



CBI
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CBI Product Factsheet:

Sustainable wine in Europe

Introduction

In Europe, sustainable wine is mostly associated with organic wine. However, sustainability involves a much wider range of practices aimed at reducing the environmental impact of wine production and improving working conditions. Sustainable practices can include converting to organic production, reducing energy and water use, and recycling, among others. The market for sustainable wine is still considered to be a niche, but a niche with growth potential. Entering this market also involves challenges, such as convincing consumers of the quality of organic wine or communicating the value of your sustainable approach.

Product Description

Sustainability is a container term that has a different meaning for different people. In the wine industry, it can refer to production techniques such as organic or biodynamic wine production, but also to the reduction of packaging waste or the application of fair trade principles. This fact sheet focuses primarily on organic wine, which is the main type of sustainable wine on the European market.

Organic wine

Wine can be certified as organic when its grapes are grown in accordance with organic farming principles. This implies the use of grapes that are cultivated without the use of any artificial chemical fungicides, pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers. Organic viticulture (the production of organic wine) includes protection of the natural balance of the vineyard and its surrounding environment during the production process. At the winemaking level, organic techniques are used. This means little to no manipulation of wines by reverse osmosis and excessive filtration and no use of flavour additives.

Wine can only carry the organic label when it meets the criteria set by certification agencies. Such criteria differ across agencies and countries worldwide. In order to be accepted by EU countries as an organic product, you need certification that complies with EU standards concerning organic wine. These standards have been altered most recently in 2012 and will be discussed in the section concerning legislative requirements.

In 2014, the European Commission published a [proposal and action plan for new organic regulation](#). New rules are expected to come into effect in 2017 and could bring significant changes. For developing country exporters, this is likely to include stricter requirements for traceability of organic products.

Biodynamic wine

Biodynamic wine production shares many principles with organic wine production. In biodynamic viticulture, the farm is seen as a cohesive interconnected living system. It excludes chemicals from the production system, but also uses some spiritual practices. Biodynamic producers believe that these spiritual practices help to improve the vineyard's health. Producers can get certified against standards for biodynamic wine production as laid down by [Demeter International](#).

Natural wine

A legal definition of natural wine does not exist. Generally, natural wine producers believe that minimal chemical and technological intervention during wine production is better for the vineyard and wines. They take organic or biodynamic wine production one step further by applying even stricter rules for the use of additives and the removal of anything from the wine. Natural wines improve by ageing due to the high tannins in the wine.

Fair trade wine

Fair trade wine typically refers to wine that has been certified by [Fairtrade International](#) or [Fair for Life](#). The 'fair trade' concept promotes fair pricing and improved social conditions for producers and their communities. Wine producers can have their products labelled as Fairtrade by going through a certification process that ensures compliance with specific economic, social, and environmental standards.

Product Specification

Quality

Consumers of sustainable wines no longer accept that those wines are of lower quality than conventional wines of the same price. This implies equal quality requirements for conventional and sustainable wine. Consumers of biodynamic and natural wines even expect premium quality.

- Higher taste intensity is generally associated with higher quality;
- Sweetness is widely acceptable in the low-end segment, but not in the high-end segment;
- Premium wines generally have a relatively high alcohol content (>13%), while some entry-level wines can have a relatively low alcohol content (<11%).

Quality requirements only differ in the following areas:

- Organic, biodynamic, and natural wine cannot contain artificial chemicals;
- Sorbic acid and desulfurization are not allowed;
- Consumers of organic, biodynamic, and natural wine accept a shorter shelf-life, which is related to the lower use of sulphites. Please refer to 'Legislative requirements' for more information.

Labelling

The EU has set compulsory labelling particulars for wines:

- The name of the Protected Denomination of Origin (PDO)/ Protected geographical Indication (PGI) or Wine of 'producing country'/Produced in 'producing country'/Product of 'producing country'
- Actual Alcoholic strength (AAS)
- Nominal volume
- Importer details
- Allergenic ingredients:
 - All wines containing over 10 milligrams of sulphite per litre must be labelled with the indication "Contains sulphites". This information is crucial for individuals who are sensitive to sulphites and experience problems such as shortness of breath and coughing. If your wine contains only a few mg or no sulphites, you can mention this on the label to serve these consumers.
 - If wine is clarified with egg or milk products, these must also be mentioned on the label.
 - Moreover, allergens must be mentioned in the language of the target market.

