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Swiss Government Proposes Wine Import Quota Tied to Use of Local Grapes

Plan aims to boost domestic wine producers as industry faces declining consumption and increased market pressures

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The Swiss Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research (DEFR) has opened a public consultation on a proposed amendment to the country’s wine ordinance. The change would allocate the World Trade Organization (WTO) customs

quota for wine based on the amount of Swiss-grown grapes purchased and pressed by companies. This measure aims to support domestic wine production amid a decline in wine consumption in Switzerland.

The consultation follows a roundtable held on August 18, 2025, where Federal Councillor Guy Parmelin brought together key stakeholders from the Swiss wine sector. Participants included representatives from grape growers, winemakers, traders, and cantonal authorities. The group discussed the challenges facing Swiss viticulture and agreed on the need for a unified long-term strategy. They also considered short-term measures that could be implemented by the industry, cantons, and federal government to address immediate market pressures.

In recent years, the Swiss wine sector has faced a difficult environment due to falling demand. To help stabilize the market, the federal government has already maintained annual funding of 9 million francs for wine sales promotion. In addition, during its winter 2025 session, Parliament approved an extra 10 million francs to support structural adjustments within the industry.

The proposed revision to the wine ordinance would distribute Switzerland’s WTO customs quota for wine imports according to how much local grape each company buys and processes. This means that companies using more Swiss-grown grapes would receive a larger share of the import quota. The goal is to encourage greater use of domestic grapes and strengthen local producers’ position in the market.

The consultation period will run until June 2026. After reviewing feedback from stakeholders and interested parties, the Federal Council is expected to make a decision in autumn 2026. The government has stated that these short-term measures are intended to complement broader long-term strategies for the Swiss wine sector.