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Wine generated 46.7% of Italy’s food and beverage trade surplus in 2025

Istat data showed wine delivered a €7.2 billion surplus, cushioning a sharp drop in Italy’s broader agri-food trade balance

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Wine accounted for 46.7% of the trade surplus generated by Italy’s food and beverage industry in 2025, underscoring how central the sector remains to the country’s export economy even as the broader agricultural trade balance weakened.

According to Istat’s report on changes in agriculture, Italy’s agriculture and food sector posted a trade surplus of just over €2 billion in 2025, down sharply from €5.4 billion in 2024. The decline came as the trade balance for agricultural and livestock products remained deeply negative, at -€13.3 billion in 2025.

That shortfall was offset by Italy’s food processing industry, where the “food and beverages” category recorded a positive trade balance of €15.4 billion, only slightly below the €15.8 billion reported for 2024. Istat said Italy has historically run a negative trade balance in agricultural and livestock goods, but that the industrial processing side has produced growing surpluses over the past 15 years, pushing the overall agri-food balance into positive territory starting in 2018.

Within that picture, wine played an outsized role. Based on Istat data, Italy’s wine trade surplus reached €7.2 billion in 2025, built on €7.7 billion in exports against €565.6 million in imports. That means wine alone represented nearly half of the positive balance recorded by the food and beverages segment.

The figures also show how dependent Italy’s agri-food trade position is on products with strong export demand and relatively limited import exposure. Wine fits that profile more than most categories, with sales abroad far outweighing purchases from overseas.

Istat said Italian agri-food production generated €80.1 billion in value in 2025, up 3.9% from €77.1 billion in 2024. Even with that increase in production value, the overall trade result narrowed because of a further deterioration in agricultural and livestock products, which fell by nearly €3 billion from the previous year.

For the beverage sector, the data points to wine’s importance not only as a flagship export but also as a stabilizing force inside Italy’s wider food economy. A category that contributes almost half of the food-and-beverage trade surplus can shape investment, export strategy and policy debates well beyond wineries themselves, especially at a time when weaker performance in other parts of agriculture is putting more pressure on processed foods and drinks to sustain the national balance.

The numbers reinforce a long-running feature of Italy’s economy: raw agricultural production often struggles to generate a positive external balance, while higher-value processed goods carry much of the export weight. In 2025, wine remained one of the clearest examples of that model.