In 2012, the EU designed additional rules on how to label organic wine:

- The EU organic logo can be **voluntarily** used for wine imported from non-EU countries.
- The label must show the code number of the certifier.
- Organic indications depend on the language and usage in the respective EU Member State. The terms in use per EU Member State can be found [here](#).
- If wine is not made from 100% organic grapes, the label cannot show the EU organic logo, but may state which part of the grapes are organic on its label. A wine is only allowed to use 'organic' in its sales description if more than 95% of the grapes used are organic.

Additional non-legislative tips on wine labelling:

- Legislation does not require the exact composition of a blend on the label. However, rising interest of consumers in the composition of a wine increases the need to include such information on the label.
- If you target educated consumers, it is worth mentioning the grape variety and vintage. This can have a positive effect on consumer perception of your product's quality.
- The Food Standards Agency of the United Kingdom provides useful [guidance on more detailed labelling requirements](#), which is also applicable elsewhere in the EU.

Packaging

Similar to conventional wines, sustainable wines can be shipped both in bulk and in bottles. Most European organic wine producers (57%) and biodynamic and natural wine producers sell their wine exclusively bottled. However, consumers who are concerned about the greenhouse effect on the global climate claim that wine shipped as bulk wine has a lower carbon footprint. In their view, bulk wine is more environmentally friendly than bottled wine travelling the same distance. However, the carbon footprint of wine influences the purchasing decisions of only a very small group of consumers. The worldwide increase in bulk wine shipments is mainly driven by cost factors.

Bottled wine

Although consumers of sustainable wine are more concerned about the environmental effects of production than other consumers, this is not reflected in their preference for sustainable packaging, such as Tetrapak and Bag-in-Box. The majority still prefers glass bottles, as other packaging is perceived as lower quality. This is even more the case for consumers of biodynamic and natural wine which place relatively more value on packaging quality than organic wine consumers. These wines are almost exclusively sold in bottles, also because producers of these wines often lack volume to switch to other packaging. These producers could choose to use lighter glass bottles which are also promoted by larger EU wine importers. The latter have to pay an eco-tax based on the weight of the bottles in order to promote more sustainable packaging.

Nevertheless, there is an increase in wine with sustainable packaging on the EU market. Consumers are more and more educated on the improved quality of other types of packaging. In the Netherlands, for example, environmental organisations are promoting the use of sustainable packaging to consumers and in the Nordic countries sustainable packaging is being stimulated by the monopolies via tenders.

Table 1: Characteristics of different types of packaging for wine

	Recyclability	Transport costs + emissions	Quality perception	On-the-go consumption at events	Price	Shelf life
Glass bottles	High	High	High	Not suitable	High	Long
Bag in box	High	Low	Medium	Not suitable	Low	Short
Tetra Pak	High	Low	Medium	Suitable	Low	Medium
Cans and plastic containers (PET)	High	Low	Low	Highly suitable	Medium	Short

Corks (natural or synthetic, e.g. Nomacorc) and screw caps (e.g. Stelvin) are both common stoppers in the sustainable wine market. Plastic stoppers are very common as well, unlike glass stoppers (e.g. Vinolok), which are less common for wines. The selection of the type of stopper should depend on the requirements of the buyer.

Bulk wine

Two types of packaging are available for the transport of bulk wine:

- Flexitanks are intended for installation in a 20 ft ISO shipping container.
- ISO tanks offer all the advantages of flexitanks, but are more polluting and expensive in transport due to higher weight. One advantage of an ISO tank is its reliability; they have a lower risk of defects compared to flexitanks.

