealand wine exports slip 7.5% in May as bulk shipments plunge and traditional markets weaken

Read online: https://nzwineexports.com/reports/2025-05

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Wine exports fell to $158.5 million in May 2025, down 7.5% year-over-year, as a 45.5% collapse in bulk wine value offset modest growth in bottled exports and a sharp rebound in Asian demand failed to compensate for weakness across core Western markets.

May shipments decline amid mixed signals

New Zealand exported $158.5 million of wine (HS 2204) in May 2025, down from $171.5 million in the same month last year. Export volume fell 8.3% to 19.1 million litres, whilst the average price per litre edged down to $8.30. Shipments reached 59 destination markets during the month.

The rolling 12-month total to May 2025 stood at $2,093.2 million, down 0.7% on the previous year, indicating relatively flat performance over the annual cycle despite May's steeper monthly decline.

Traditional markets continue retreat

The United States remained New Zealand's largest wine market by value, accounting for $57.3 million and a 36.2% share of May exports, though this represented a 6.3% year-over-year decline. The United Kingdom, the second-largest destination at $34.8 million (21.9% share), fell 10.6%.

Weakness was pronounced in other established markets. Australia dropped 27.2% to $16.3 million, whilst Canada suffered a sharp 38.2% fall to $10.4 million. France declined 17.3% to $5.2 million, Ireland fell 13.6% to $4.5 million, and Japan slumped 49.4% to $1.0 million.

Asian and European markets surge

Offsetting the declines, several markets posted dramatic growth from relatively modest bases. China delivered the standout performance, surging 150.5% year-over-year to $6.6 million and claiming a 4.1% share of total exports. South Korea followed closely, rising 153.7% to $5.0 million (3.2% share).

Germany climbed 122.6% to $3.9 million, whilst Singapore increased 54.7% to $2.4 million. Among smaller markets, Poland jumped 278.4% to $0.6 million and Norway rose 204.1% to $0.9 million. Sweden grew 65.3% to $0.8 million, and Hong Kong advanced 46.0% to $1.2 million.

Bottled gains cannot offset bulk collapse

The packaging mix revealed a stark divergence in May. Bottled wine (containers of 2 litres or less, including sparkling) recorded $133.8 million in export value, up 6.1% year-over-year. Bulk wine shipments (containers exceeding 10 litres), however, collapsed 45.5% to $24.6 million, representing just 15.5% of total export value.

The price differential between formats remained substantial: bottled wine averaged $10.58 per litre compared with $3.82 per litre for bulk. This near-threefold gap underscores the continued premiumisation of New Zealand's bottled wine proposition, whilst bulk exports-typically destined for blending or private-label bottling offshore-face intensifying headwinds.

Provisional data subject to revision

These figures are drawn from Statistics New Zealand customs data for May 2025. As with all recently released trade statistics, the most recent month's data are provisional and subject to revision as late declarations are processed and classifications are refined.