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New Zealand wine exports rose 6% to their second-highest June total.

A 15% smaller harvest helped bring supply closer to weaker global demand, leaving export value near NZ$2.1 billion.

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New Zealand’s wine exports rose in the year ended June 2026 even as the industry brought in a much smaller harvest, a shift that growers say is helping align supply with weaker global demand.

New Zealand Winegrowers, the national industry body, said export volume reached 306.2 million liters in the 12 months to June 2026, up from 288.8 million liters a year earlier. That was an increase of 17.4 million liters, or 6%. Export value reached NZ$2.108 billion over the same period, compared with NZ$2.098 billion in the previous 12 months, leaving revenue broadly unchanged despite the rise in shipments.

The figures were published in the group’s 2026 annual report and point to a mixed picture for one of New Zealand’s most important agricultural export sectors. Volumes moved higher and overall sales rose 8%, driven by export growth, but the near-flat change in value suggests the increase in shipments did not translate into a comparable lift in earnings.

The report did not provide a detailed breakdown of how pricing, product mix, or exchange rates affected the export value. It described the result as the industry’s second-highest June year total on record and said New Zealand wine continued to outperform the wider category in key overseas markets despite a difficult global and domestic environment.

At the same time, production moved in the opposite direction. The 2026 grape harvest came in at about 440,000 metric tons, down 15% from the previous vintage. Based on that decline, the prior harvest was roughly 517,600 metric tons, which would put the year-over-year drop at about 77,600 metric tons. The industry body said the smaller crop was bringing production into closer balance with current market demand and supporting a focus on sustainable long-term growth.

That reduction is significant because exports remain central to the sector’s business model. New Zealand Winegrowers said overseas shipments account for about 90% of all New Zealand wine sales. In practice, that leaves producers highly exposed to changes in consumer demand abroad, inventory levels, and pricing pressure in major importing countries.

Industry leaders framed the latest year as one of adjustment rather than contraction. Fabian Yukich, chair of New Zealand Winegrowers, said the global wine industry had faced a challenging year but that New Zealand producers had shown resilience. He said the report showed growers and wineries adapting and moving toward a more balanced

footing.

The annual report highlighted strength in several major destinations, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and China. It did not publish a full market-by-market export table in the release, but it said shipments to China rose 72% in the 12 months and exports to South Korea increased 20%. Those gains stand out because they came during a period when many wine-producing countries were dealing with softer demand, higher living costs for consumers, and pressure on discretionary spending.

New Zealand’s export profile is closely tied to its reputation in premium white wines, especially Sauvignon Blanc, and the country has often performed better than the broader wine category in English-speaking markets. Even so, the latest figures suggest volume growth alone is not enough to produce a strong rise in value when the global market is under strain.

The data also suggest producers may be trying to avoid a buildup in unsold stock. A smaller harvest after a stronger export year can ease pressure on inventories if demand remains uneven. The industry body did not say directly that inventory reduction was the main reason for the smaller vintage, but it linked the lower production level to the need to match current market conditions more closely.

New Zealand Winegrowers Chief Executive Anishka Jelicich, who took the role in July, said the annual report marked the start of the next phase under a new industry strategy. She said the organization would focus on giving growers and wineries better information, advocacy, and practical support so they can make informed decisions in a more difficult market.

The annual report also pointed to policy developments that could matter over a longer period. The industry group said the New Zealand-India Free Trade Agreement creates a future opportunity for exporters by setting out gradual tariff reductions on New Zealand wine. For a sector that exports to more than 100 countries but still depends heavily on a handful of large markets, lower barriers in India could offer an additional outlet if consumer demand develops there.