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Russia to Delay Champagne Label Law by 2 Months – France

By AFP

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Russia is the 15th biggest export market for French champagne. **Tristan Gassert / unsplash**

Russia has agreed to delay implementing a contested law barring French champagne producers from labeling their bubbly "champagne" on bottles sold in Russia, French Trade Minister Frank Riester told AFP on Tuesday.

France, home of the original champagne, jealously guards its right to use the term and has been in talks with Moscow about the new law, which was signed by President Vladimir Putin in July.

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"France has obtained a moratorium on the implementation of the Russian viticulture-wine law until Dec. 31," Riester said in a written statement.

"It doesn't resolve everything and we are determined to make permanent progress during the period in front of us," he added.

The new Russian law on alcoholic beverages forbids the use of the Russian translation of champagne — "Shampanskoe" — on imported bottles.

French producers can still use the word in French but only Russian producers of sparkling wines can use the term in Cyrillic — a move that caused outrage in France's Champagne region.

Along with the United States and Haiti, Russia is one of few countries that have never recognized the word "champagne" as an exclusive term for sparkling wine made in the Champagne region of France.

Russia is the 15th biggest export market for French champagne, with 1.8 million bottles sold in the country in 2019.

The French champagne industry body recommended its members cease exporting to Russia in July, but it reversed the guidance in September as diplomatic talks between Paris and Moscow took place.

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