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LIGHTEST CROP IN 20 YEARS, 2.844 MILLION TONS

NOVATO, CA – “The fact that the 2024 California wine grape crop was 2.844 million tons is nothing short of shocking. Although the 2024 crop was generally light, and overall demand was lackluster, the industry has not seen a crop this low since 2004,” according to Audra Cooper, Director of Grape Brokerage of Turrentine Brokerage. With grape acreage being removed (and the process continuing), and growers employing mothballing techniques on some of their less marketable blocks, the question now arises: Do we have enough wine grapes for the future growth of the California wine business?

According to Brian Clements, Vice President of Turrentine Brokerage, “The 2023 harvest of 3.685 million tons was a major contributing factor to the industry’s oversupply, despite the approximately 325,000 tons of grapes that were left unpicked due to quality concerns and heavy yields. 2024 brought a historically lighter crop of 2.844 million tons, yet approximately 100,000 tons were still left unharvested, signaling ongoing challenges for buyers and sellers as we continue to navigate the 2025 market.”

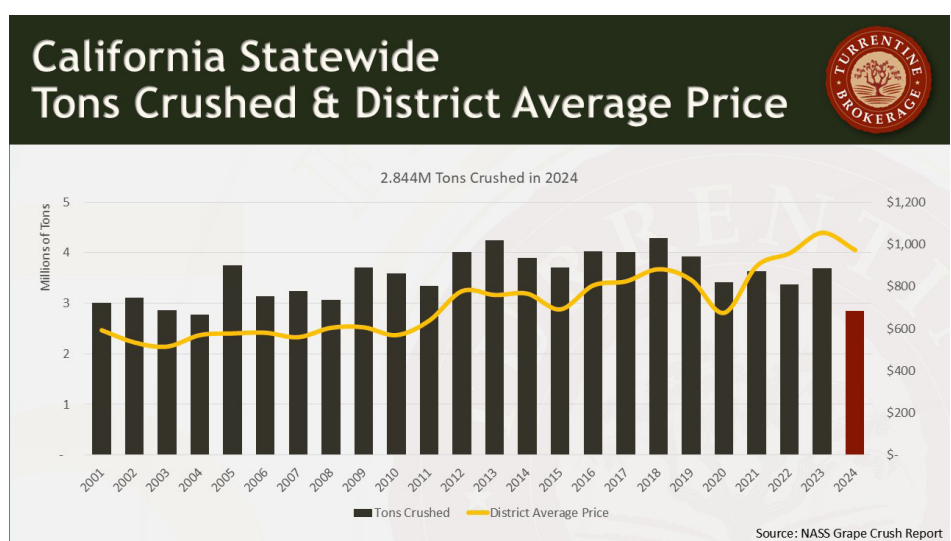
Currently, the California wine industry is facing an unprecedented downturn driven by economic pressures, changing consumer preferences, and an emerging generation that favors alternative beverages over traditional wine. “With this in mind,” Steve Fredricks, President of Turrentine Brokerage states, “district average prices do not completely capture the challenged 2024 grape market, as the majority of grapes harvested and reported in Table 4 were contracted in previous years.” In reality, the spot market showed significant softness, evidenced by the substantial volume of bulk wine available from various regions.

“Some double-edged news was contained in the crush report,” according to Cooper; “The total California Cabernet Sauvignon crop was down 31% from 2023 and 22% from the five-year average. While damaging to those who grow Cabernet Sauvignon, this decrease is helpful in balancing the oversupply from previous vintages.”

The total tonnage of grapes crushed in the North Coast also reflects this market slowdown, decreasing from 576,744 tons in 2023 to 483,424 tons in 2024, a 16% decrease. This reduction stemmed from significantly lower winery demand and substantial crop losses due to late-season heat waves.

The average price per ton for Napa Cabernet Sauvignon fractionally decreased from the previous record high of \$9,067 in 2023 to \$8,969 in 2024, as reported in the preliminary report. “This decrease was largely influenced by contracted grapes from prior years still under term in 2024,” according to Christian Klier, North Coast Grape Broker of Turrentine Brokerage.

Mother Nature brought multiple heat waves, significantly impacting the Central Coast’s 2024 grape harvest and resulting in historically lower yields per acre across most varieties. Sauvignon Blanc served as an early indicator of this decline, with extraordinarily light yields, especially in Paso Robles and Monterey County. Despite new acreage coming into production, the Central Coast Sauvignon Blanc crop



reached only 18,176 tons—a dramatic 32% decrease from the previous year. Despite these light yields, there has been little early demand on the bulk wine market, which is a statewide trend. District 8 Cabernet Sauvignon production also suffered dramatically, falling to 55,146 tons, the lowest since 2015. According to Eddie Urman, Turrentine’s Central Coast grape broker, this prompted “late-season replacement demand,” as wineries sought to fulfill supply needs.

Monterey County growers and wineries experienced similar challenges, with Pinot Noir and Chardonnay yields falling 15% and 17%, respectively, below the five-year average. These varieties faced a challenging market due to weak demand, reflected in a district average price of \$1,158 for Chardonnay.

The Central Valley experienced its smallest wine grape production in 20 years. This decline resulted from a combination of factors, including continued decreased demand leading to unharvested grapes, the most significant vineyard removals in the state, and heat waves this past summer. While there was limited late-season demand for white varieties, primarily for concentrate, there was very little demand throughout the year for red varieties. According to Mike Needham, Central Valley Grape Broker for Turrentine Brokerage, “A leading example is Cabernet Sauvignon, which decreased in volume by 29% in Lodi and 36% in the southern interior compared to 2023. It was further exemplified by the lowest Lodi Chardonnay crop since 2001.”

	Tons Crushed 2024	Tons Crushed 2023	Net Gain/Loss	Equivalent Gallons	% Change	2024 % Δ to 5-Year Avg.
North Coast	483,424	571,159	-87,736	-14,476,000	-15%	3%
Central Coast	340,865	526,670	-185,805	-30,658,000	-35%	-29%
Northern Interior	752,958	985,985	-233,028	-38,450,000	-24%	-19%
Southern Interior	1,190,659	1,501,859	-311,200	-51,348,000	-21%	-27%

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 \$3 billion over the past decade.
