

VINTAGE 2005: SECOND HIGHEST FOR WINE INDUSTRY

The 2005 wine vintage is the second highest ever for the New Zealand wine industry with a total of 142,000 tonnes of grapes harvested, according to the results of the New Zealand Winegrowers 2005 Vintage Survey. The grapes are expected to produce around 102 million litres of wine.

New Zealand Winegrowers chief executive, Philip Gregan, says the final result is in line with expectations. "In our mid vintage update in April we forecast a crop of 140,000 tonnes, so the end result is as expected. This makes it our second largest vintage ever, following on from last year's record of 166,000 tonnes."

Mr Gregan went on to say that the vintage size and quality was a result of good growing conditions. "The 2004/05 summer began unsettled and unusually cool, but from early January onwards growing conditions were ideal, producing high quality grapes through nearly all winegrowing regions. The Indian Summer during the main harvest month of April was a great finish to the ripening season," he says.

Mr Gregan says the vintage is good news for wine exports. "The record vintage of 2004 helped to grow exports 70% in the past year and open new markets. With supplies from the large 2005 vintage, continuing export growth is envisaged in the year ahead, albeit more slowly than the current year."

Regional Production

Regionally, Marlborough continues to lead grape production, accounting for 58 percent of the vintage, followed by Hawke's Bay at 20 percent and Gisborne at 16 percent.

Production in the minor regions was 7,780 tonnes, representing 6% of the vintage, down from 8% of the crop in vintage 2004.

Regional production changes compared with the 2004 vintage were (tonnes):

	2004	2005	Change	% change
Northland	144	183	+38	+27%
Auckland	1,497	948	-548	-37%
Waikato	457	948	-548	-54%
Gisborne	25,346	22,493	-2,853	-11%
Hawke's Bay	30,429	28,098	-2,331	-8%
Wellington	2,820	1,649	-1,171	-42%
Marlborough	92,581	81,034	-11,546	-12%
Nelson	4,563	2,454	-2,109	-46%
Canterbury	2,825	895	-1,930	-68%
Otago	1,1439	1,441	+1	0%

Varietal Production

Reflecting the overall trend most grape varieties experienced production falls compared with vintage 2004. However New Zealand's leading export style Sauvignon Blanc, was only marginally affected, as a result of new vineyard areas offsetting lower yields. Sauvignon Blanc with 63,000 tonnes harvested, represents 45 percent of the vintage. Red grape production was led by Pinot Noir at 14,600 tonnes, making up 10 percent of the vintage.

Compared with 2004 the changes in production for major varieties were as follows (tonnes):

	2004	2005	Change	% change
Merlot	9,330	9,194	-136	-1%
Sauvignon Blanc	67,773	63,297	-4,476	-7%
Pinot Gris	1,888	1,655	-233	-12%
Riesling	5,647	4,792	-856	-15%
Chardonnay	35,597	29,741	-5,856	-16%
Cabernet Sauvignon	4,045	3,018	-1,027	-25%
Pinot Noir	20,145	14,578	-5,567	-28%

ENDS -

About the 2005 Vintage Survey

This information has been sourced from a voluntary survey covering 72 percent of wineries and an estimated 98 per cent of the total vintage.