



Avignon, August 25, 2026

2026 HARVEST IN THE RHÔNE VALLEY VINEYARDS: A RESILIENT VINEYARD FACING AN INTENSE GROWING SEASON



The 2026 grape harvest has now begun in the Rhône Valley Vineyards. After the first snips of the pruning shears on August 11th in the earliest-ripening areas, the pace has accelerated since last Wednesday. The harvest will now be staggered over the coming weeks, depending on the ripeness of the grapes, with some later-ripening areas not starting for another few days.

A SEASON UNDER HIGH CLIMATE TENSION

The 2025-2026 growing season began under favourable conditions, before being punctuated by several **significant weather events**. After a generally wet autumn, the mild and wet winter allowed the soil water reserves to be replenished. The vineyards thus entered spring with good water availability.

Then, the season saw a marked change of pace. Exceptionally hot and dry, **spring 2026 ranked as the hottest ever recorded in France since measurements began**, with a national anomaly of **+1.7 °C**. In the Vaucluse Department in particular, temperatures remained almost continuously above normal from May 21st, with a difference of around **+4 °C**. This heat accelerated the wine's growth cycle and established a **phenological lead** over a large part of



the vineyard. However, with the progressive onset of water stress, this head start was reduced as harvest approached.

The water reserves built up during the winter played a crucial role in enabling the vines to survive this period of heat and drought. However, localized cases of sunscald and wilting were observed in the most exposed plots.

EXCELLENT HEALTH CONDITION

At the start of the harvest, the vineyard is in **very favourable overall health**. The dry and windy conditions of the season have helped to control the pressure from the main diseases, particularly downy mildew and powdery mildew. The grapes are therefore arriving at harvest time in very good health.

AN EARLY HARVEST, A VINTAGE TAKING SHAPE

The 2026 harvest is distinguished by a marked precocity, although this varies according to the sectors, the grape varieties and the levels of water stress.

The Gard Department offers an example of this diversity. In Costières de Nîmes AOC, the harvest began on August 13th, a date close to those observed in recent years.

In the Drôme, Vaucluse, and Ardèche Departments, initial observations confirm a markedly early harvest, with grape picking having begun several days to more than a week ahead of the usual timeframe, depending on the area.

Certain sectors in the northern Rhône Valley are also experiencing a particularly significant advance.

This situation is accompanied by a **strong heterogeneity between the plots**, some having reached their optimal maturity while others having evolved more slowly under the effect of water stress.

The white grape varieties are showing remarkable earliness. **In Clairette de Die AOC, the harvest began as early as August 11th, making 2026 the earliest vintage ever recorded in the appellation.**

The first batches of juice show promising balance, and feedback from professionals indicates significant potential for quality. The winemakers are adjusting their practices and harvest dates to best suit the specific characteristics of each plot in order to maintain the desired balance.

“Once again this year, the wines have demonstrated their ability to withstand particularly demanding climatic conditions. Their health is excellent, and initial observations are very encouraging. Faced with increasingly frequent heat waves, the winegrowers are adapting their practices, both in the vineyard and in the cellar, with an



PRESS RELEASE



Hospitality in a bottle

ever deeper understanding of their terroirs. *This ability to adapt is essential to supporting the vine's development and preserving the quality of the grapes.*" Philippe Pellaton, President of Inter Rhône.



**60 223 HECTARES
AND 2 MILLIONS
HECTOLITERS
PRODUCED IN
THE 2025 VINTAGE**



**297 MILLIONS
BOTTLES
SOLD IN 2025**



**6 371 PRODUCTION
UNITS**



**366 TRADING
COMPANIES**



**171 EXPORT
DESTINATIONS
AROUND THE
WORLD CONSUMED
RHÔNE VALLEY
WINES IN 2025**



**IN THE RHÔNE
VALLEY VINEYARDS,
HVE 3 LABEL REPRESENTS
37% IN VOLUME AND
34% IN AREA
OF THE 2025 HARVEST**



**ALMOST
9 BOTTLES OF RHÔNE
VALLEY WINES ARE
CONSUMED EVERY
SECOND**

**ORGANIC WINES
REPRESENT
24% IN VOLUME AND
26% IN AREA
OF THE 2025 HARVEST**

