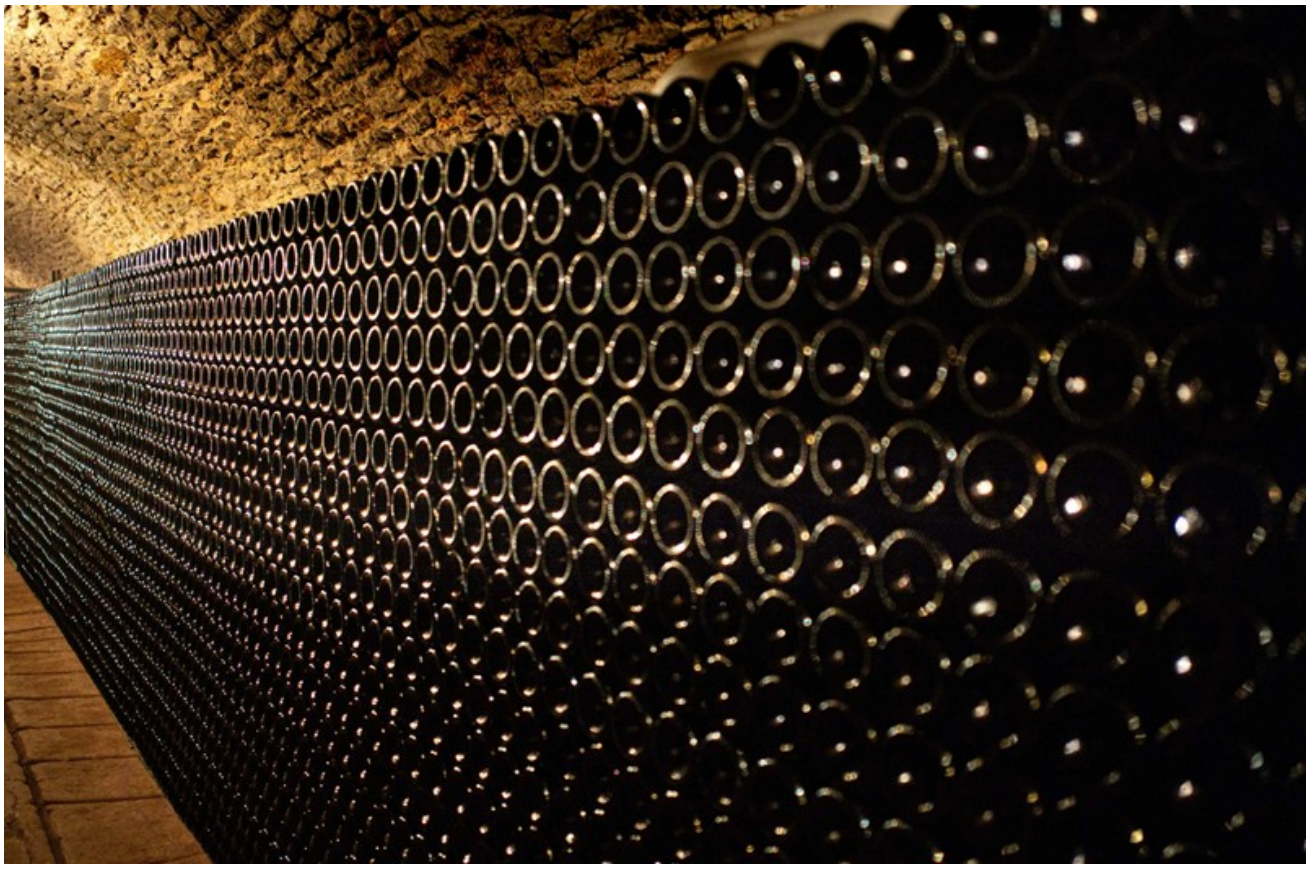
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Italy’s League proposed a 12-month loan moratorium for wine cooperatives burdened by unsold stocks

The budget amendment would let eligible producers pay cooperative members first, easing pressure from weak balance sheets and unsold inventories

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Italy’s League party proposed on Friday, November 20, a 12-month moratorium on loan repayments for parts of the wine sector, saying the measure is meant to help cooperatives and wineries facing cash pressure from unsold stocks and weak balance sheets.

Riccardo Molinari, the party’s leader in the Chamber of Deputies, announced the proposal at a news conference on the budget bill in the lower house, according to ANSA. He said the amendment would suspend loan payments for social wineries, or wine cooperatives, and for companies with deteriorated credit positions and wine reserves they have not yet been able to sell.

Molinari said the aim is to allow those businesses to prioritize payments to cooperative members over debt service. He described the proposal as a “zero-cost” measure designed to respond to what he called an objective emergency in agricultural areas.

The plan, as outlined by Molinari, is part of amendments the League has submitted to Italy’s budget package. The proposal does not amount to final policy at this stage, and it would still need to move through the legislative process tied to the broader budget measure.

The announcement points to financial strains in parts of Italy’s wine industry, where some producers and cooperatives are dealing with inventories that have not been sold and with tighter access to credit. A temporary suspension of loan payments could, if approved, give some operators more room to manage short-term liquidity needs. In the beverage sector, that could matter because cooperatives often need cash to pay grape growers and other members, and a repayment pause could help keep those payments moving while wine remains in storage.

Molinari said the amendment is targeted, not broad-based. He referred specifically to cooperatives and companies that have troubled credit and reserves they are still unable to place on the market. That suggests the League is trying to direct relief toward the segment of the sector under the most immediate financial pressure rather than toward all wine businesses.

The proposal comes against the backdrop of a wider debate in Italy over how to support agriculture through the annual budget law. Alongside the wine measure, Molinari said the League had also introduced another amendment to increase funding for the Agriculture 4.0 program by €40 million over two years.

He said that increase is meant to prevent farms and agricultural businesses from making investments under the program and then being forced to contribute more of their own money because budget resources fall short of what the rules had led them to expect. The program is intended to support investment and modernization in agriculture.

Taken together, the two proposals show the League focusing both on immediate financial stress in the wine industry and on longer-term investment support for farming businesses. The moratorium proposal addresses liquidity and debt servicing, while the Agriculture 4.0 amendment is aimed at funding certainty for companies making capital investments.

ANSA’s report did not include reactions from the government, other parties, banks or wine industry groups, and it did not give details on how many businesses could qualify for the moratorium or how the suspension would be administered. It also did not specify whether the 12-month pause would apply only to principal payments or to both principal and interest.

Even so, the measure as described by Molinari would offer a clear form of temporary relief to eligible wineries and cooperatives. For a sector dealing with unsold wine and pressure on cash flow, a delay in debt repayments could help businesses preserve operating funds and, potentially, ease tension between servicing loans and paying growers tied to cooperative structures.

The budget debate in parliament is expected to determine whether the amendment moves forward in its current form or is revised as lawmakers negotiate the final package.