Economic Environment

- Japan plans to eliminate import tariffs on EU wines

Japan is negotiating with the EU to scrap tariffs on imported wines produced in EU countries as the two parties enter the final stages of negotiations that first started in 2013.

According to a report by Japan News, Japan will gradually lower the current 15% tariff on EU wines to zero about eight years after the finalisation of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).

The move came at a time when Chile and Australia, the two countries that have forged EPAs with Japan, have surged ahead in wine exports to Japan after the reduction of tariffs. Chile, for instance, has become Japan’s top wine importer in terms of volume in 2015, surpassing France for the first time. The South American country signed an EPA with Japan in 2007, and tariffs on its wines has been cut back to the current 2.3%.

For Australian wines, the current tariff stands at 7.5% since the two countries’ EPA came into effect in 2015.

Japan, currently the world’s fifth largest wine importing country, imported 25.9 million litres of wines in 2016, according to figures released by Vinexpo and IWSR.

Source: The Drinks Business 21 June 2017

Major Wine Producing Countries

- Why SA wine exports must move from bulk to brands

South Africa’s wine industry must shift its emphasis from volume to value and from a production orientation to a market orientation. This is according to Anton Smuts, the newly elected chairperson of Vinpro. He shared his thoughts on some of the pressing issues that currently prevail in the industry.

Click here to read more
Other Wine Producing Countries

- **Sobering Outlook for English Fizz**

Despite all the hype surrounding English wine, very few are actually turning a profit.

It's no secret that English sparkling wine is the darling of the UK trade at the moment. It all appears to be one big utopia – sales are growing, sommeliers are on board, and English Wine's PR is rock solid. As a result, it's hardly surprisingly that the press coverage of this nascent industry has been almost uniformly positive, if not sycophantic.

A more objective analysis of Europe's youngest wine industry (current consumption stands at less than 2 percent of the total fizz market in the UK) is long overdue. That leading brands produce a high-quality product is clear; however, what is less certain is whether English sparkling will be able to overcome the considerable challenges that lie ahead, and how many casualties there will be along the way?

[Click here to read more](#)