

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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POLICY

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France

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New Wine Agreement Signed Between French and US Governments

Report Categories:

Policy and Program Announcements

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Report Highlights:

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with respect to trade in alcoholic beverages between the French Ministry for the Economy, Finance, and Industry and the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) of the United States Department of Treasury was signed in Paris in September. The agreement is expected to increase communication and ease trade problems between the two countries. It should be positive for US wine and spirit sales to France.

General Information:

On September 1, 2011, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with respect to trade in alcohol beverages between the General Directorate for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs, and Fraud Control (DGCCRF) of the French Ministry for the Economy, Finance, and Industry and the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) of the United States Department of Treasury was signed in Paris.

This MOU is a statement of intent to consult, cooperate, and exchange information between the DGCCRF and TTB.

- The DGCCRF and TTB intend to notify each other in a timely manner of changes to their laws and regulations regarding trade in alcohol beverages.
- When problems occur concerning the quality, safety, or labeling of alcoholic beverages, the DGCCRF and TTB intend to undertake to resolve them by an information exchange and cooperative consultation. They intend to obtain the assistance of any other relevant agency as needed.
- The DGCCRF and TTB intend to exchange information concerning the methods of analysis of alcoholic beverages used by the laboratories supporting regulatory enforcement efforts.

The necessity of having this agreement between the United States and France results in part from a case of “counterfeit” Pinot Noir, when several French merchants were selling large quantity of mislabeled wine to the United States.

For the last two years, FAS Paris has deepened its contacts with the DGCCRF and has informed the TTB of the latest events. FAS Paris also recommended to the TTB to open an official channel between the two administrations. While France exports a much larger volume of alcoholic beverages to the United States than vice-versa, this agreement should help reduce problems, such as on labeling, and will likely allow an increase of US wine sales to France.



From right to left, Jean-Louis Gerard, Deputy Director DGCCRF; Abdul Mabud, Director Scientific Division, TTB; Theresa McCarthy, Deputy Assistant Administrator, TTB; Laurent J. Journé, Marketing Specialist, FAS; Nathalie Homobono, Director DGCCRF; William H. Foster, Assistant Administrator, TTB; Alain Chatelet, Wine & Spirits Director, DGCCRF; Joel Tozzi, Assistant to the Deputy Director, DGCCRF; Stephen Robey, specialist, TTB.

