



Preliminary Winegrape Crush Report is 3.7 Million Tons

by Turrentine Brokerage

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For Immediate Release

Novato, CA – The California Department of Food and Agriculture’s *Preliminary Grape Crush Report* for 2015 has been released. It is a critical barometer for the wine and grape industry, containing tons crushed and prices of wine grapes sold during the 2015 harvest. The *Crush Report* provides growers and wineries insight into the inventory position for the California wine business as a whole, and influences market dynamics for the current bulk wine market as well as the upcoming 2016 harvest.

Key Insights by Region

General/Statewide

“The 2015 Preliminary Grape Crush Report, as released by the National Agriculture Statistics Service, announced a California statewide wine grape crop of 3.7 million tons. This is the lightest California wine grape crop since 2011—down 5%, or about 32 million gallons from 2014. The crop was especially light in coastal regions which predominantly supply premium and luxury programs. Overall, the lighter crop helped to balance out inventories built up from the previous three good sized crops.”

-Steve Fredricks, President, Turrentine Brokerage



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“The 2015 crop came in below estimate in most coastal areas of California and in some areas the crop delivered was dramatically under expectations. This has caused the grape and bulk wine markets to become very active in the early months of 2016.”

-Brian Clements, Vice President, Turrentine Brokerage

“The total crush was down 5% from last year due mostly to the short crop in coastal regions. However, an ample harvest in Sacramento and San Joaquin Valley helped lift the total California grape crop. Northern Interior production was 2% down from last year, bolstered by new acres and a better Chardonnay crop than 2014.”

-Erica Moyer, Interior and Central Coast Grape Broker, Turrentine Brokerage

North Coast

“Due to poor weather during bloom, grape cluster weights were down in Sonoma County. This adversely affected Chardonnay and Pinot Noir in particular. Sonoma County Pinot Noir was down 36% off of the five year average, while Chardonnay was down 27%. This has stimulated the bulk wine market and the grape market to start earlier than previous years.”

-Brian Clements, Vice President, Turrentine Brokerage

“The release of the 2015 *California Grape Crush Report* shows grape prices continuing to climb to record highs for Sonoma County and Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon, \$2,642 and \$6,224 per ton, respectively. Turrentine Brokerage’s internal sales show that newly contracted grape prices are even higher than that.”

“The Sonoma County Chardonnay crop was down 27% off long-term average and Pinot Noir was down 36%. Cluster counts early on left the impression the 2015 crop could be reasonably sized again, but poor weather during bloom and a warmer summer resulted in much lower cluster weights. The low crop has meant wineries are active in the bulk and grape markets much earlier than the last few years.”

-Mike Needham, North Coast Grape Broker, Turrentine Brokerage

Central Coast

“Bloom proved to be a challenging time for the Central Coast in 2015. Widespread shatter set up Crush District 8 for a lighter crop; however, once harvest was upon us, it was clear the 37% decrease of Paso Robles Cabernet Sauvignon and the 39% decrease of Santa Barbara County Pinot Noir were going to leave the market needing more. With growth of programs and a lighter crop, the district average price for Pinot Noir in Santa Barbara County has once again reached similar levels to the height of the grape market in 2008. With a light crop behind us, the Central Coast is experiencing an active market.”



“Grape prices have risen for Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, which now have a combined estimated value of \$325 million in the Central Coast alone.”

“Regardless of variety, Paso Robles was one of the most challenged regions in California due to a light crop in 2015, with very few exceptions. This has meant buyers are out earlier, especially for Cabernet Sauvignon and Sauvignon Blanc.”

-Audra Cooper, Central Coast Grape Broker, Turrentine Brokerage

“Monterey County had weather during bloom that lead to poor berry set and lighter cluster weights for Chardonnay and Pinot Noir resulting in a 32% decline in Chardonnay from 2014 and a 49% decline in Pinot Noir, a disaster! This has stimulated an earlier grape buying market than in previous years and increased prices for grapes and the few gallons of 2015 bulk wine for sale.”

-Erica Moyer, Interior and Central Coast Grape Broker, Turrentine Brokerage

Lodi & Interior

“Grape yields per acre were average to above average as new plantings continue to come into production in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valley. Though vineyards are being pulled out in the Southern San Joaquin Valley, vineyards are producing more on less acres which offset the acres that have come out.”

-Erica Moyer, Interior and Central Coast Grape Broker, Turrentine Brokerage

About Turrentine Brokerage

Turrentine Brokerage, founded in 1973, serves as trusted and strategic advisors to growers, wineries, and financiers and specializes in the strategic sourcing of wine grapes and bulk wine from the major growing areas across the globe. Working with thousands of wineries worldwide, and with over 2,000 growers, this experienced team has negotiated transactions between buyers and sellers valued at more than \$2 billion over the past decade.

Turrentine Brokerage is available to provide comment and analysis on this report and its probable impact on growers, wineries and consumers. Turrentine Brokerage will have its experienced team of grape and wine brokers and analysts available all day Wednesday, February 10th and throughout the week for comment and questions.



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