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French Farm Union Urges Overhaul of Wine Advertising Rules

No legal change was announced, but the union said France must back wine promotion to keep viticulture viable.

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The French farm union Coordination Rurale is pressing for major regulatory changes for the country’s wine sector, saying the ongoing debate over the future of viticulture should produce concrete political decisions rather than general discussion.

In a statement published Friday after the third meeting of the sector group on viticulture, held as part of France’s Food Sovereignty Conferences, the union said two priorities should guide the talks: allowing more positive communication about wine and making access to water easier for producers. The group said both issues require clear political backing if the sector is to have a viable future.

Coordination Rurale framed the first issue around France’s Évin law, which is a central part of the country’s rules governing advertising and communication for alcoholic beverages. The union said efforts to restore a positive image of wine and support consumption would require a broad reworking of that framework. It called for a deep overhaul of the law and said its removal should even be considered.

According to the union, the current rules limit the sector’s ability to promote wine and should be fully included in the policy work on the future of viticulture. The organization presented that demand as a necessary step for giving the industry better prospects.

No legal change was announced. The statement sets out the union’s position in an ongoing public policy discussion, not an adopted government measure. Still, the issue is significant because any eventual change to France’s advertising rules for wine could affect how producers market their products at home, with possible consequences for sales, branding, and competition across the broader beverage business.

The second priority raised by Coordination Rurale was water. The union said access to water will shape the future not only of vineyards but also of other forms of agricultural production. It argued that plans to diversify crops or replace some existing production will not succeed without adequate water resources.

The group said repeated project calls and efforts by local stakeholders will not be enough if the regulatory framework stays the same. It is asking for what it described as a thorough revision of water legislation and of the relevant parts of France’s Environmental Code so that farmers can create more retenues collinaires, or upland water retention reservoirs, to serve farm needs.

That request also carries weight for the drinks sector because water access directly affects grape growing and therefore wine supply. If policymakers were to loosen the rules on water storage, that could influence production conditions for wineries, especially in areas facing pressure from drought or changing weather patterns.

Coordination Rurale said the Food Sovereignty Conferences should lead to decisions that match the scale of the problems facing agriculture. In the union’s view, improving the standing of wine and giving farmers the means to keep producing are political choices, not only technical ones.

The statement was accompanied by a video recap from the union’s representative, who described communication on wine and water access as two essential levers for giving the sector a future. The organization used that message to urge policymakers to move beyond discussion and adopt measures it believes would strengthen French viticulture.

The intervention comes as France’s wine industry continues to face pressure from weak consumption trends, competitive challenges, and climate-related constraints, even though those wider issues were not detailed in the statement itself. Coordination Rurale’s latest message places two sensitive regulatory subjects at the center of the debate: the balance between public health rules and wine promotion, and the balance between environmental law and water access for farming.

For now, the union’s demands remain proposals within that debate. But by targeting both the legal framework for wine communication and the rules governing water storage, the group has laid out an agenda that could affect both the commercial side of wine and the practical conditions for producing it if French authorities decide to act on the proposals.