



DESPITE AN 18% DROP IN VOLUMES, THE CHAMPAGNE SECTOR IS FIGHTING BACK

Shipments of Champagne in 2020 totalled 245 million bottles, down 18% compared to 2019. The health crisis is a blow, but Champagne has taken steps to meet the challenge.

Epernay, 26th January 2021 - The year 2020 was a particularly testing time for the Champagne sector, right across the world. The closure of main centres for consumption and sales, along with the cancellation of many events, put the business under pressure and called for rapid adaptability, in a climate of considerable uncertainty, to ward off the consequences of the health and economic crisis.

Champagne recorded a drop of 18% in the number of bottles shipped, compared with a feared loss of 30% in the first half of 2020, based on shipments at the end of the year. Turnover in the sector was expected to be around 4 billion euros, a loss of around 1 billion for the year.

Already in retreat before the crisis, the French market continued to fall (-20%). **Champagne's three leading** export markets likewise recorded serious falls this year: -20% in the United States, -20% in the United Kingdom and -28% in Japan. This drop was meanwhile offset by the relative strength of traditional markets in Continental Europe: Belgium (-5%), Germany (-15%), Switzerland (-9%); and the Australian market recorded a notable increase with growth of 14%. Taken as a whole, export markets lost 16% of their volume*.

The **Comité Champagne met today and confirmed last July's wise decision to adjust grape harvest volumes** for the year 2020 so the efforts be distributed between growers and houses. Considering the final 2020 sales, it was also decided to augment the available harvest (8,000 kg/ha) by drawing 400 kilos per hectare from the interprofessional grape reserve. These decisions mean the business can approach the year 2021 with confidence.

*"Faced with an unprecedented crisis, the organisation of our sector has proved its resilience. Together, the Champagne winegrowers and houses took last year wise decisions about yields. The adjustment that the Comité Champagne has agreed on today will give everyone **a certain room for manoeuvre**,"* said Maxime Toubart, co-president of the Comité Champagne and president of the Syndicat Général des Vignerons.

*"Despite the crisis, Champagne remains dear to the hearts of consumers who feel the need to keep something exceptional in their everyday lives, to choose quality products when so many other pleasures are unavailable **due to the health crisis**,"* added Jean-Marie Barillère, co-president of the Comité Champagne and president of the Union des Maisons de Champagne. *"It is the strength and power of our appellation to be the champion of prestige and above all quality among our consumers."*



The two co-presidents were equally at pains to emphasise the sector's efforts to enhance value, and its determination to push forward Champagne's objectives in the area of environmental transformation**.

** Country by country export figures represent initial trends, based on 80% of the volumes exported.*

**** The Champagne sector has its own certification titled "Sustainable Viticulture in Champagne", with ambitious targets that include zero herbicides by 2025, and 100% environmental certification by 2030 (aiming for HVE or higher). Environmental transformation is a long-term undertaking that the sector has championed for more than 20 years now. Alongside these global initiatives, we are delighted by any individual action that contributes to greater respect for the environment.**