

“How can wine be sustainable if it’s shipped from NZ?”

Emissions

Food miles only consider emissions associated with a single component of the complex value chain that produces wine and delivers it in market: the distance it travels from point of origin to point of consumption. Despite this fact, it is at times mistakenly used interchangeably with the concept of ‘sustainability’.

A Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) approach ensures all GHG emissions in the supply chain of wine (not simply those associated with transport) are accounted for, giving us a more complete picture. NZW has a goal of becoming a net zero industry before 2050 in line with the Paris Agreement.



NZW net-zero emissions by 2050

Taking the LCA approach consistently demonstrates that the GHG emissions associated with bringing food and beverage to market are dominated by the production phase (growing and processing raw products such as grapes) as opposed to the freight and shipping phase.

Emissions (grams of CO₂-e) per 750ml bottle of NZ wine, shipped



Sustainability

Food miles is not a proxy measure of product sustainability. The concept of product sustainability is based on three key pillars: environmental, economic and social well-being. NZW manages impacts across all of these pillars through our internationally acclaimed Sustainable Winegrowing NZ (SWNZ) programme.

Under SWNZ, 98% of New Zealand’s vineyard area is certified by independent auditors to ensure they are meeting robust industry baseline standards across sustainability metrics in six focus areas: People, Climate Change, Waste, Water, Soil and Pest and Disease. These standards have been developed to align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Efficient Production

The production phase of NZ wine is energy efficient. Well managed production practices in NZ means our wine can be delivered to international markets more efficiently than local markets are able to. Production factors include:



Lower fossil fuel use compared with other producer regions



Our soil, sun and rain conditions mean lower fertilizer use



NZs electricity grid is around 85% renewable (the OECD average is around 25% renewable)



High levels of forestry in NZ offset roughly a third of all gross emissions across NZ’s industries



Low impact pest and disease controls (governed through independently verified audits and accreditation)

Shipping

The bulk of emissions associated with the global food and beverage trade is associated with road transport within counties, rather than cross-border shipments. In fact, consumers driving their private vehicles to the store to buy wine has been found to be one of the biggest contributors to the GHG emissions on a per unit basis.

NZ wine is largely shipped by sea to our international markets, which is ten times as efficient as road transport.



New Zealand Wine
Altogether Unique.

For more information on this issue and to read in more depth research behind this resource, please refer to the full [NZW Food Miles here](#)