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US-EU trade talks stall, leaving wine industry in limbo

Ongoing trade tensions threaten to disrupt global wine supply chains

Saturday, July 19, 2025



Karoline Leavitt, White House Press Secretary

The White House confirmed Thursday that it will not extend the deadline for tariff negotiations with the European Union, set to expire on August 1. The administration continues talks with Brussels, but officials made clear that President Donald Trump’s ultimatum stands: if no agreement is reached, the United States will impose a 30 percent tariff on European goods.

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt addressed reporters, stating that the EU remains eager to negotiate with the U.S. “for obvious reasons,” referring to the potential economic impact of new tariffs. She reiterated longstanding U.S. complaints about European tariff and non-tariff barriers, which Washington argues harm American workers and businesses. “The president’s trade team is still in discussions with European representatives,” Leavitt said. When asked if Trump might consider another extension—after already moving the deadline from July 9 to August 1—Leavitt was firm: “The president has already said he will not do that.”

These comments came as European Trade Commissioner Maros Sefcovic arrived in Washington for meetings with his U.S. counterpart, Howard Lutnick. Both sides are seeking a last-minute deal to avoid the imposition of steep tariffs on European imports.

The situation is further complicated by ongoing trade talks with Canada. With only four days left before a separate deadline for new tariffs on Canadian goods—set at 35 percent—Leavitt said discussions continue but described negotiations as difficult. “The president himself has said it’s been quite tough dealing with our northern neighbors on trade,” she noted.

Since returning to office, President Trump has launched a series of tariff threats against key trading partners, aiming to address what he calls unfair trade deficits and boost foreign investment in the United States.

If the 30 percent tariff on European goods takes effect in August, it could have significant consequences for the wine market. European wines make up a large share of U.S. imports, and higher tariffs would likely drive up prices for American importers and consumers. Industry experts warn that smaller importers could be forced out of business, while wine retailers and restaurants may have to reduce their selections or pass costs onto customers.

The uncertainty also affects European producers, who rely heavily on the U.S. market. A sharp drop in exports could hurt vineyards across France, Italy, Spain, and other major wine-producing countries. The ripple effects could extend beyond both regions, disrupting global wine trade and supply chains.

Observers are watching closely to see if Canada can secure a last-minute deal to avoid its own tariffs. Success at the negotiating table with Ottawa might signal that Washington is open to compromise with Europe as well. On the other hand, if talks fail and tariffs are imposed on Canadian goods, it could indicate that new duties on European products are inevitable.

For now, both American and European wine industries face an uncertain future as the August deadline approaches. The outcome of these negotiations will shape not only transatlantic trade but also the choices available to wine lovers on both sides of the ocean and around the world.