



Steady numbers: French barrel production

THE FÉDÉRATION des Tonneliers de France (French Coopers Federation) has confirmed steady production figures with 2014 matching the figures from 2013.

The organisation's 51 member cooperages manufactured 524,500 barrels, accounting for sales of more than 340million euros. On a like-for-like basis, the market trend observed was toward stability in value, recording a slight drop in volume (down three per cent).

The small reduction in the number of units sold was said to be the result of an increase in the use of larger barrels as well as 'slower business' recorded in the southern hemisphere and in China. Specifically, large format barrels that are supplied by 17 of the 51 member cooperages, have become a growing segment. Roughly 1000 larger format barrels were sold in 2014, for sales that totalled approximately 24million euros (which accounted for seven per cent of the total sales figure).

French coopers continue to be recognised across the world because of



the quality raw material they use and the expertise they evidence through a combination of ancestral craft skills and highly innovative techniques. As proof of this recognition, exports represented 66 per cent of business through the sale of barrels worth more than 235million euros (69 per cent) in 2014.

The markets that French cooperages supply are now spread right across

the international wine industry and the wineries buying barrels are highly diversified.

However, these markets are focused in five countries which represent 80 per cent of the total 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.