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Bordeaux Wine Prices Plunge to 28 Cents per Liter as Liquidations Spark Vandalism and Industry Crisis

Producers warn of market collapse amid falling demand, record-low auction prices, and rising tensions in France’s iconic wine region

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In the Bordeaux wine region, anger is growing among local producers as auctions of liquidated wines at extremely low prices threaten the stability of the market. The issue has become a central topic for the board of the Union of Bordeaux and Bordeaux Supérieur Wines, which represents more than half of the vineyards in the Gironde department. The board is meeting to discuss possible solutions to prevent these discounted sales from further damaging the industry.

A letter titled “We, the Angry Winegrowers” has been circulating in Bordeaux for several weeks. The letter, partially published by Vitisphère and reviewed by Le Monde, claims responsibility for two acts of vandalism that occurred in October. On the night between October 12 and 13, and again on October 16, unknown individuals entered wineries in Blaye and Médoc and opened wine vats, spilling a total of 1,000 hectoliters onto the floor. This was done to prevent the wines from being sold at what they described as “unacceptable” prices at auction.

Nicolas Carreau, president of the Blaye-Côtes-de-Bordeaux appellation and a close friend of one affected winemaker, explained that one of the wineries had just entered court-ordered administration. Its wines were auctioned off at a historic low price of 28 euro cents per liter, compared to an average bulk price of 2.39 euros per liter for that designation. Carreau said he understood why some producers took such drastic action, as these cheap wines compete directly with other local producers and drive down prices across the region.

The crisis in Bordeaux’s vineyards is deepening. Carreau warned that more business liquidations are likely, citing two additional cases within his own appellation. The most recent meeting of the regional viticulture task force, led by the Prefect of Nouvelle-Aquitaine, revealed that wine production in Gironde for the 2024-2025 harvest reached 3.25 million hectoliters—a 7% decrease from the previous year. Both exports and domestic sales through large retailers have declined.

On November 20, the board of the Union of Bordeaux and Bordeaux Supérieur Wines will address this sensitive issue for the first time. Michel-Éric Jacquin, president of the union, said their goal is to find a way to stop these discounted sales. He pointed out that bottles sold in supermarkets for less than one euro threaten to collapse the entire

sector.

With few options available, Jacquin said the union is seeking a politically viable solution that would involve stricter controls on these sales and bankruptcies. The aim is to make it harder for buyers to acquire Bordeaux wines at such low prices and to protect producers from further financial harm.

The situation highlights growing tensions in one of France’s most famous wine regions as producers struggle with falling demand and increased competition. Many fear that if no action is taken, more wineries will be forced into liquidation, leading to further instability in an already fragile market.