

Media Release

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Vintage 2018 benefits from warm summer

A warm summer benefited New Zealand's winegrowing regions, with 419,000 tonnes of grapes harvested during Vintage 2018.

This is up 6% on the 2017 tonnage, but is still lower than initially anticipated in a season marked by a very early start to harvesting.

New Zealand Winegrowers CEO Philip Gregan says many wineries had been hoping for an even larger vintage, given 2017's small harvest.

"However, we now expect export growth in the year ahead will be modest. It will be up to wineries to manage any product shortages from the vintage."

In addition to prompting an early harvest, the warm summer produced fruit with good ripeness levels.

A highlight from Vintage 2018 is the increased production of red wines.

"Production of both Pinot Noir and Merlot has lifted more than 20% on last year, which will be welcomed by both wineries and consumers. These varieties were down sharply in 2017 and it is very positive to see a return to more normal production levels this year," Mr Gregan says.

New Zealand Winegrowers is confident Vintage 2018 wines will add to New Zealand's reputation as a premium producer of cool climate wines.

"Every vintage is different and ultimately the final test is the quality delivered in the bottle to consumers. We are certain that consumers will enjoy the benefits of the warm summer when they get to taste the wines from Vintage 2018," Mr Gregan says.

New Zealand wine exports are currently valued at \$1.71 billion, up 3% in the past year. Wine is New Zealand's fifth largest export good.

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