

Embargoed until 03:40PM – 23 February 2007

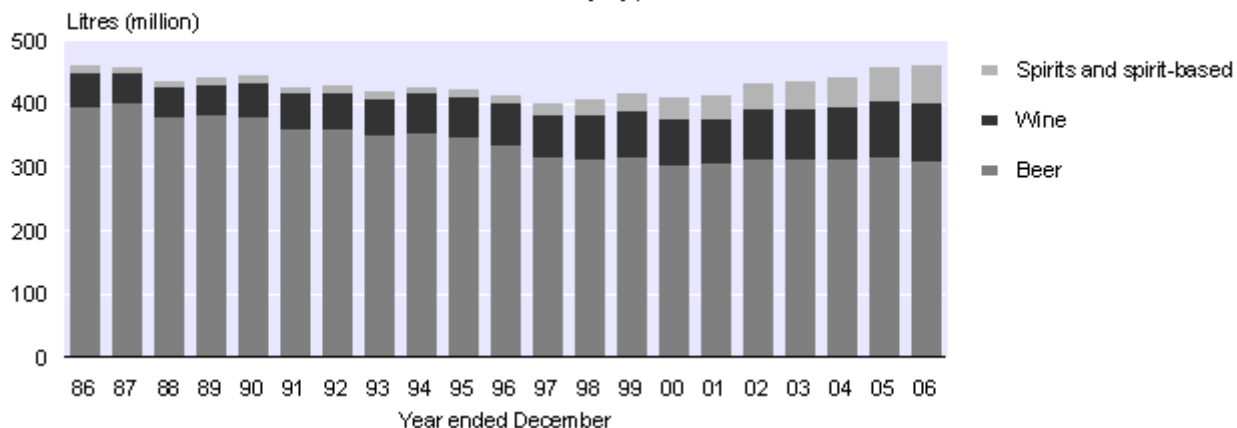
Alcohol and Tobacco Available for Consumption: Year ended December 2006

Highlights

In the December 2006 year:

- Total alcoholic beverage available for consumption exceeded previous high, in 1986.
- Spirit-based drinks, up 16.3 percent, were the leading contributor to this increase.
- Beer was still most popular alcoholic beverage, but only higher-strength beer increased.
- Wine provided over 20 percent of total beverage available for consumption.

Total Alcoholic Beverage Available for Consumption
By type



Brian Pink
Government Statistician

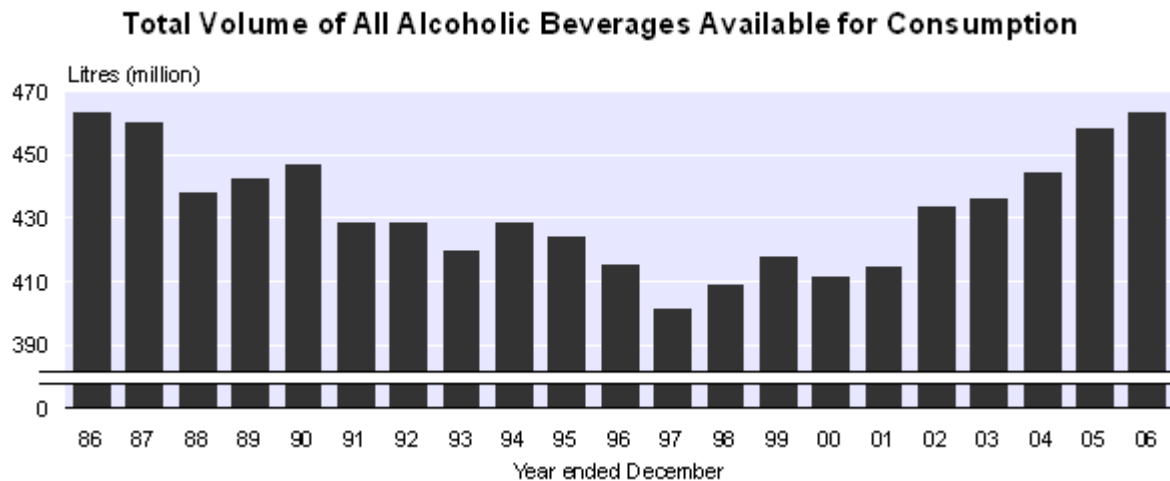
23 February 2007
Cat 74.901 Set 06/07 – 124

Commentary

Total alcoholic beverage available for consumption

The total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption in the December 2006 year was 463.9 million litres, an increase of 5.1 million litres compared with the December 2005 year. For the first time since the series began in 1986, the level has exceeded the 463.8 million litres available for consumption in that year. Following decreases from 1987 to 1997 (when a low of 401.9 million litres was recorded) the volume of available beverage has increased almost every year.

