



SustainableWine
ROUNDTABLE

The Bottle Weight Accord

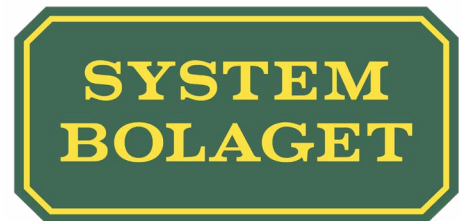
A lightweight(*ing*) report

In November 2023, the Sustainable Wine roundtable (SWR) launched the Bottle Weight Accord (BWA). Based on research we had undertaken earlier that year, the Accord committed its signatories to reduce the average weight of their 750ml still wine bottles to below 420g by the end of 2026.

We do a lot of long reports, but this is a short one to celebrate the first year of the BWA and look at some of the lessons that we and those who have signed the Accord have learned in the past 12 months.



Signatories



Key Statistics

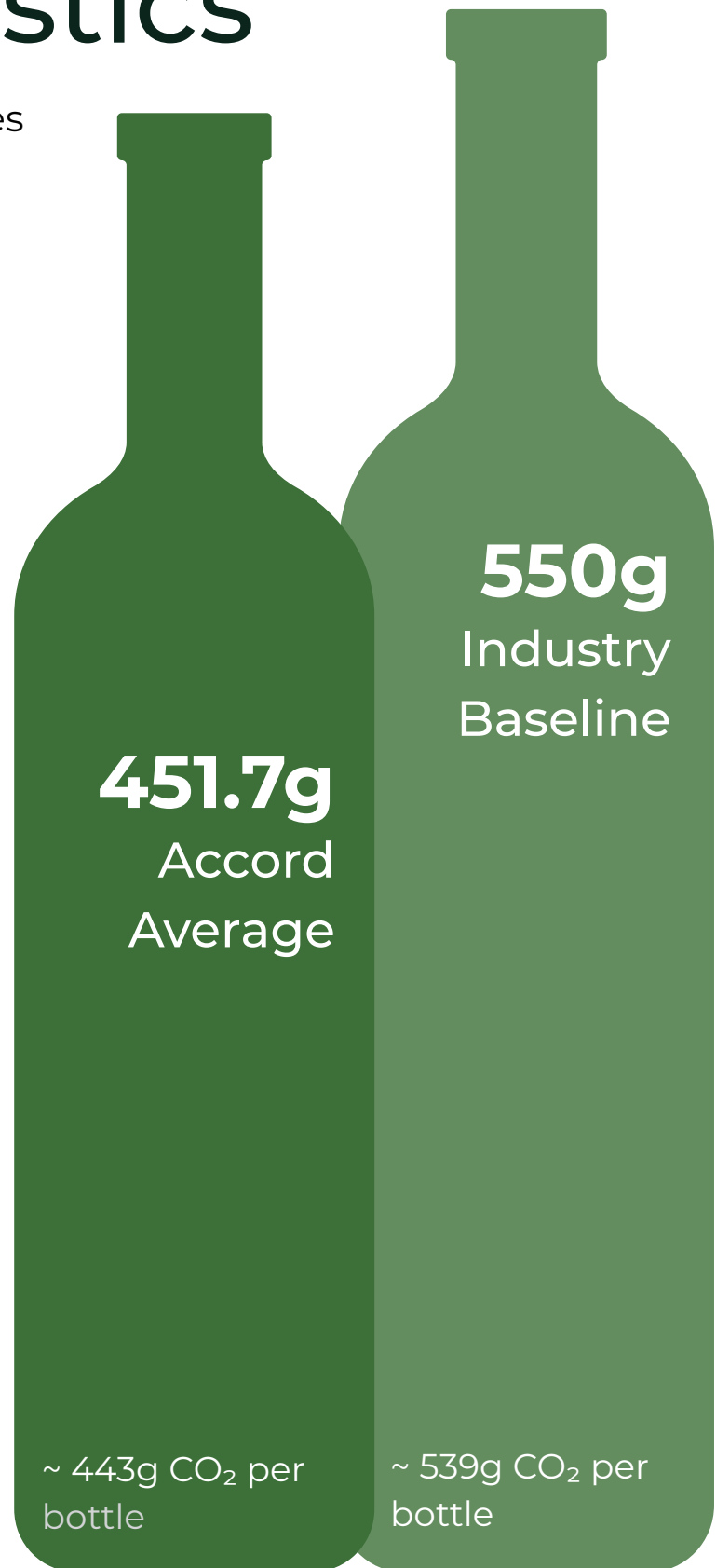
But first of all, the headlines
about the Accord.

