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German wines outperformed Germany's shrinking wine market in the third quarter, the industry group said

The NielsenIQ analysis offered a rare bright spot for domestic producers, though the institute did not release detailed figures

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The German Wine Institute said on Wednesday, November 11, that German wines performed better than the broader wine market in Germany during the third quarter of 2026, offering a rare positive signal in a market that is still shrinking overall.

The institute, known by its German initials DWI, said the finding comes from an analysis by NielsenIQ that it commissioned. According to the institute, the third-quarter trend for German wines was more favorable than the development of the domestic wine market as a whole, which remains in decline.

The announcement points to a shift in a difficult retail environment. Wine sales in Germany have been under pressure, and the DWI presented the latest third-quarter reading as a bright spot for domestic producers at a time when the wider market continues to weaken. The material published on the institute’s website did not include the detailed sales or volume figures behind the assessment, so the size of the gap between German wines and the total market was not immediately clear.

Even without the full data, the message is important because it suggests German producers may be holding their position better than competitors in a crowded market. In Germany, domestic wines compete directly with imported labels in supermarkets, discount chains, specialist merchants and restaurant channels. If local wines continue to lose less ground than the overall market, that could affect how retailers and distributors shape their assortments, how importers position foreign wines, and where producers place marketing money in the coming months.

That matters across the beverage industry, not only for wineries. A sustained divergence between German wines and the total wine market could influence shelf space decisions, promotional campaigns, pricing strategies and inventory planning. Importers, wholesalers and specialty merchants may all watch closely to see whether the third-quarter pattern holds into year-end trading and the early months of 2027.

The DWI is the main promotional body for German wine, and its role in commissioning the NielsenIQ analysis is significant context for the announcement. The institute’s statement reflects an industry-backed reading of market conditions, even though the data source itself comes from a major consumer and retail measurement company. In the absence of a fuller public release, it was not possible to independently assess which

segments drove the better result for German wines, such as entry-level bottles, premium wines, specific retail channels or regional brands.

The institute’s website places the market update within a broader presentation of Germany’s wine sector. It notes that there are about 10,700 grape varieties worldwide and that 132 grape varieties come from Germany. The site also highlights the country’s 13 wine-growing regions. Those facts do not explain the third-quarter sales trend by themselves, but they show the range and depth of the domestic industry whose performance the institute is trying to measure and support.

The DWI also features an overview of wine trade partners and specialty stores in Germany offering about 25,000 wines, underscoring the level of competition facing domestic producers even in their home market. In that setting, any sign that German wines are proving more resilient than the total market is likely to draw attention from growers, bottlers, merchants and buyers.

The timing is notable because the third quarter includes a key stretch for wine retailing and for assessing consumer demand ahead of the strongest seasonal sales period. For producers and merchants, a relative improvement in domestic wine performance could shape decisions on promotions, stock levels and commercial negotiations through the rest of the year. The full effect on orders, store placement and portfolio strategy will likely become clearer as Germany’s beverage trade works through year-end planning.