Spirit-based drinks were the leading contributor to the increase in 2006, up 7.0 million litres (16.3 percent). Wine also increased, while less beer was available for consumption in 2006 than in 2005.

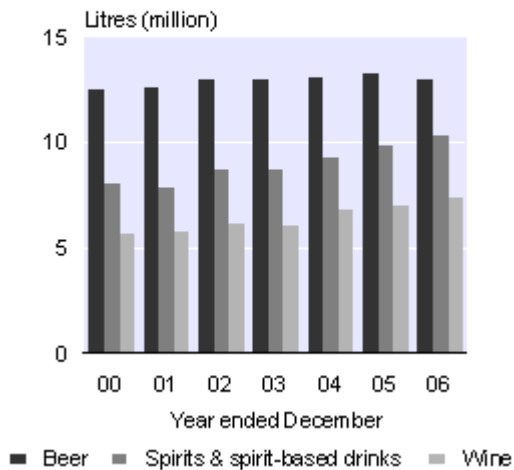


Total pure alcohol available for consumption

The total volume of pure alcohol available for consumption was 30.8 million litres in the December 2006 year, an increase of 1.9 percent compared with the December 2005 year. The volume of pure alcohol available from wine increased by 5 percent and by 5.3 percent for spirits and spirit-based drinks, while the pure alcohol available from beer decreased by 2.2 percent. At 9.43 litres, the volume of pure alcohol available per head of population aged 15 years and over has increased 0.5 percent from the December 2005 year. While this is 8.7 percent higher than the lowest level, recorded in the 1998 year, it is 16.4 percent lower than the 11.28 litres per head recorded in 1986, when the current series began.

Total Litres of Pure Alcohol Available for Consumption

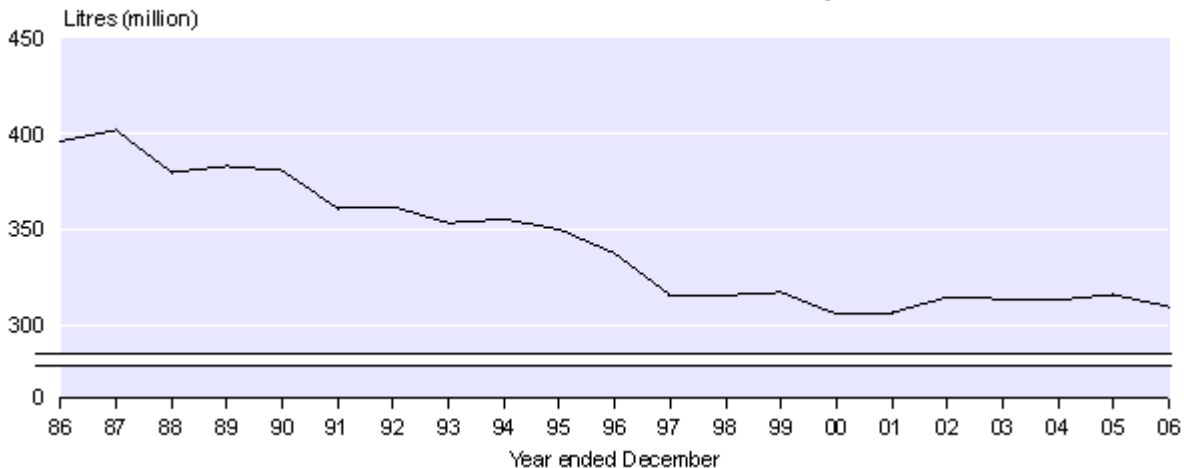
By beverage type



Beer

The volume of beer available for consumption in the December 2006 year was down 6.4 million litres (2.0 percent) on the December 2005 year. While still the most popular type of alcoholic beverage, beer has declined as a proportion of the total beverage available for consumption – down from 97 percent in 1946, and 81 percent in 1996, to the present level of 67 percent.