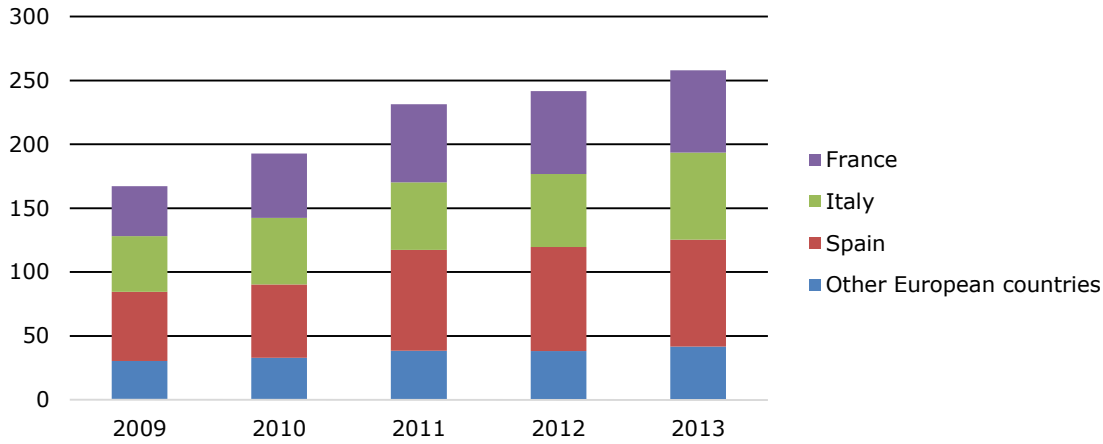
What is the demand for sustainable wine in Europe?

In the last decade, the European market for sustainable products, mostly comprising organic products, has developed from a small niche market into a major market segment. Both consumer awareness on the benefits of organic farming and promotion of organic farming through EU policies have contributed to this development. The adoption of biodynamic viticulture by world-famous vineyards has stimulated development of the biodynamic wine market. However, compared to the market for organic wine, biodynamic wine remains a small niche.

Production

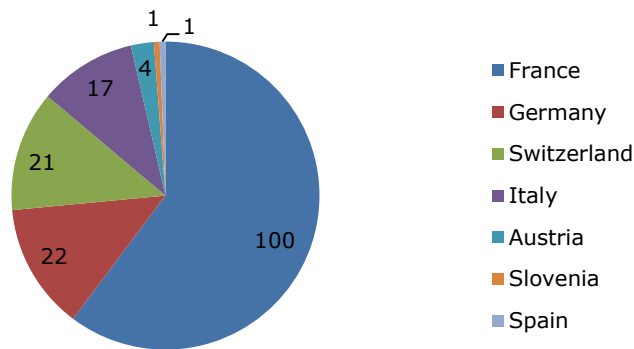
In Europe, organic viticulture is growing rapidly. By the end of 2013, the total organic grape area amounted to 258 thousand ha. Since 2008, the organic grape area has increased by 17% annually. 6.6% of all grape areas in Europe are now certified organic (FiBL/IFOAM, 2015). Promotion through EU policies and a growing market for organic food and drinks have triggered this rapid development of organic viticulture in Europe.

Figure 1: European organic grape area (in thousand ha)



Source: FiBL-IFOAM (2015)

Figure 2: European biodynamic wine producers, 2011



Source: Wine Alchemy Biodynamic Directory (2014)

Tip:

- See the paragraph on competition for more information on EU promotional policies.

In a global context, Europe is by far the largest producer of organic wine worldwide. Its organic grape area constitutes almost 90% of the total area under organic grape cultivation worldwide (FiBL/IFOAM, 2015).

Tip:

- Most opportunities for developing country producers of organic wine can be found in those European countries that have an increased demand for organic wines, but do not produce much organic wine themselves, e.g. Denmark and Sweden.

Spain, France, and Italy, the largest wine producers in Europe, are also the main organic wine producing countries. Even some prestigious wine estates have converted to organic farming.

Tip:

- Consider hiring the help and expertise of a European (e.g. Spanish, French or Italian) organic wine producer in order to increase your knowledge on organic viticulture and viniculture.

