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Champagne shipments rose 2% through October on stronger exports

Exports reached 128.4 million bottles, more than enough to offset a 3.5% drop in France

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Champagne shipments rose 2% in the first 10 months of 2026 as foreign demand offset a continued decline in France, according to figures from the industry body Comité Champagne.

From January through October, producers shipped 203.6 million bottles, more than in the same period of 2025. The gain came almost entirely from export markets. Shipments in France fell 3.5% to 75.3 million bottles, while exports rose 5.6% to 128.4 million.

Exports accounted for just over 63% of all champagne shipments over the 10-month period, showing how heavily the region now depends on international buyers. The split also points to a growing divide inside the industry, where larger houses benefited from export demand while many growers and cooperatives continued to struggle.

October was weaker than the broader year-to-date trend. Total shipments for the month fell 3.4% from October 2025 to 29.6 million bottles. The sharpest drop came in France, where shipments fell 7.3% to 11.1 million bottles. Export shipments slipped 1% to 18.6 million.

Within exports, shipments to the European Union rose 1.2% in October to 6.9 million bottles, while shipments to markets outside the EU fell 2.2% to 11.7 million. The softer month came at an important point in the sales calendar. October has historically represented about 11.8% of annual champagne shipments, making it an important signal before the year-end holiday season.

The wider trend through October still showed strong support from overseas markets. Shipments to the EU increased 6.7% over the first 10 months to 39 million bottles. Shipments to countries outside the EU rose 5.1% to 89.4 million. Those increases were more than enough to make up for the domestic decline.

The overall increase masked clear differences among producer groups. Champagne houses posted the strongest results. Their shipments rose 4.1% through October to 155.4 million bottles. Their exports increased 6.8%, while their shipments in France fell 2.2%.

Growers had a more difficult year. Their shipments dropped 4.4% to 32.1 million bottles. In France, their volumes fell 7.7%, although their exports rose 6.2%. Cooperatives also posted a decline, with shipments down 3.3% to 16.2 million bottles. Unlike houses and growers, cooperatives also lost ground abroad, where shipments fell

8.7%, even as their shipments in France rose 2.8%.

October was especially difficult for cooperatives. Their shipments for the month fell 17.5%, a much steeper decline than in other parts of the sector. The gap between producer groups matters for importers, wholesalers and retailers because it can affect which suppliers have stock available, how year-end allocations are managed and where pricing pressure may emerge.

On a rolling 12-month basis, the recovery remained slight. From November 2025 through October 2026, champagne shipments reached 270.2 million bottles, up 0.4%. That was an improvement after several years of lower volumes, but the gain was narrow and still depended on exports. Over the same 12-month period, shipments in France fell 4.1%, while exports rose 3.8%.

The same imbalance appeared in the 12-month data by producer type. Champagne houses recorded a 2.1% increase, while growers were down 4.7% and cooperatives were down 2.1%. With November and December still to come, the final stretch of the year will determine whether the sector can hold on to growth and finish above the 266 million bottles shipped in 2025.

Separate figures for the United Kingdom, one of champagne’s most important export markets, suggested continued support from abroad. From January through September, shipments to the U.K. rose 5.8% by volume and 7.1% by value, according to Comité Champagne. The average shipment price increased 1.3%.

James Simpson, chairman of the Champagne Agents’ Association, told The Drinks Business that shipment data should not be confused with bottles actually bought by consumers. He said supermarket sales in Britain had remained relatively stable. Data from NIQ showed retail sales rose 1.7% by volume and 1.5% by value to £204.5 million, with an average price of £27.93.

After 22.7 million bottles were shipped to the U.K. in 2025, Simpson said the market could move back above 24 million bottles in 2026 if the current pace continues. That would bring Britain closer to its 2023 level, when shipments reached 25.5 million bottles.