

## ENGLISH AND WELSH WINE

- Vineyards and wineries

Most vineyards in England are in the southern counties, with the largest area under vines in Essex, Kent, Hampshire, Surrey and Sussex. There are also 17 vineyards in Wales. About 100 vineyards also have wine making facilities. Some of these offer a contract wine making service for vine growers or may buy in grapes to make branded wines under their own label, though these should not be confused with single vineyard wines.

There were a total of 351 actively cultivated vineyards in August 2005, covering 790 hectares.

- Production in UK

This varies widely from year to year, mainly as a result of variations in the climate (frost, flowering conditions, amount of rainfall) but it also depends on the effectiveness of growers' pruning and spraying programmes.

Production figures have been recorded since 1989. The smallest harvest was 6,523 hectolitres (1997) and the largest 25,573 (1996).



- Vine varieties

Plantings of 5 varieties exceed 50 hectares each:

- Reichensteiner
- Seyval Blanc
- Müller-Thurgau
- Bacchus
- Pinot Noir

These account for about 50% of the total active cultivated area. Seyval Blanc is an interspecific crossing (non vitis vinifera) and under EC regulations may not be used for the production of quality wine psr. Plantings of other varieties have gradually increased, including Chardonnay, at the expense of varieties which were previously popular e.g. Schonburger. Other international black varieties e.g. Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot are not well suited to the cool climate in the UK (although there are some plantings in polytunnels).

### Advice on planting vineyards

The industry body, the United Kingdom Vineyards Association (UKVA) includes a list of Consultants in the Grape Press (published every six months).

- Types of wine

Single varietal and blended wines are produced. Sparkling wines have become increasingly popular, made from either the classic grapes grown in Champagne or from the more widely planted varieties above.

- Regional Wine and Quality Wine

The Quality Wine Scheme was established in 1991 and the Regional Wine Scheme in 1997. For the Quality Wine Scheme, wines are assessed by a tasting panel organised by the "Recognised Industry Body", the UKVA, and must be submitted for analysis to the approved laboratory, Corkwise Ltd.

- Other sources

English Wine Producers website has news stories and other information about English Wine. Please see our links page under Trade Bodies.