In Europe, only around 150-200 biodynamic wine producers are certified by Demeter and/or member of the Union [Biodyvin](#). More wine producers apply biodynamic farming principles, but do not have the certificate or membership of Biodyvin. In most cases, these wine producers often do not market their wine as biodynamic, but focus on producing high-quality premium wine.

Tip:

- French wine producers dominate the market for biodynamic wines and set standards for quality. Exporters should carefully look and learn from French wine producers in order to be competitive on the EU market.

Consumption

In 2013, total annual sales of organic products in Europe increased by 6.0%, to € 24.3 billion (FiBL/AMI, 2015). The share of organic food sales in total food sales ranges from 0.2% in Poland, Portugal, Latvia, Lithuania, and Slovakia to 8% in Denmark. A conservative estimate of organic wine consumption, based on the average share of organic food in the total food market of the 5 largest wine markets (2.1%), amounts to 2.7 million hl. However, actual organic wine consumption is likely to be higher, as organic wine sales perform better than sales of organic food in general. For example, wine accounts for more than 10% of the organic market in France and Croatia (FiBL/AMI, 2015).

According to Fairtrade International, global consumption of Fairtrade wine amounted to 22.2 million litres in 2014, of which 19% was organically certified. In the year before, global sales amounted to 20.9 million litres, of which 9% was organic. This means that not only sales of Fairtrade wine are increasing rapidly, but so are sales of wine which is both Fairtrade and organic.

Tip:

- Stay informed about developments in the organic and fair trade(wine) market by regularly checking the [website of IFOAM](#).

In Norway and Sweden, the monopolies push organic wine sales. Currently, organic wine already makes up an estimated 5.0% of the market. The monopolies aim for a 10% market share by 2020. They want to show customers that they are taking responsibility for sustainability issues.

Tip:

- Target the monopolies of Norway and Sweden to benefit from growing interest in organic wine.

On the individual EU member level, demand for organic wine has grown particularly fast in the United Kingdom (UK), the Netherlands, and Sweden. In the Netherlands, the success of organic supermarkets such as Ekoplaza or Marqt shows that organic products are becoming mainstream.

Consumption of biodynamic and natural wine amounts to only a fraction of organic wine consumption. Only visitors of fine restaurants with top sommeliers, and wine lovers consume these wines. Most of them are located in France which leads the market.

Tip:

- Investigate the wine preferences of consumers in various European markets before targeting them. Since the UK, the Netherlands, and Sweden do not produce organic wine in significant amounts themselves, but do witness increased demand for it, these countries could be promising entry markets for developing country exporters.

Import and Export

Imports of organic wine have most potential in Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Germany, UK, Switzerland, Austria, and the Benelux countries. France, Italy, and Spain are not as interested in importing organic wine, since they produce enough themselves. Germany is the world's leading importer of organic wine with an annual volume of around 30 million bottles, which is equivalent to 225 thousand hl ([IFOAM](#)). A large part of Germany's organic wine imports comes from European wineries (e.g. Spain and Italy).

Tip:

- Find out the preferences of consumers regarding organic products in the country you wish to enter before making the decision to target its market. Not all European consumers have the same perception of organic products.

Most European trade in biodynamic and natural wines takes place between European countries. Imports from developing countries are insignificant.

What trends offer opportunities on the European market for sustainable wine?

From niche to mainstream

Environmental and health concerns are driving the boost of organic wine sales in Europe. People are increasingly choosing for organic products and wine is no exception. At the moment, mainly boutique wineries and small businesses have converted their production to organic. Large wineries, however, are following this trend. Even though it is still a niche in many markets, some countries such as the Netherlands, Germany, and Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland) already have mature organic markets.

Tip:

- If you are a new supplier in the organic wine market, consider supplying the Netherlands, Germany or Scandinavian countries. Some of these might not be the largest markets in terms of volume, but these markets are considered frontrunners in terms of organic products.

Diversity in sustainability labels confuses consumers

The spectrum of labels and certification bodies available is huge and every label is different. This development shows that sustainability is a hot topic. At the same time, the amount of labels available causes confusion amongst consumers. This is one of the main arguments for the introduction of the EU organic label and respective legislation. The label creates uniformity among organically produced wine. This will help consumers to distinguish more easily between conventional and organic wine.

