Economic Environment

Is the World Economy Headed for a Fall?

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has once again cut its global growth forecast for 2019. In its new semi-annual World Economic Report, the organization now projects a 3.3% growth rate, down from the 3.5% it predicted in January, 3.7% in October and 4% a year ago. Key reasons for the downward revisions: the U.S.-China trade war and the potential for a disorderly Brexit. [Click here to read more]

Global Trends - Wine Industry Key Elements

What’s the Difference Between Sustainable, Organic and Biodynamic Wine?

Sustainable
This is a word that’s been tossed around quite a bit. It does not mean that a business is necessarily certified organic or biodynamic, (many indeed have pursued this certification in addition, but always do further research to make sure, more on that below). What it does mean is that the company engages in eco-friendly practices such as limiting/eliminating chemical waste and the use of pesticides, replanting crops or trees to replace those harvested for production, carbon footprint reduction, energy efficiency initiatives, recycled packaging, biodiversity programs, wildlife conservation and other green initiatives. The basic concept of sustainability is to do business while leaving as little negative impact on the earth as possible.

Organic
Few realize there is a major difference between organic grapes and organic wine, and one of the best explanations comes from vineyardbrands.com: "Either the wine has ‘certified organically grown grapes’, which is exactly what it sounds like—no synthetic pesticides, etc. Or the wine is ‘organic wine,’ which means the wine is not only made from organic grapes, but there are also no added sulfites during production.” (Incidentally, every wine, organic or not, contains naturally occurring sulfites, so it is incorrect to say that one is drinking an entirely sulfite-free wine.)
Biodynamic
Think of biodynamic as the practice that takes extra, jolly green giant-sized steps beyond the organic. Biodynamic farms are, in effect, their own ecosystem. No synthetic chemical interference of any kind is used to farm biodynamically. The practice has gained a “hippy-dippy-trippy” reputation because of its association with ancient agricultural concepts such as following lunar growing cycles and astrological charts, with systems only found in nature allowed to be used to protect and nourish the vines. Biodynamic wine farming is the manifestation of the interconnectedness of the earth, the vines and the solar system, with a fairly strict calendar identifying which days are best for harvesting, pruning and watering, as well as which ones to just let nature take its course.
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Major Wine Producing Countries

How climate change is affecting the Australian wine industry

The 2019 Australian grape harvest is under way but it has taken a hit from the fact this summer has been one of the hottest and driest on record. All over the world, wine growers report that grapes are ripening earlier. So far, the effects on the taste of wine have not been adverse, as winemakers are learning how to deal with hot seasons.

They are watering the vines more – if they have water available. They’re managing the vine canopies better to provide optimal leaf shading for the bunches. They’re mulching their vineyards to retain moisture in the soil beneath the vines. In some cases, they're changing their trellising system so they can better manage the canopy. Some are even switching their vine plantings to cooler parts of their properties, such as south or east-facing slopes instead of north or west, because less-exposed sites are cooler.

But perhaps the most effective way to manage global warming is to replant with grape varieties that are more heat- and drought-tolerant.
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Nuusbrokkies / News Snippets

English wine needs to move beyond generic ‘white’ and ‘red’ labels

English wine needs to move beyond generic ‘white’ and ‘red’ labelling on the bottle and call out the grape varieties, UK grocery giant Tesco has said, as it launches a new, premium English still wine in its *finest range.
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