



PRESS RELEASE

THE EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT WINEGROWERS (CEVI) REFUSE TO BE THE COLLATERAL DAMAGE OF A TRADE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE US AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Paris, 18 October 2019. Starting from today, French, Spanish and German still wines face 25% tariffs, four days after the World Trade Organization (WTO) gave the go-ahead to Washington to impose sanctions against the EU in retaliation for subsidies granted to the European aircraft manufacturer Airbus.

CEVI deeply regrets that the European union and the United States failed to reach an agreement that would have prevented the entry into force of these new tariffs on French, Spanish and German wines. *“The EU wine sector is being hijacked in this conflict and it is our producers that will have to pay the price for a dispute settlement in which they are not even involved in. Agriculture should not be seen as a retaliation tool in trade conflicts.”* said Thomas Montagne, President of CEVI.

The tariff increase represents a huge loss in market share for French, Spanish and German wine producers who already invested in the US market and are now confronted with important disruptions. The US market is the main export destination for the European independent winegrowers and represents a major trading partner.

The US is the largest export market for EU wines with a total of 3, 78 billion euros made in the US in 2018. French, Spanish and German still wines represent alone 36% of that total. For the French independent winegrowers, for instance, the US market is the leading third-country market in terms of value and in constant progress.

“CEVI urges the European Union to find a common answer to settle the dispute to avoid more collateral damages for our wine producers. Alternative solutions should be considered to prevent a long-term damage in the wine trade relations with the US that would not only affect the European producers but also the US market. CEVI also asks the European Commission to take the measure of the business losses by providing effective compensations at least for the small and medium sized enterprises that will suffer greatly from these new duties”, added Thomas Montagne.

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CEVI is on the only organisation representing and defending the interests of independent winegrowers at European level. CEVI counts today 12 000 members from 12 different Member States. Independent winegrowers are entrepreneurs at the head of a micro / small enterprise, often a family business. They make everything from the field to the bottle meaning that they produce and sell their wines directly to the consumer.