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France Plans 130 Million Euro Vine Removal, Up to 32,500 Hectares Targeted Amid Wine Sector Crisis

Political uncertainty and EU approval threaten emergency support for winegrowers as government faces key parliamentary votes next week

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The French government is preparing to launch a major vine removal plan worth 130 million euros, aimed at addressing the ongoing crisis in the country’s wine sector. The announcement was made by Agriculture Minister Annie Genevard during a press

conference in Paris on Friday, January 9. The plan is set to begin next Wednesday, pending political developments that could affect the government’s stability.

The initiative is part of a broader package of measures totaling 300 million euros, designed to support the agricultural sector. These measures were first outlined in November at the Sitevi trade show in Montpellier. The plan for the wine industry includes four main actions: a new vine removal program to better align production with market demand, an extension and easing of state-backed consolidation loans, 15 million euros in social charge relief for 2025 and 2026, and a request for European crisis funds to finance emergency distillation of surplus wine stocks.

Minister Genevard stated that she is awaiting a response from European Agriculture Commissioner Christophe Hansen regarding the request for 80 million euros from EU crisis reserves to support the distillation effort. This would help reduce excess wine stocks that have built up due to declining consumption and export challenges.

The vine removal program is scheduled to be launched at the FranceAgriMer wine council meeting next Wednesday. With a budget of 130 million euros and a removal premium set at 4,000 euros per hectare, up to 32,500 hectares of vines could be uprooted under this plan. Recent surveys suggest that around 35,000 hectares may be eligible or interested in participating.

If applications exceed available funding, priority will be given to winegrowers leaving the profession entirely and those removing all their vineyard parcels. A secondary criterion will favor vines planted more than ten years ago. The decisions expected on January 14 are intended to provide clarity for growers who need to plan pruning and treatments for the upcoming 2026 vintage.

The FNSEA, France’s main farmers’ union, welcomed the government’s response to demands from sectors in crisis, including both large-scale agriculture and viticulture.

However, two key conditions must be met before the vine removal plan can proceed. First, European regulations must be updated to allow permanent vine removal; this change is expected with the publication of new EU wine rules in March. Second, France’s 2026 budget law must be passed by parliament to secure the necessary

funding.

Amélie de Montchalin, Minister for Public Action and Accounts, highlighted the political stakes during the press conference. She noted that two motions of censure are scheduled for debate in the National Assembly on January 14. If the government falls as a result of these votes, it could jeopardize not only the vine removal plan but also much of the broader agricultural support package.

De Montchalin emphasized that many aspects of the 300-million-euro plan depend on having a fully approved budget rather than temporary stopgap measures. She pointed out that deputies representing agricultural regions will face a crucial decision: supporting or blocking government action on urgent issues facing winegrowers.

The current crisis in French viticulture has become a central political issue as lawmakers weigh their options ahead of Wednesday’s votes. The outcome will determine whether emergency support for thousands of wine producers can move forward as planned or face further delays amid ongoing political uncertainty.