Tip:

- Apply the EU's standards for organic production and its labelling rules in order to be allowed to carry an EU organic logo on your products. This logo will allow you to benefit from greater consumer recognition.

Retailers guide consumers

Instead of looking for products with particular sustainability claims, consumers increasingly express their concerns about sustainability through their choice of retailers. As a result, retailers have an interest in including sustainable products in their product range to convey an image of sustainability to their customers.

Tip:

- Find out more about the interests of leading retailers in your target country to determine which sustainability aspects are most appreciated.

Boxed wine gains popularity

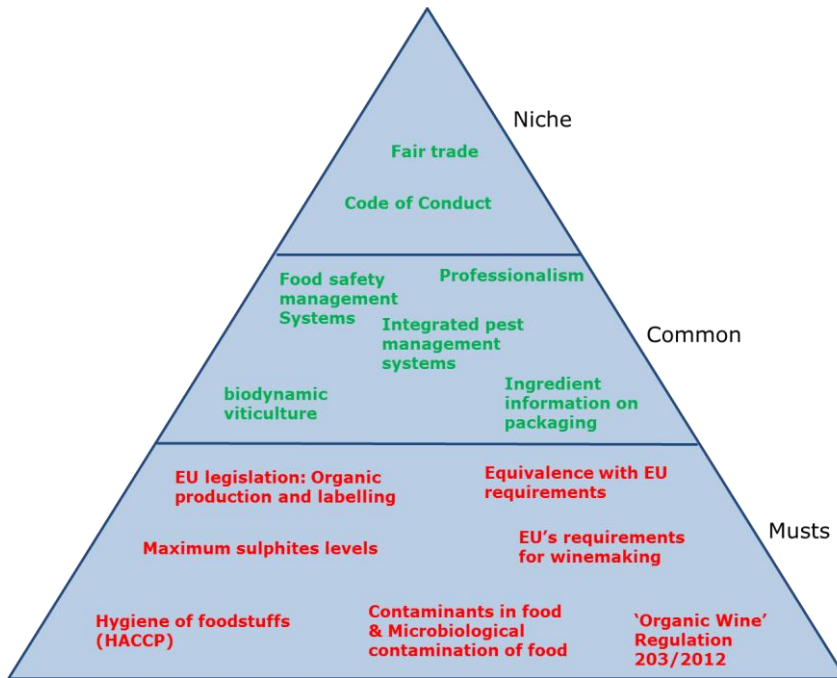
The packaging of boxed wine is much lighter in weight than glass bottles and can be stacked with less wasted space and can therefore be transported with less fuel. Moreover, boxes are often recyclable and extend the shelf life of opened wine – meaning little waste of wine. For these reasons, boxed wine matches perfectly with the 'eco-friendliness' of organic wines and more and more producers are choosing to offer their wine in boxes.

Tip:

- If you are looking for another way to attract consumers who are focused on value-for-money and as well as environmental issues, consider the use of environmentally friendly packaging like bag-in-box (BiB) or Tetra Pak.

What requirements should sustainable wine comply with to be allowed on the European market?

Figure 3: Organic buyer requirements pyramid



Source: ProFound, 2015

Requirements you must meet

Oenological practices

The EU stipulates what oenological practices can be used for winemaking in general, including the making of sparkling wine, sweetening, and addition of sulphites.

Tip:

- Check whether your current practices comply with the EU's requirements for winemaking. Producers of wine destined for the European market must present a 'VI1' certificate and an analysis report for their wine to show that they comply with the oenological requirements.

Organic agricultural production

The EU has established requirements on the production and labelling with which an organic product of agricultural origin must comply in order to be marketed in the EU as "organic".

