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South Africa Expects Larger 2026 Wine Harvest After Two Years of Favorable Weather

Stable grape yields and high quality boost optimism for exports to Europe, UK, and expanding Asian markets

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South Africa’s wine industry is preparing for the 2026 harvest with a sense of cautious optimism, as early indicators point to another stable year for grape production. The first official crop estimate, released by private and producer-cellar growers and shared by

South Africa Wine, suggests that the upcoming harvest could be slightly larger than last year’s. This outlook follows a season in which vineyards avoided major weather disruptions, such as frost and flooding, for the second year in a row.

The majority of South Africa’s wine production takes place in the Western Cape, a region known for its winter rainfall. Smaller volumes are produced in the Northern Cape. The favorable weather patterns seen in 2025 have continued into this year, supporting healthy grape maturation and good yields. According to Wandile Sihlobo, chief economist at the Agricultural Business Chamber of South Africa, timely rains and periods of intense heat have contributed to excellent grape quality and strong volumes.

Sihlobo spoke about these developments during an interview with Stephen Grootes on The Money Show. He emphasized that the positive weather conditions are not only benefiting wine producers but are also supporting broader agricultural growth across the country. Sihlobo noted that while the industry is pleased with the quality and quantity of grapes, attention is now turning to international markets. He highlighted Europe and the United Kingdom as key destinations for South African wine exports and mentioned ongoing efforts to expand into Asian markets, particularly China.

The wine sector remains one of South Africa’s most important agricultural value chains, providing jobs and supporting rural economies. The stable outlook for 2026 is expected to help sustain this role, provided that global demand remains strong. Industry leaders are watching export trends closely as they prepare for the new season, hoping that favorable weather will continue to support both production and sales abroad.