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European wine and spirits may avoid new US tariffs as trade deal nears

Proposed agreement would exempt alcoholic beverages from higher duties, offering relief to producers and consumers on both sides of the Atlantic

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The European wine and spirits industry received encouraging news today as the United States and the European Union move closer to a trade agreement that could exempt alcoholic beverages from new tariffs. Earlier this month, President Donald Trump announced a 30% tariff on all products from the European Union, replacing the current

10% rate. The announcement caused concern across the European wine and spirits sector, as well as among American importers and consumers, who feared higher prices and disruptions in supply.

Following Trump’s announcement, the European Union began negotiations with U.S. officials to seek a resolution. However, talks stalled last week. On July 18, White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt stated that negotiations had reached an impasse and confirmed that the 30% tariffs on European goods would take effect in August unless an agreement was reached.

Today, new information suggests a breakthrough may be near. According to reports from the Financial Times, the EU and the U.S. are finalizing a deal that would set tariffs on most European imports at 15%, mirroring a recent agreement between the U.S. and Japan. Importantly, this proposed tariff would not apply to wine, spirits, or other alcoholic beverages.

This development offers relief to producers and exporters in Europe who rely heavily on the American market. The U.S. is one of the largest destinations for European wines and spirits, with billions of dollars in annual trade. American importers and distributors also benefit from access to these products, which are popular among U.S. consumers.

While this is only a preliminary agreement, it provides a foundation for further negotiations aimed at avoiding the steep 30% tariff originally announced by President Trump. The European Commission has stated that its main goal is to reach a negotiated outcome with the United States before August 1 to prevent these higher tariffs from taking effect.

Despite progress in talks, EU officials continue to prepare countermeasures valued at €93 billion in case negotiations fail before the deadline. The Commission has emphasized its commitment to protecting European interests while seeking a balanced solution with Washington.

The potential exemption of wine and spirits from new tariffs is seen as a positive step for both sides. It would help maintain stability in transatlantic trade and support businesses on both continents that depend on open markets for alcoholic beverages. As discussions continue, industry stakeholders remain hopeful that a final agreement will

be reached soon, ensuring continued access to American shelves for European wines and spirits without additional costs for producers or consumers.