vinetur

Languedoc’s wine output is expected to rise 5% in 2026

A wet winter and late August rain helped vineyards endure weeks of temperatures above 35C.

Tuesday, September 29, 2026



Wine producers in Languedoc, France’s largest winegrowing region, are reporting a generally solid 2026 harvest after a season marked by extreme summer heat and late relief from rain, according to the regional trade body CIVL and figures cited by France’s agriculture ministry.

Harvesting has been active across August and September, with growers describing good-quality white grapes, a broadly positive red harvest and vineyards that held up better than expected after a wet winter helped the vines withstand months of heat. The ministry expects wine output in Languedoc-Roussillon to rise 5% from a year earlier, even as overall French wine production is forecast to decline. Even with that increase, this year's volume is still expected to remain 8% below the five-year average for 2021 through 2025.

That mix of recovery and continued constraint is important for the beverage business because Languedoc is one of the country's biggest sources of wine for domestic and export markets. A larger crop could help support supply for retailers, importers and hospitality buyers, but production that remains below recent norms could still limit how much relief reaches prices and campaign planning.

CIVL said growers in several parts of the region, including Gard, the Pyrénées-Orientales and La Clape AOP, are satisfied with harvest levels, although volumes differ sharply from one area to another and in some cases remain below historical standards. Gard includes appellations such as Pic-Saint-Loup, while the Pyrénées-Orientales department covers part of Roussillon.

The season tested vineyards for much of the summer. CIVL said the region experienced many days above 35C and several episodes above 40C. Despite those conditions, the organization said winter precipitation gave vines "good resistance" to heat stress. The previous winter brought 50 days with rainfall above seasonal averages, helping soils and vines enter the growing season with more reserves than in recent years.

Even so, CIVL warned that water management remains a major issue for the years ahead after several campaigns affected by water shortages. The better performance this year does not remove the longer-term pressure from recurring drought and higher summer temperatures, which continue to shape vineyard decisions across southern France.

In Picpoul de Pinet, one of Languedoc's best-known appellations abroad and a major export area for the British market, CIVL described the growing season as difficult at times. Early and severe heatwaves put the vines under pressure before drought took

hold, and soils became very dry from the end of June onward.

A storm on August 25 changed the pace of the season there. CIVL said the rain effectively restarted vines that had been slowed sharply by summer drought and set off a rapid final phase of ripening. The result, according to the group, was a harvest carried out at high speed, with growers moving quickly to bring in fruit once conditions improved.

That turnaround was especially significant in a region where cooperatives play a central role. CIVL said 80% of vines in the area are tended by cooperative producers. Among growers, the relief after the late-August rainfall was described as profound, with harvested grapes showing good quality and sound health.

Farther west and inland, in Saint-Chinian, the pattern was similar but not identical. CIVL said the white grape harvest began in early August, while red varieties needed more time. The late rain that benefited Picpoul also helped Saint-Chinian by allowing ripening to continue under better conditions. Growers there also reported strong grape health.

The regional picture suggests that winter water reserves made a clear difference in 2026. In vineyards that had enough support from earlier rainfall, vines were better able to cope with intense heat. But the outcome also depended on timing. Areas that received rain at a critical moment in late August appear to have benefited most, especially where drought had slowed vine activity and threatened the final stages of ripening.

The agriculture ministry’s expected 5% year-over-year increase sets Languedoc apart from the broader French market this year. That relative resilience may draw attention from wine buyers watching supply risks across Europe after a series of climate-related disruptions. At the same time, the region’s harvest remains below its recent average, underlining that one better season does not erase the production losses and water deficits built up over several years.

For producers, merchants and distributors, the 2026 crop offers a more stable picture than the summer heat alone might have suggested. White grapes are being reported in good condition, and CIVL said the overall red harvest is positive. But the region’s own warning on water resources points to a continuing structural issue for one of Europe’s

biggest wine-producing areas, even in a year when a wet winter and well-timed late rain helped vineyards get through a difficult summer.