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Champagne region begins early grape harvest amid exceptional weather and rising temperatures

Producers anticipate an excellent vintage as climate change accelerates ripening and labor concerns persist in the vineyards

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The 2025 grape harvest in Champagne is starting earlier than usual, with the first authorized pickings beginning this week in some villages of the Aube region. The early start is due to exceptional weather conditions throughout the growing season.

According to Maxime Toubart, co-president of the Comité Champagne, the vineyards are in remarkable condition, allowing producers to approach this year’s harvest with confidence. David Chatillon, also co-president of the Comité Champagne, said that an excellent vintage is within reach. The organization reports that the health of the grape clusters is excellent, acidity levels are satisfactory, and aromatic maturity is developing well.

Each commune and grape variety—chardonnay, pinot noir, and meunier—has specific start dates for harvesting. While some areas in Aube began as early as Tuesday after receiving special permission due to rapid ripening, most villages will start picking early next week. The latest harvests are scheduled to begin on September 4.

The Comité Champagne attributes this early harvest to a particularly sunny year, noting that 2025 is the second warmest year since the beginning of the century. In recent days, sugar levels in the grapes have risen at a historically fast pace, confirming the need for an early harvest.

In July, Champagne growers and producers set the commercial yield for 2025 at 9,000 kilograms per hectare, down from 10,000 kilograms last year. This decision comes amid economic uncertainty and new trade challenges. On August 7, a 15% tariff on European wine and spirits exports to the United States took effect, impacting Champagne producers.

With forecasts of continued high temperatures during harvest time, the Comité Champagne has urged all producers to prioritize the health and safety of vineyard workers. This call comes just a month after three people were sentenced to prison for exploiting and housing around fifty workers—many undocumented—in poor conditions during last year’s harvest. Another trial related to similar allegations from 2023 is scheduled for late November in Châlons-en-Champagne.

The early start to the 2025 harvest highlights both the impact of climate change on traditional wine regions and ongoing concerns about labor practices in one of France’s most prestigious wine areas.