

New Zealand wine industry plans for Vintage 2017 after Kaikoura Earthquake

The New Zealand wine industry is busy planning for the up-coming vintage after taking into account the impact of the recent Kaikoura earthquake.

“We have completed our survey of the impact of the earthquake on our members” said Philip Gregan, CEO of New Zealand Winegrowers. “It is clear there was some wine loss as a result of the earthquake but it amounts to only a little over 2% of Marlborough’s total production. While this is frustrating, this is not a major concern as vintage 2016 was a near record one. This means there is plenty of wine available to continue our market growth.”

As expected the major impact on wineries has been to storage tanks. “Many wineries, both small and large have escaped with no damage at all, but in others damage to tanks has occurred. Our initial estimate is that 80% of tank capacity in Marlborough is undamaged, but around 20% has been impaired to some extent. These numbers may change as the process of damage assessment continues.”

The priority for wineries with damaged tanks is to repair or replace the tanks they need to have in working condition for vintage 2017. “The process of tank repair is already underway but it is going to be a big task which will continue for many months. We have been liaising with affected wineries, engineers, tank manufacturers, the government and the Marlborough District Council to ensure there are no unnecessary impediments to that process proceeding as quickly and safely as possible.”

“Marlborough produces well over 200 million litres of wine each year with over 80% of this destined for export markets. Despite the obvious damage to transport links, we are not aware of any particular issues affecting the movement of wine out of the region at the moment. We are working with various transport operators, ports and the government to identify and address any issues should they occur.”

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