

# WINE INDUSTRY INSIGHT

## French Barrel Business Buoyant



© Ben Stuart | New French oak barrel sales on the up  
Growth in French barrel industry driven by overseas demand.  
By [Rebecca Gibb](#) with AFP | Posted Sunday, 14-Jul-2013

French oak barrel sales have returned to pre-2008 levels, thanks to increased demand from overseas wine producers.

French coopers sold more than 525,000 barrels in 2012, worth 328.5m euros (\$429.8m). Sales increased by 6.8 percent in value and by 2.7 percent in volume, mainly thanks to exports.

“We witnessed a sharp rise in demand from Asian markets,” said Jean-Luc Sylvain, the president of the Federation of French Barrel Makers. However, he added that “the main importing countries remain the U.S., Italy, Australia and Spain.”

Despite Spain remaining in the top four customers, French oak barrel orders have declined since 2011. Italy's orders have also fallen. The federation cited the ongoing economic crisis as the major factor in the decline.

In the past year, French wine producers have also bought fewer barrels.

Exports are increasingly important for French barrel makers and now account for two-thirds of all sales – a total of 350,000 barrels.

The French barrel industry employs 1,805 people.