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EFOW sounds alarm over US wine tariffs

EFOW calls for swift action to protect jobs and rural economies

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The European Federation of Origin Wines (EFOW) has expressed strong regret following the United States' decision to impose a 20% tariff on wines imported from the European Union. The measure, announced amid ongoing trade tensions, poses a serious threat to the EU wine sector, which counts the U.S. as its largest export market in both volume and value.

EFOW made its position clear during a meeting of the European Parliament's Wine, Quality Products, and Spirits Intergroup held today in Strasbourg. Addressing Members of the European Parliament and representatives of the European Commission, the organization warned of the severe consequences the tariffs could bring to wine-producing regions across the EU. These include potential job losses, the closure of small and medium-sized producers, and broader damage to the rural economies that rely on the wine industry.

The timing of the U.S. decision is particularly difficult for EU producers, who are already dealing with declining wine consumption and increasing pressures in domestic and global markets. EFOW stated that the U.S. market cannot be replaced in the short term and that the new tariffs are already causing immediate disruptions. According to the group, the US Wine Trade Alliance has advised its members to halt purchases of European wines, exacerbating the financial strain.

EFOW emphasized the urgent need for renewed diplomatic dialogue between the EU and the U.S. It called on the European Commission to take swift action to engage with American counterparts and work toward a negotiated resolution. The organization warned that the future of Geographical Indication wines—those that rely on protected designations of origin—could be in jeopardy if the dispute is not resolved.

While recognizing that the tariffs are part of a wider pattern of transatlantic trade tensions, EFOW rejected the approach of retaliatory measures and escalation. It instead urged the Commission to pursue a "zero-for-zero" agreement, eliminating tariffs on wine and spirits between both sides. EFOW described such an agreement as the only way to ensure economic stability, preserve employment, and protect the cultural heritage represented by Europe's wine regions.