[EU legislation: Organic production and labelling](#)

Regulation (EC) 834/2007

Regulation (EC) 889/2008

Regulation (EC) 1235/2008



Tips:

- Determine whether the climate in your area is conducive for organic viticulture or not. In general, humid climates require more control of pests and diseases and thus spraying with pesticides and herbicides.
- If you do not yet have a certificate, contact a certifier to learn more about the certification process.
Examples:
 - [BCS](#)
 - [Ecocert](#)
 - [IMO](#)

Changes in EU regulation for organic wine

In addition to compliance with general wine labelling rules, organic wine labels must also meet the conditions in Regulation 203/2012. This regulation allows organic wine producers to label their wine as 'organic wine'. Previously, it was only possible to label such wines as 'wine made from organic grapes'. The current regulation requires labels to show the EU's organic logo and the code number of the certifier. The advantages of the new rules are improved transparency and better recognition for organic wine consumers.

These rules are expected to change again in 2017 in accordance with proposed changes to organic regulation. The European Commission's [2014 proposal](#) includes stronger requirements for traceability and labelling. Along with new rules for organic products in general, specific rules for wine are expected to be added or amended.

Tips:

- Use the EU organic logo and mention the code number of your certifier on your label.
- Pay attention to changes in EU regulations for organic products

Maximum sulphite levels

Under the latest EU regulation, maximum sulphite levels for organic wine are decreased by 50 mg per litre from the levels allowed for conventional dry wines (residual sugar level less than 2 mg/l) and by 30 mg per litre for sweet wines. That means dry red organic wine will be allowed a sulphite content of up to 100 mg per litre, while up to 150 mg per litre of sulphites could be added to organic white and rose dry wines.

Tip:

- Find out what limit for sulphite addition applies to your wine and ensure compliance.

EU equivalence

The old system of import authorisations is being replaced step by step with a new one, which is based on a list of third countries whose organic regulations are approved as being equivalent to those of the EU. Certification bodies that are accredited by the EU can certify organic products for the EU market.

Tip:

- Make sure to work with an approved certification body. Not all third countries and certification bodies are recognised as equivalent by the EU.

Hygiene of foodstuffs

Food and beverage business operators shall put in place, implement, and maintain a permanent procedure, or procedures, based on Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP). This also applies to the import of wine to the EU and export from the EU.

Tip:

- Ensure compliance with EU legislation on [Hygiene of foodstuffs \(HACCP\)](#).

Contaminants in food

The EU has laid down maximum levels of contaminants, pesticides, and criteria for microbiological contamination of food, including wine.

Tip:

- Only use healthy grapes and ensure hygienic processing conditions to comply with EU legislation regarding [Contaminants in food](#).

Common requirements

Food safety management

Buyers commonly require their suppliers to have a quality/food safety management system in place. These systems require companies to demonstrate their ability to control food safety hazards in order to ensure that food is safe at the time of human consumption.

Tip:

- Suppliers can apply a basic HACCP system. However, many buyers appreciate certified food safety management systems recognised by the Global Food Safety Initiative, such as ISO22000, BRC or IFS: Food Safety Management Systems.

Increasing demand for list of ingredients on wine labels

Due to health concerns, which are typically slightly higher among organic food consumers, consumers appreciate a wine label that states all the ingredients of a wine.

Tip:

- While a list of ingredients is not mandatory for wine, in the organic segment, such transparency may result in a more positive image for your wine.

Biodynamic wine

Next to organic wine production, biodynamic wine production is another sustainable production system. Biodynamic has a number of very specific compost-making viticulture practices, as well as practices for channelling cosmic or metaphysical (spiritual) forces for the wellbeing of the farm and its organisms. Please note that organic production is the basis for biodynamic wine production.

Tips:

- Biodynamic production can potentially help you to improve the productivity of your vineyard and/or the quality of your wine with the use of sustainable practices. However, there is no general consensus about this.
- Find out what is required to convert to biodynamic viticulture on the website of [Demeter International](#).

Professionalism

Particularly big buyers in Europe indicate that producers of wine can improve their chances of successful market entry by showing professionalism. Communication and sampling are areas in which producers in developing countries in particular can improve.

Tips:

- When you approach a potential buyer for the first time, provide a complete introduction of your company and products. Include a unique and passionate story about your company and your wines.
- Only send clean and representative samples with clear labels that include the price and volume available in addition to contact details.

