THE SWR BOTTLE WEIGHT ACCORD

KEY INFORMATION

October 2024

Introduction

The SWR Bottle Weight Accord was launched in November 2023 by the Sustainable Wine Roundtable. It was supported initially by a group of retailers and has since welcomed participants from across the value chain – from production to retail. The inclusion of producers, alongside importers, distributors, and retailers alike, underscores the importance of addressing glass bottle weight throughout the entire supply chain. As with so much in sustainability, success requires joined up action by all in the sector.

The core commitment of the Accord remains unchanged: each participant aims to reduce the average weight of their wine bottles to below 420 grams by the end of 2026.

The Accord

The glass bottle is the single most significant component of wine's entire carbon footprint. Research by the Sustainable Wine Roundtable (SWR) shows that as much as half of the carbon impact of wine comes from the bottle itself, a combination of embedded carbon from manufacturing along with the energy required to transport it.

Based on the findings of that research, the SWR launched the Bottle Weight Accord supported by a group of our retailer members in order to reduce the average weight of the 750ml still wine bottles they sell from the current average of approximately 550 grams to an average bottle weight below 420 grams by the end of 2026. This will be achieved through a number of steps:

1. Removing as many of the heaviest bottles as soon as possible;
2. Light-weighting the bottles of "own brand" wines by the end of 2025;
3. Collaborating through SWR to work with along the supply chain to make change happen.

Each participant has undertaken to introduce phased reductions within their own procurement processes. The modalities for each member will be communicated to SWR, which will monitor progress over time. In each case, members will provide SWR with their weighted average wine bottle weight and total volume sold every six months, allowing SWR to publicly demonstrate reductions in bottle weight over time

As part of this accord, SWR will also work with its members in other parts of the supply chain to facilitate this process of change. This will include working with producers to access lighter weight bottles and providing guidance to bottlers on changes in the management of filling lines. We recognise that there may be challenges in certain areas, for example with the packaging regulation of some appellations. However, SWR believes that taking a collective approach to these issues is the most effective way of delivering change.

SWR views reducing the average wine bottle weight to below 420g as just the first step and will continue exploring opportunities for further reductions over time. We will also be undertaking further work to address the carbon impact of wine packaging, including light-weighting of sparkling wine bottles, examination of the expanded use of alternative packaging formats, and of bulk shipping.

What participants need to provide

We ask participants to fulfil the following commitments to support the success and transparency of the Accord:

- To confirm their participation, we ask members to sign the Accord using the provided web-form. This will be publicly announced on SWR's website and through our media channels.
- To track the Accord's progress, SWR requires participants to submit data every six months, including their weighted average bottle weight and total bottles sold. SWR will publish aggregated data to demonstrate industry-wide reductions.
- A key role of SWR is facilitating the exchange of insights and best practices. We ask participants to provide narratives on the steps they are taking to implement the Accord, which will be published to showcase practical examples of bottle lightweighting in action.

SWR's role

SWR will play an active role in expanding and facilitating the success of the Accord. Specific activities we are undertaking include:

- **Expanding and embedding the Accord:** The Accord is the first global, coordinated approach to reducing wine bottle weight. SWR wants to expand the membership considerably to expand the effect and impact of the Accord. We will also work with journalists and others to publicise the Accord and its impact on sustainability in wine.
- **Collating and publishing data:** To demonstrate credibility of the Accord, and to demonstrate progress over time, SWR will collect from participants their average bottle weight and publish this semi-annually.
- **Ensuring bottle availability:** It is clear that lighter weight bottles are not always available, for example to smaller producers. SWR will work to help map where gaps in bottle availability may exist, and ensure these are addressed.
- **Defining optimal bottle weights for sparkling wine**: SWR will establish optimal bottle weights for 750ml sparkling wine bottles, covering both the champagne method and tank-fermented styles.
- **Working along the supply chain:** SWR exists to facilitate collaboration in the wine supply chain. SWR will map these and work to provide a central point of communication within the supply chain. This process is being facilitated by encouraging producers themselves to join the Accord.
- **Support to filling line management:** SWR will produce a 'how to' guide to be distributed to producers and bottlers to support them in understanding and implementing an changes that may be needed in their filling lines to be able to use lighter bottles.
- **Developing consumer communication**: SWR will develop messaging to support coordinated communication with consumers about the importance of lighter-weight bottles.

Funding

Implementation of the Accord is not covered by SWR's membership income. Additional funding is therefore required from participants. For more details, please refer to the SWR 'Wine List'.

Sign the Accord

Ready to commit? Join the Accord today and demonstrate measurable action in reducing the wine industry's carbon footprint. Use the following link to affirm your commitment and be part of this transformative initiative: Sign the Accord

Current Participants