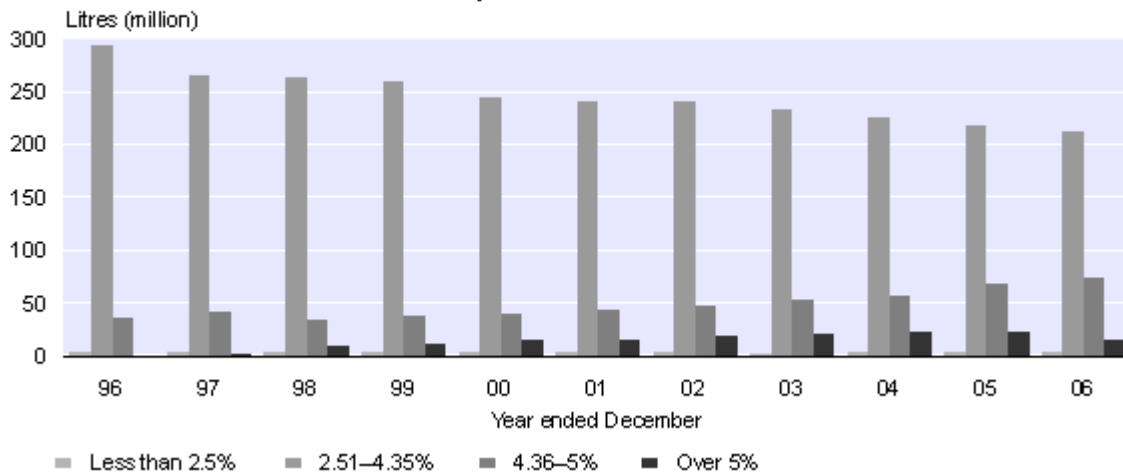
Volume of Beer Available for Consumption



The volume of beer available for consumption with an alcohol content of between 4.36 and 5.0 percent continued to rise, up by 6.9 million litres (10.1 percent) in the December 2006 year compared with the December 2005 year. This was the only range of beer strength to show an increase, and now provides almost a quarter of all beer available. Although beer with alcohol content between 2.6 and 4.35 percent still contributed the largest share (almost 70 percent) of the volume of beer available for consumption in 2006, this level has been decreasing every year.

As the Beer Production Survey, which provided data on the volume of beer produced in New Zealand, was discontinued after the September 2006 quarter, information on volumes of beer by packaging type (bottled, canned, bulk) is no longer available.

Volume of Beer Available for Consumption *By alcohol content*



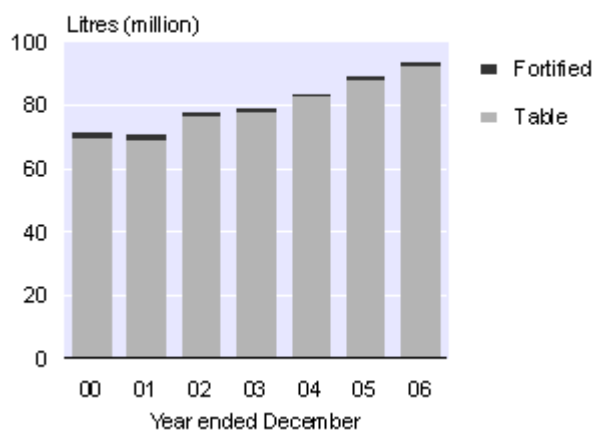
Wine

Over the past decade, the volume of wine available for consumption has generally been increasing, and in 2006 wine provided 20.2 percent of available alcoholic beverage, compared with 15.9 percent in 1996. The total volume of wine available for consumption was 93.7 million litres in the year ended December 2006, up 5.0 percent compared with the previous year. New Zealand-produced wine available for domestic consumption was 69.6 million litres in 2006, compared with 66.9 million litres in 2005. Over the same period, net imports of wine increased by 7.7 percent to 24.1 million litres.

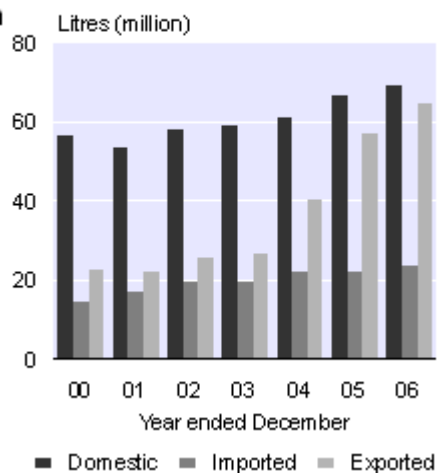
In addition to the increased availability of domestically produced wine for consumption, exports of wine produced in New Zealand have been increasing over the last decade; levels of New Zealand-produced wines exported in 2006 were almost three times the volume exported in 1996.

Table wine (up to 14 percent alcohol by volume), which is now 99.0 percent of all wine available for consumption, increased by 4.5 million litres (5.1 percent) in the December 2006 year compared with the December 2005 year.