Codes of Conduct

Some buyers in Europe, including the monopolies in Sweden and Norway, require suppliers to sign a Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct promotes sustainable trade.

Cooperate with your sector organisation to develop your own Code of Conduct. This supports your strategy to position your company as a sustainable business.

Niche requirements

Fairtrade

A relatively large number of sustainable wine consumers are also interested in Fairtrade. Fairtrade offers producers a better deal by improving the terms of trade. In order to benefit from the advantages of Fairtrade, producers must be certified for compliance with Fairtrade standards (e.g. standards for hired labour).

Tip:

- Although Fairtrade is not widely demanded, it can be interesting for regions that European consumers associate with bad labour conditions. For example, South African producers have used Fairtrade to distance themselves from any association with Apartheid.



What competition do I face on the European for sustainable wines?

Strong competition between conventional and organic wines

Apart from consumers looking for healthier and sustainable products, organic and conventional wines compete for the same consumer segment. These consumers focus on the quality/price ratio; organic USPs will often not persuade consumers.

Tip:

- Do not count on a price premium. Carefully calculate the costs involved in organic production and the expected benefits as a result of increases in sales.

Low consumer knowledge on New World organic wine

New World wine suppliers face difficulties convincing consumers to try their product. While the prevalence of both New World wines and organic wines is growing, consumers are not fully informed about all facts concerning organic wine production in the New World. This results in fewer sales, because uninformed consumers are tempted to buy a safe choice of wine they already know from a conventional wine producer.

Tip:

- If you aim to compete directly with established wines from traditional origins, such as France, Italy, and Spain, you will need strong marketing support. You will not only need to ensure the transfer of information towards consumers on the origin of your wine, but also on organic wine production.

Quality perception

There is a prejudice among European consumers about the quality of organic wine. Organic wine is generally perceived to be of a lower quality than conventional wine from the same period, region and grape variety. This leaves suppliers of organic wine with a disadvantage on the wine market.

Tip:

- As a supplier of organic wine you need to invest more in promotional activities than suppliers of conventional wines in order for European consumers to form a positive image about the quality of your wine compared to suppliers of conventional wine with the same characteristics.

No specific subsidies available for organic wine production

While there are no specific subsidies for organic wine production, there are different ways in which the EU member states support organic wine production under Rural Development programmes:

- Agri-environment schemes as area payments for organic farming.
- Organic-specific measures such as support for individual farmers who want to convert to organic production (to help cover the additional costs in the period of conversion).
- Training programmes, investment opportunities, information and promotion measures, and food quality schemes are offered to organic producers to support them in their general production.

Tip:

- While there are no official or specific subsidies targeted at European organic wine producers, there is some support present as part of Rural Development programmes. This may result in a stronger competitive position for European producers. As a reaction, developing country producers can explore opportunities to receive support from their own government.

What do the trade channels and interesting market segments look like in Europe for sustainable wine

For visual overviews of the market channels for wine, please refer to information provided for a number of [individual EU countries](#).

Market Channels

Mostly off-trade channels

Organic and Fairtrade wines are mainly sold through the off-trade. Specialist retailers in particular are in a good position to sell organic New World wines. Their sales people can inform consumers about the origin and organic production. This is required to convince consumers to try something that they are not familiar with. Nonetheless, increasing consumer awareness about organic wines has also attracted supermarkets, which are now the main clients for larger-sized organic wineries.

Tip:

- If you offer an entirely new wine to the European market, focus on small importers that supply specialist retailers. Small importers are usually more motivated to provide marketing support for wines from unknown origins than big importers.

Specialising in organic

There is a rise in both retailers and restaurants that specialise in organic foods and only sell wine that is organically produced. This trend is particularly visible in Germany.

Tip:

- If you aim to supply organic supermarkets or other organic retailers and restaurants, it is crucial to focus on the quality of your wine. Since all wines on offer are organic, there is little use in using the organic nature of your wine as a USP.

