New Zealand wine exports slip 7.7% in April as major markets retreat

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Wine exports fell to $150.5 million in April 2026, driven by double-digit declines in the United States and Australia, though China and Ireland delivered strong gains against a weakening trend.

April exports down on lower volumes

New Zealand exported $150.5 million of wine (HS 2204) in April 2026, down 7.7 per cent on the same month a year earlier. Export volumes fell 10.7 per cent to 20.0 million litres, whilst the average unit value edged up to $7.54 per litre. The month's result continues a pattern of subdued performance across the sector, with shipments reaching 56 destination markets.

Rolling annual total nearly flat

The rolling 12-month total to April 2026 stood at $2.09 billion, down a modest 0.7 per cent year-over-year. April's monthly performance follows a volatile sequence over the southern autumn: exports reached $181.3 million in March and $205.6 million in February, after dipping to $123.1 million in January. The latest result sits below the April 2025 baseline of $163.2 million.

United States and Australia weigh on top markets

The United States remained New Zealand's largest wine market, accounting for 37.3 per cent of April exports with $56.2 million in shipments, but the value fell 12.6 per cent year-over-year. The United Kingdom, the second-largest destination, recorded $29.2 million in exports, down 5.0 per cent. Australia, the third-ranked market, saw a sharp 24.5 per cent decline to $15.6 million, whilst Canada fell 8.3 per cent to $13.7 million.

Against this backdrop, China delivered the standout performance among major markets, surging 85.6 per cent to $8.3 million and claiming a 5.5 per cent share of total exports. Ireland rose 26.3 per cent to $5.4 million, South Korea increased 8.0 per cent to $4.3 million, and Japan advanced 19.2 per cent to $2.2 million.

Several European markets experienced steep falls: France dropped 34.7 per cent to $1.6 million, the Netherlands declined 27.1 per cent to $1.5 million, and Germany fell 25.1 per cent to $1.5 million. Singapore retreated 24.2 per cent to $2.0 million.

Emerging bright spots in smaller markets

Among destinations exporting above $0.5 million, Bulgaria posted the sharpest gain, up 90.5 per cent to $1.1 million. Hong Kong also impressed with a 50.6 per cent increase to $1.4 million. Denmark, however, fell 51.0 per cent to $0.5 million, marking the steepest decline in the cohort.

Bulk exports bear the brunt of decline

The packaging breakdown reveals a sharp divergence in performance. Bottled wine in containers of two litres or less accounted for $125.5 million of April exports and declined 2.5 per cent year-over-year. Bulk wine shipped in containers exceeding 10 litres totalled $25.0 million-16.6 per cent of total export value-but fell 27.0 per cent.

The price gap between formats remained stark: bottled wine averaged $10.47 per litre compared with $3.13 per litre for bulk, a differential reflecting the premium positioning of finished product versus commodity shipments for offshore bottling.

Data note

Figures are compiled by Stats NZ from Customs export data. Statistics for the most recent month are provisional and subject to revision as late declarations are processed.