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Major Wine Producing Countries

French Winemakers Have Too Much Inventory, So They’re Cutting Prices on US Imports
When the Trump Administration moved to push through new tariffs on European goods late last year, one of the categories hit hardest was French wine, which saw its products levied with a 25 percent tax. The resulting price hike has made many bottles simply too expensive for US sellers to import. Now, with an abundance of wine bottles in reserve, French vintners are reportedly slashing prices to stay afloat.

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Why so many epidemics originate in Asia and Africa
The coronavirus disease, known as COVID-19, is a frightening reminder of the imminent global threat posed by emerging infectious diseases. Although epidemics have arisen during all of human history, they now seem to be on the rise. In just the past 20 years, coronaviruses alone have caused three major outbreaks worldwide. Even more troubling, the duration between these three pandemics has gotten shorter.

An unprecedented shift in human population is one reason why more diseases originate in Asia and Africa. Rapid urbanization is happening throughout Asia and the Pacific regions, where 60% of the world already lives. According to the World Bank, almost 200 million people moved to urban areas in East Asia during the first decade of the 21st century. To put that into perspective, 200 million people could form the eighth most populous country in the world.

Migration on that scale means forest land is destroyed to create residential areas. Wild animals, forced to move closer to cities and towns, inevitably encounter domestic animals and the human population. Wild animals often harbor viruses; bats, for instance, can carry hundreds of them. And viruses, jumping species to species, can ultimately infect people.

Eventually, extreme urbanization becomes a vicious cycle: More people bring more deforestation, and human expansion and the loss of habitat ultimately kills off predators,
including those that feed off rodents. With the predators gone – or at least with their numbers sharply diminished – the rodent population explodes. And as studies in Africa show, so does the risk of zoonotic disease.

The situation is only likely to get worse. A major proportion of East Asia’s population still lives in rural areas. Urbanization is expected to continue for decades.

Tropical regions, rich in host biodiversity, already hold a large pool of pathogens, greatly increasing the chance that a novel pathogen will emerge. The farming system throughout Africa and Asia doesn’t help.

On both continents, many families depend on subsistence farming and a minuscule supply of livestock. Disease control, feed supplementation and housing for those animals is extremely limited. Cattle, chickens and pigs, which can carry endemic disease, are often in close contact with each other, a variety of nondomestic animals and humans.

And not just on the farms: Live animal markets, commonplace throughout Asia and Africa, feature crowded conditions and the intimate mixing of multiple species, including humans. This too plays a key role in how a killer pathogen could emerge and spread between species.

Another risk: bushmeat hunting and butchering, which is particularly widespread in sub-Saharan Africa. So is traditional Chinese medicine, which purports to provide remedies for a host of conditions like arthritis, epilepsy and erectile dysfunction.

**USA: More winegrapes could go unsold, analysts believe**

With the amount of winegrapes that went unpicked in 2019, the message to grape growers from marketers and vineyard managers is clear: Without a winery contract, grapes could easily not have a buyer this year.

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