Volume of Wine Available for Consumption



Wine – Domestic Production, Imports and Exports

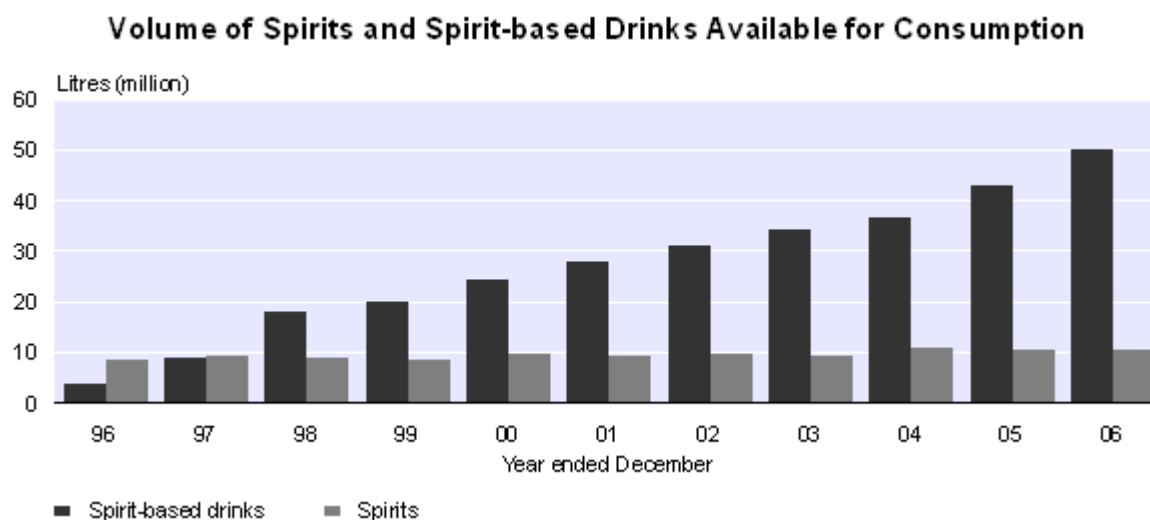


Spirits and spirit-based drinks

Spirits and spirit-based drinks now represent 13.1 percent of the alcoholic beverage available for consumption. The total share of spirits and spirit-based drinks has increased steadily from 3.0 percent in the year ended December 1996.

The availability of spirit-based drinks (those with less than 23 percent alcohol content) continued to rise in the December 2006 year, as it has done each year since the series began in 1995. The volume available in the 2006 year increased by 7.0 million litres (16.3 percent) when compared with the 2005 year. This follows an increase of 6.1 million litres (16.6 percent) between the 2004 and 2005 years.

While the volume of spirits (those with more than 23 percent alcohol content) available for consumption (10.5 million litres) was almost unchanged in the December 2006 year, the shift to spirit-based beverages with a lower alcohol content resulted in the pure alcohol available from total spirits and spirit-based drinks increasing only 5.3 percent, despite an increase of 13.0 percent in the total volume of beverage available.



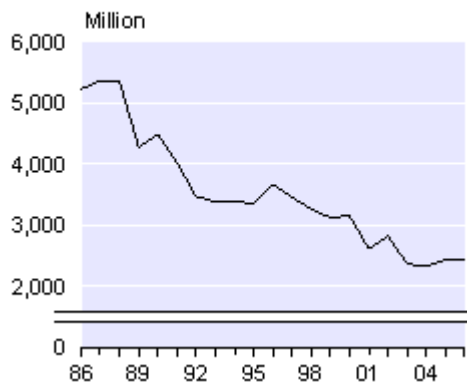
Cigarettes and tobacco

During the December 2006 year the number of cigarettes available for consumption was virtually unchanged at 2.4 billion. This follows a rise of 5.0 percent in 2005.

The number of cigarettes available for consumption peaked at 6.3 billion in 1977. Since then the level of cigarettes available for consumption has generally been decreasing. The number of cigarettes has been below 3 billion for the last six calendar years, and below 2.5 billion for the last four years, and is now less than half the 5.2 billion available in 1986.

In the December 2006 year, tobacco available for consumption fell 1.0 percent (to 879 tonnes) compared with the 2005 year.

Cigarettes Available for Consumption



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Technical notes

General

The statistics contained in this release are a measure of the amounts of alcoholic beverage and tobacco released to the market and therefore available for consumption. They do not necessarily apply to actual consumption. Information is not available to measure the change in level of stocks that may be held pending sale and therefore not yet consumed. The figures also exclude the production of alcoholic beverages by households.

