Consumer Countries/Markets

Supply chain ‘stuffed’ as US consumers see lowest wine prices for 20 years
US wine consumers are set to enjoy the “best wine retail values in 20 years” due to oversupply and shrinking demand, a new report has said, as it warns producers that “the supply chain is stuffed”.

The Silicon Valley Bank’s State of the Wine Industry 2020 Report report blamed a number of issues, including oversupply along with the failure of the industry to engage with new consumers and adapt to consumer changes. 

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Economic Environment

Nielsen: Navigating the Turbulence of Tariffs
Tariffs have dominated headlines since March 2018, when the U.S. first announced the beginning of a series of tariffs affecting several industries, sectors and countries. Since then, “on again off again” signals have besieged the marketplace, leaving many businesses to contend with rising prices and a sense of whiplash.

Prepare for price and volume changes, expect a political element. 

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Global Trends - Wine Industry Key Elements

The World’s Diverging Wine Tastes
A snapshot of searches from different markets shows a changing wine market.

The most searched-for wines in the world are always the same, right? Dom Pérignon, Mouton and Lafite; it's always been like this and always will be – nothing to see here. Except there is plenty to see here, especially when you drill down through the headline stuff and look at the immense – and growing – variance between the world's different wine markets.
America flies the flag - The wine rankings in the US display a touching level of patriotism, with two local wines breaking up the French hegemony.

Britain sticks to tradition - The UK, by contrast, is a tiny bit more adventurous. Click here to read more

**Nuusbrokkies / News Snippets**

**How South African wineland workers used global networks to fight for their rights**
By Thomas Hastings, Lecturer in Management, Queen's University Belfast

**Lessons learnt**

The creation of progressive labour laws is important in securing improved standards of work. But laws in themselves remain limited in their effectiveness in industries where workers are hidden and isolated, and where inspectorates struggle to attend to the work realities on the ground.

That’s why regulation is so important.

The case study I have done shows that workers are capable of influencing both private and public forms of regulation in their interests. This involves the creation of consumer boycotts, as well as supply lines of pressure from within corporate networks which producers will struggle to ignore.

Workers not only create pressure to reform laws and regulation: they can influence the strategies for policing labour standards too, for example by getting the labour inspectorate to be more active.

In this instance workers have helped re-orientate regulatory agencies away from merely nudging companies to improve conditions towards a stronger regulatory model with a threat of sanction.

Others could learn from the collaborative networks that were formed.

Despite this positive story it is important to stress that the job of improving labour standards in South African wine is far from finished. Issues such as evictions of workers and the over-reliance of casual labour (often via labour brokers) are not typically addressed by either labour inspectorates or private codes of conduct.

The need for transnational worker activism in monitoring labour standards is sure to remain relevant. Click here to read more

**Socio-Cultural Environment**
4 Specific Challenges Of Pregnancy And New Motherhood While Working In Wine

There are no hard and fast rules, no universal guidebook, and no one-size-fits-all solution for pregnancy, young parenthood and revised work-life realities when working in the wine industry. As the number of women employees working in wine continues to grow and reach a more critical mass, especially relative to the number of women who worked in wine even ten or fifteen years ago, the expectations (both codified and implicit) will also evolve and grow.

Gender Imbalance Around Professional Progression - Professional progression being thrown off-kilter by pregnancy and new parenthood is hardly an issue that’s isolated to the wine industry, but the gender imbalance of it becomes particularly pronounced when maternity and paternity leave policies within wine vary so widely, culturally and geographically, from mandatory to vague to non-existent.

The Imperfections of Child Care - Hand-in-hand with the problematic of inconsistent family leave policies when a baby is born is the ongoing challenge of child care as that baby grows older. I heard from multiple women from the US to Europe to Australia who said that, between the “new mother glass ceiling” and unrealistic child care “accommodations,” they saw no recourse other than leaving the wine industry or striking out with their own small businesses where time management was more in their own control.

“Handshake” Agreements that Fall Apart - At the far negative end of the spectrum, colleagues from around the wine world shared their experiences of “handshake” work agreements that fell apart once they became pregnant and their baby was born. Winemakers working as casual employees in another culture or country, for example, are already in an economically vulnerable position. After they had their babies, they were told there was “no need” for them to return to work. One winery in Italy added that they believed they were doing the new mother a favor by encouraging her to stop working and stay home with her newborn.

Combating Clichés - Several of the initial interviewees for this series mentioned the understanding and support of industry colleagues who, as in the case of London-based wine educator Christina Marsiglio MW, “don’t seem to have any issue with pregnant or breastfeeding mums being active members of the industry.”

Just as expectations around pregnancy and new motherhood within the wine industry will continue to evolve and be codified as standard practices, cultural assumptions reflected in the baby-to-wine-country comment will continue to be challenged. It’s nothing new but the gender of wine is changing more quickly now. We still have a ways to go to adapt.

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