Biodynamic and natural wines are exclusively sold through specialist retailers and on-trade with a focus on high-end markets (e.g. fine restaurants).

Nordic tenders for organic wine

In the Nordic countries, the monopolies frequently publish tenders in which they request sustainable wine, such as organic and [Fair for Life](#)-certified wine. The monopolies aim to position themselves as promoters of sustainable production. Please refer to [CBI Product Fact Sheet: Premium Wine in the Nordic countries](#) for more details about the monopolies.

Tip:

- Embassies are a particularly good place to inspire, educate, and influence buyers at monopolies. Embassies have an interest in the promotion of wine from your country and can use their knowledge of the target country's culture to convince potential buyers of the value of your wine. They can also provide a nice setting for promotion events.

High costs for small importers

Many small wine importers are interested in expanding their product range with organic wines. However, the costs of importing small quantities of organic wine are high. They need licenses, which are relatively expensive if imports only concern a few hundred bottles.

Market segments**Bulk and premium wine**

Many consumers still associate organic wine production with low quality. In the past, many organic wines did not meet the same quality standards as conventional wines of the same price. Consequently, the lower and middle segments for everyday wines have become the main markets for organic wine. In fact, organic wine is increasingly supplied as bulk wine, since this means of transportation is in line with the values of the environmental friendliness aspect of organic wine.

Tip:

- You will find most opportunities in the lower end of the European wine market. If you target the premium wine market, you will need more promotion than suppliers of conventional wine to convince the prejudiced consumers of the quality of your wine.

Biodynamic and natural premium wines

High costs of biodynamic and natural wine production restrict their consumption to wine lovers only.

Tip:

- Consumers of biodynamic and natural wines believe that premium wines are the result of sustainable production techniques.

Environmental & health concerns

Sustainable wine consumers are generally consumers who are more concerned with the environment and who have concerns about the healthiness of food and drinks.

Tip:

- Target your marketing on consumers with a high degree of environmental and health concerns. One way of giving this an extra dimension is by offering the wine in eco-friendly packaging.

Preference for young and fresh wines

Many sustainable wines have lower levels of sulphite content, which shortens the shelf life of a wine. This largely explains the popularity and wide availability of relatively young organic wines over heavy wines that need to ripen for some years.

Tips:

- Supply young and light organic wines, since these sell best in Europe.
- Consumers expect a stronger bouquet in biodynamic and natural wines, compared to organic wines.

What are the end market prices for sustainable wine?**No pre-determined price range for organic wine**

Organic wine is sold in all price segments on the European wine market. Organic wine competes in the low-end discounter market, the high-end super-premium market, and all segments in between.

Tip:

- Receive a higher price for your wine by improving its quality. Optimise your entire production process from grape cultivation to vinification and bottling. If necessary, hire a product developer to assist you in this.

Willingness to pay

Most European consumers are not willing to pay a premium for organic wine. In their choice of wine, the quality and taste are generally more important than the wine being organic. Only in Germany and Austria is organic wine offered at a slight premium compared to conventional wines of the same origin and quality.

Going back to the origin of supply, organic wine grapes, which are also Fairtrade certified, have different minimum prices and premiums, depending on origin.

Tips:

- Do not count on a price premium. Carefully calculate the costs involved in organic production and the expected benefits as a result of increases in sales.
- Check [Fairtrade Minimum Prices and Premiums](#) for current information on minimum prices and premiums applicable to the various Fairtrade wine grapes.

High prices for biodynamic and natural wine

In the UK, biodynamic wine usually costs more than GBP 15, which puts it in the super-premium market.

Useful sources**Trade fairs**

Visiting or even participating in trade fairs is highly recommended as one of the most efficient methods of testing market receptivity, obtaining market information, and finding prospective business partners. The most relevant trade fairs for exporters of sustainable wine are:

- [Millésime](#), Montpellier, France
- [BioFach](#), Nuremberg
- [RAWfair](#), London, UK
- [Merano wine festival](#), Merano, Italy
- Trade fairs for conventional wine, such as [Vinexpo](#) and [ProWein](#) are less interesting for organic wines.



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