

Outstanding vintage despite adverse Covid-19 conditions

While it will be forever remembered as the Covid-19 harvest, an excellent summer throughout most of the country has contributed to an outstanding vintage for New Zealand's wine regions.

"Although Covid-19 restrictions did have a huge impact on the way the harvest was run, they will not affect the quality of the wine, and we are really looking forward to some exceptional wines coming from this year's vintage" said Philip Gregan, CEO of New Zealand Winegrowers.

The New Zealand wine industry had hoped for a larger harvest in 2020, after smaller than expected crops over the last three years. With 457,000 tonnes of grapes harvested, this year's vintage will help the industry to meet the high demand for New Zealand wine.

With New Zealand moving into Alert Level 4 just as Vintage 2020 began, the industry was acutely aware that it was in an incredibly privileged position to be allowed to pick the grapes, says Gregan.

"Throughout the entire lockdown our number one priority remained – ensuring the safety of our people and our communities. The fact that harvest was completed safely, testifies to how our industry fully embraced the challenges to meet the strict Covid-19 requirements."

New Zealand Winegrowers is confident Vintage 2020 wines will only enhance New Zealand's international reputation for premium and sustainable wines.

"Positively, the reputation of our wine remains strong in our key international markets, and our wines continue to resonate with both consumers and the trade. While the world has changed, what has not changed is the love that people have for New Zealand wine".

Wine is New Zealand's sixth largest export good, and New Zealand wine is exported to more than 100 countries. New Zealand wine exports are up by 6% on last year, and currently valued at \$1.92 billion.

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