vinetur

USDA lowers its U.S. wine import forecast to $6.1 billion for fiscal 2027

Beer imports are now projected at $6.7 billion, with distilled spirits expected to reach $7.3 billion

Wednesday, November 25, 2026



The U.S. Department of Agriculture lowered its forecast for U.S. wine and beer imports in fiscal 2027 and raised its outlook for distilled spirits, according to the agency’s November 2026 Outlook for U.S. Agricultural Trade.

The USDA’s Economic Research Service and Foreign Agricultural Service said wine imports are now projected at $6.1 billion for fiscal 2027. Beer imports are forecast at $6.7 billion. Distilled spirits imports are expected to reach $7.3 billion. The revisions point to a mixed outlook for alcoholic beverage purchases from abroad in one of the world’s largest consumer markets.

The report updates the government’s expectations for agricultural trade values rather than physical volumes, which means the figures reflect not only expected shipments but also pricing, product mix and currency effects. A lower import forecast for wine or beer does not necessarily mean fewer bottles or cans alone. It can also signal changes in average prices, buying patterns or the types of products U.S. buyers are expected to bring in during the fiscal year.

USDA publishes the outlook as a regular benchmark for farm, food and beverage trade. The broader report covers many commodity groups, but the changes in alcohol categories are likely to draw attention from importers, distributors and foreign producers because the United States remains a critical destination for wine, beer and spirits sales. A downward revision for wine and beer could lead some exporters to reassess inventory, pricing and marketing plans for the U.S. market, while the higher spirits projection may support greater focus on liquor shipments and brand investment.

The new estimates matter across the beverage supply chain because they shape expectations for demand in the U.S. import market before orders are finalized and shipping schedules are set. For producers in Europe, Latin America and other exporting regions, a change in the federal outlook can influence sales planning and negotiations with U.S. buyers. For domestic wholesalers and retailers, the revisions can offer an early signal about competitive pressure, category growth and the likely mix of imported products on store shelves and in restaurants.

The USDA did not present the category revisions as fixed outcomes. Trade forecasts can move from one monthly outlook to the next as consumer spending, exchange rates, freight costs, inventories and trade conditions change. Alcohol imports are especially sensitive to shifts in demand at restaurants, bars and large retailers, as well as to premiumization trends that can raise the value of imports even if volumes are flat.

The split between weaker wine and beer expectations and a stronger spirits outlook may also reflect differences in how consumers are spending. Imported spirits often occupy higher-price segments, and their trade value can rise quickly when buyers shift toward premium brands. Beer and wine, by contrast, can face broader competition from domestic products, alternative beverages and changes in household budgets. The USDA report does not assign a single cause to the revisions, but the category differences suggest that the import market is not moving in one direction across all alcoholic drinks.

Because the figures are reported in dollars, market participants will also watch whether the revisions are driven by demand or by pricing. If import values fall because consumers buy less, that can point to softer category demand. If values fall mainly because prices or exchange rates ease, the effect on physical shipments may be smaller. The same applies to the increase in the spirits forecast, which could reflect stronger purchasing, a more expensive product mix or both.

The November update arrives as companies build plans for the fiscal year that began in October 2026. Importers, overseas suppliers and beverage groups will now be working with a USDA outlook that calls for $6.1 billion in wine imports, $6.7 billion in beer imports and $7.3 billion in distilled spirits imports, a combination that suggests softer expectations for two major beverage categories and firmer demand, pricing or product mix for one.