

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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China - Peoples Republic of

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Sonoma Winery Targets Chinese Consumers

Report Categories:

Agricultural Trade Office Activities

CSSF Activity Report

Export Accomplishments - Events

Export Accomplishments - Other

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Report Highlights:

Ektimo is a Sonoma-based winery with Chinese management. As a newcomer to the wine promotion scene in Beijing, they have targeted new wine consumers, with help from ATO.

U.S. Wine Gets Another Boost:

Ektimo is the first Chinese- owned vineyard in Sonoma, California. As a Chinese-owned U.S. winery, they have both a strong incentive to promote U.S. wines in China, and an inherently strong grasp of Chinese consumers and markets. The company started their marketing efforts in China in 2012, when ATO first encountered them at the Topwine China trade show in Beijing. Since that time, ATO has worked with them to help build markets for U.S. wines, among other things, introducing them to the Wine Institute, of which they have become a member. The Wine Institute has helped to involve Ektimo in their own promotion program, including trade shows such as the Tangjiuhui, where the ATO office in Chengdu organizes a U.S. pavilion.

ATO also worked directly with Ektimo on their consumer outreach efforts. One event was also a trial effort with the U.S. Embassy's Public Affairs Section (PAS) to promote U.S. food as part of the Embassy's cultural outreach. In this case, PAS was hosting a month-long series of presentations and discussions on American culture at their Beijing American Center. ATO coordinated with them to include a session on U.S. wines, and Ektimo donated the services of their wine educator to conduct the lecture in mandarin. PAS also recruited an audience that included both consumers and media. Rather than focusing on advanced wine knowledge, as many industry efforts do, the educator provided a basic outline of wines, U.S. wines, and how to appreciate them. After the event, media attendees noted the need for this type of basic wine knowledge among the broader consuming public. There were multiple requests for copies of the briefing materials for republication, a good sign that the event reached a larger audience.

Most recently, ATO attended a media launch for Ektimo in the parent company's hometown of Zibo, Shandong province. The event attracted more than 100 trade contacts, as well as about 15 media organizations to report the event. The value of this event for consumer awareness of U.S. wines is difficult to calculate. Media coverage in smaller (less than 10 million people) cities like Zibo tends to be far more intense than in the big three urban centers of Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou. During 2012, an ATO outreach event for U.S. wines to Zhengzhou, a city of 7 million, received national media coverage in China Daily, largely because efforts like this in interior cities are so rare.

Ektimo sold an estimated \$250,000 in Sonoma wine during their initial efforts in 2013.