1.5 billion
bottles covered

96g CO₂
reduction
per bottle

114,428
tonnes

of total CO₂
mitigated



Emissions factor: 0.98g CO₂ per gram of virgin glass (DEFRA, 2024)

Highlights

Average Weight Reductions

Progress varies regionally, but many signatories report reductions exceeding the 420g benchmark for still wine bottles.



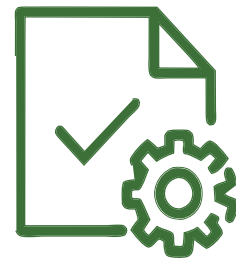
Global Involvement

Signatories include Nordic monopolies (e.g. Vinmonopolet, Systembolaget, Alko), major producers (e.g., Catena Zapata), and retailers (e.g. Naked Wines, Tesco).



Increasingly Becoming an Industry Standard

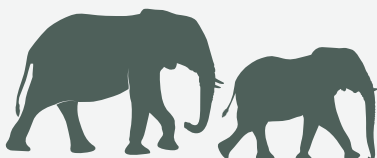
Often referenced as “**THE** bottle weight accord” in public media. Throughout our pilot benchmarking process, the accord has popped up in standards guidance and requirements in multiple occasions – solidifying SWR’s approach to lightweight bottles as industry best practice.



Carbon Mitigation

114,428 tonnes of CO₂

Equivalent to CO₂ emissions from **18,000 households**



or **36,100 Asian elephants** by weight

The Value of Collaborative Action

A key value of the BWA is that it is a vehicle for collective action. Many of the participants knew that action on bottle weight was needed, and the creation of the BWA provided the incentive and vehicle to take that action.

The wine sector is fragmented, and a key role for SWR is to provide an impetus for cooperation in sustainability along the supply chain. Our research provided the evidence base for change in bottle weight, and the Accord has provided a clear rallying point for the sector.

“Without the official BWA, the move toward lighter bottles was already there for several years but going at a slower pace. SWR has been a strong catalyst on this subject.”

“The Accord is a tool to strengthen our message together with other industry stakeholders.”

“The commitment to the SWR target has given us the impetus and confidence that the average target set is both achievable and practical.”

“As a producer group we are seeing more requests from retailers for lighter weight bottles. It seemed common sense, therefore, to join what is rapidly becoming an industry standard for bottle lightweighting”



Making it Work

The BWA needed to be more than just a statement of intent. Those signing the Accord committed themselves to taking concrete steps to actually reduce the weights of the bottles they use.

Central to SWR's mission is to share experience about what makes sustainability work in practice. We therefore asked signatories what practical steps they were taking to implement the Accord, and the challenges they face. This is what they said:



Collaboration Internally

For sustainability to work within an organisation, it requires the efforts of more than just the sustainability team. Over the past year, BWA participants have made it clear that collaborating with colleagues from other parts of the business has been a critical step in putting the BWA into action.

“ *We have worked closely with our team of buyers to make sure that they understand why lighter weight bottles are important, and to make sure that this **becomes part of their discussions** with the producers we buy from.”*

“ *Working with our colleagues in the packaging team has been a key activity. They have a wider view of developments– especially in light of various regulatory changes – so **their collaboration is key** in making the BWA work as part of our wider packaging strategy.”*

Work with business partners

However, it is also clear that implementation of the Accord requires working closely with business partners. This can include both vertical linkages between producers and retailers, and lateral ones with bottle makers and other suppliers.

“We’ve **communicated the ambition** through Supplier Conferences, email updates, and a targeted approach prioritizing products with higher-than-average bottle weights.”

“As the trend towards lighter-weight glass grows, our **bottle supplier has worked with us** to provide the lightest weights possible for our needs.”

“Our partnership with our bottle supplier has enabled us to create lighter bottles as low as 365 grams **without sacrificing design or integrity**. These efforts amplify our shared goal of environmental improvement.”

The challenge of accurate data

Collecting accurate data around packaging remains a significant challenge. This is in part because, until relatively recently, this information was not required and therefore not collected. However, differences in how data is formatted and poor communication all contribute to the issue. Nonetheless, there is evidence that mandating provision of data can be effective.

“Gathering bottle weight data remains a challenge, especially for premium wines. We weigh empty bottles ourselves, but this is not always possible for rare or expensive wines. **This effort needs a team approach.**”

“In the past we were not always that rigorous at registering bottle weights.”