Beer

The volume of beer available for consumption is obtained from New Zealand Customs Service (NZCS) figures on beer produced for local consumption on which duty has been paid, and Statistics New Zealand external trade statistics. Domestically produced beer with less than 1.15 percent alcohol content is excluded from these statistics. The estimates of beer available for consumption also excludes beer produced by private individuals with home-brewing equipment.

The volume of alcohol available from beer is calculated using the five categories used to calculate excise duty. These categories being:

1. Not more than 1.15 percent alcohol volume (external trade statistics only).
2. More than 1.15 percent but not more than 2.5 percent alcohol volume.
3. More than 2.5 percent but not more than 4.35 percent alcohol volume.
4. More than 4.35 percent but not more than 5 percent alcohol volume.
5. More than 5 percent alcohol volume.

The volume of beverage in each category is multiplied by 0.0115, 0.01825, 0.04, 0.04675, and 0.051, respectively. This converts the volume of beer available for consumption to the volume of alcohol available for consumption.

The factor of 0.04 was chosen to calculate the volume of alcohol available for consumption of beer containing more than 2.51 percent but not more than 4.35 percent alcohol because the majority of beers produced in this range are made up of 4.0 percent alcohol content.

Wine

The volume of wine available for consumption is obtained from NZCS figures on wine produced for local consumption on which duty has been paid, and Statistics NZ external trade statistics. Domestically produced wine with less than 1.15 percent alcohol content is excluded from these statistics. The estimates of wine available for consumption also excludes wine produced by private individuals with winemaking equipment.

The volume of table wine available is multiplied by 0.11 and the volume of fortified wine is multiplied by 0.18 to calculate the volume of alcohol available in these wines. Results of the "Study of the Alcohol Content of Alcoholic Beverages" conducted by the DSIR between 1976 and 1987 are used to determine the average alcoholic content of table and fortified wine.

Spirits

The volume of spirits and spirit-based beverages available for consumption is obtained from NZCS figures on locally produced/bottled spirits on which duty has been paid, and Statistics NZ external trade statistics.

The data used to calculate available spirits is expressed in absolute alcohol content. However, spirit-based beverages which have an alcohol content of less than 23 percent are expressed in litres. The volume of alcohol content in spirit-based drinks is calculated using the five categories used to calculate excise duty. These categories are:

1. Not more than 2.5 percent alcohol volume.
2. More than 2.5 percent but not more than 6 percent alcohol volume.
3. More than 6 percent but not more than 9 percent alcohol volume.
4. More than 9 percent but not more than 14 percent alcohol volume.
5. More than 14 percent but not more than 23 percent alcohol volume.

The volume of beverage in each category is multiplied by 0.015, 0.045, 0.08, 0.11, and 0.18, respectively. This converts the volume of spirit-based drinks available for consumption to the volume of alcohol available for consumption.

Alcohol per person

Statistics NZ quarterly population estimates are used.

Cigarettes and tobacco

The amount of cigarettes and tobacco available for consumption is obtained from Statistics NZ external trade statistics and NZCS figures on tobacco products cleared for local consumption on which duty has been paid.

More information

For more information, click on these links from the technical notes of this release on the Statistics NZ website: [*alcohol for consumption statistics*](#) or [*cigarettes and tobacco statistics*](#).

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Timed statistical releases are delivered using postal and electronic services provided by third parties. Delivery of these releases may be delayed by circumstances outside the control of Statistics NZ. Statistics NZ accepts no responsibility for any such delays.

Next release ...

Alcohol and Tobacco Available for Consumption: Year ended December 2007 will be released in February 2008.

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Tables

The following tables can be downloaded from the Statistics New Zealand website in Excel format. If you do not have access to Excel, you may use the [Excel file viewer](#) to view, print and export the contents of the file.

List of tables

1. Alcohol and tobacco available for consumption
2. Alcohol available for consumption, volume of pure alcohol available

Correction

Alcohol and Tobacco Available for Consumption: Year ended December 2006 Hot Off The Press: error in one of the graph titles

The Year ended December 2006 Hot Off The Press release, published on Thursday, 22 February, included an incorrect graph axis title.

The correct graph for "Litres of Pure Alcohol available for Consumption, Per head of population aged 15 years and over" is now included in the release.

All other graphs, data and information in this release are unaffected.

Statistics New Zealand regrets any inconvenience caused.