

FINE WINE IN FINE SHAPE (JUDGING BY THE BARRELS)

Judging by a recent report by the Fédération des Tonneliers de France, demand for top-shelf French oak barrels was effectively steady from 2013 through 2014. The organization's **51** member cooperages manufactured **524,500** barrels, accounting for sales of **342 million** euros.

On a like-for-like basis, the market trend observed was toward stability in value and a slight **3%** drop in volume. The slight drop in the number of units sold is the result of an increase in the use of larger barrels and slower business in

the southern hemisphere and in China. Specifically, large format, supplied by **17** of the **51** member cooperages, is a growing segment, currently accounting for **7%** of total sales.

French coopers continue to be recognized worldwide, as evident in **66%** of their business going abroad. Top markets are focused in five countries that represent **80%** of the world market: France (where a normal harvest has helped bring back stability), the United States (where growth has been good for the second year in a row), Australia, Italy and Spain.