“For 2025 and 2026, our members **must record the weight of the bottles used**, note the approximate production percentage for each type of bottle, and if bottle weights exceed 420g, detail a roadmap for reductions or participate in a bottle reuse sector.”

Communicating with consumers

In some markets and some consumer groups there remains a lingering perception that heavier bottles implies better quality wine. A key lesson of the BWA to date is the need to work with consumers to help them understand the environmental advantages of lighter weight bottles. Accord members are taking a wide range of steps, including proactive consumer education campaigns and event QR code quizzes to drive awareness of the importance of lighter bottles.

“We aim to **shift consumer preferences**, encouraging acceptance of lightweight bottles as a mark of environmental consciousness rather than a compromise on quality.”

“There is much to do. In some markets, heavier bottles are still associated with quality. Changing this perception **requires a concerted effort** from the entire trade.”

“We also **actively communicate** packaging related information to our customers in our different channels, as we see customer engagement as a key focus area in enhancing sustainability in the beverage industry.”

Operational efficiencies

The past year has also highlighted some operational insights into implementation of the BWA. In some cases, the intention to lightweight bottles has driven efficiencies in the choice and selection of bottles used.

“Starting in 2023, we lightweighted and consolidated the number of different glass moulds used, achieving **both production efficiency and environmental impact reductions**. By choosing one primary Burgundy and Bordeaux mould, we reduced our average bottle weight to 419g by the end of 2023, with 75% of SKUs bottled in these moulds.”

Where next:

Driving the Accord in 2025

As the Bottle Weight Accord continues to gain momentum, SWR remains focused on expanding its impact and supporting signatories in overcoming key challenges. We see the following as our key tasks over the next year to help drive the Accord's success and reach.



Streamlining Data Collection

Accurate and accessible data is the foundation for driving effective change under the Accord. To support signatories, SWR will:

- **Develop Reporting Templates:** Provide standardized formats to simplify bottle weight reporting and ensure consistency across members.
- **Support Smaller Suppliers:** Create resources to help smaller producers source lightweight glass and navigate reporting requirements.
- **Increase Transparency:** Make bottle weight data and availability from glass manufacturers accessible to members, addressing gaps in data and improving decision-making.

Sparkling Wine Lightweighting

The BWA currently relates only to 750ml still wine bottles. We are currently working to develop equivalent values for sparkling wines. There are particular challenges here including pressure resistance and breakage concerns. We will develop:

- **Guidance on lightweight bottles** for sparkling wines while maintaining product integrity.
- **Collaborating with manufacturers and producers** to pilot innovations and share findings with signatories.

Expanding Consumer Education

Clearly communicating to consumers the environmental advantages of lighter weight bottles is key. Whilst SWR itself cannot be consumer facing, we can support BWA signatory in ensuring consistent messaging and signposting. Key tasks will be:

- **Align Messaging Across the Value Chain:** Collaborate with signatories to ensure a unified narrative that emphasizes the environmental benefits of lightweight bottles without compromising perceived quality.
- **Coordinate Campaigns:** Launch initiatives such as retailer-led labelling programs and consumer-focused events to educate the public.
- **Leverage Retailer Insights:** Drawing on successful examples, SWR will amplify strategies like retail displays that compare heavy and lightweight bottles.

Leveraging the Packaging Choice Framework

Lightweighting efforts will integrate into SWR's broader Packaging Choice Framework, enabling members to make informed decisions about packaging sustainability.

- **Comprehensive Assessment:** Bottle weight data will complement insights on alternative formats, recycling infrastructure, and extended producer responsibility.
- **Maximizing Impact:** By evaluating trade-offs and identifying opportunities for improvement, the Framework will guide members in aligning their packaging choices with their sustainability goals.



Why Join?



Industry-Wide Effort

Activities related to bottle weight are occurring across all wine businesses, but coordination is lacking, leading to inefficiencies.



Demonstrate Measurable Action

On reducing the single largest component of wine's carbon footprint.



Leadership Opportunity

Joining the Bottle Weight Accord allows members to show industry leadership in sustainability.



Share Best Practice

Learn from peers on successful implementation of the Accord.



Regulatory Preparedness

Packaging regulations are evolving. Being proactive helps the entire wine industry stay ahead of regulatory changes.

Contact Us

Visit **our website** to learn more about the bottle weight accord and joining the SWR membership.



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