



## Wine: Buying Local Helps Reduce Pollution And Protect Your Health

*The transportation-related pollution from importing wine from France includes 29 times more particulate matter and 5 times more global warming impact than transporting wine from California.*

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What are the hidden costs of the food you eat? The distance your food travels from the field to your plate (known as food miles) can substantially add to global warming *and* can increase many health risks such as asthma, cancer, and premature deaths. Let's compare California wine with French imports traveling 10,361 miles by ship to California as an example.

### **Why does it matter how far your wine has traveled?**

How your food is grown, stored, transported, processed and cooked can all influence how it impacts climate change and the environment. Transportation-related impacts are particularly important for imported foods, like wine. The United States ranks fourth internationally in wine production following France, Italy, and Spain. Americans consume an average of 2 gallons of wine per person each year, almost a quarter of which is imported. In California alone, more than 83 million gallons of wine are imported per year—about 15 percent of it from France, which means the wine makes a 10,361-mile journey in cargo ships and trucks to the Port of Oakland, where it is then shipped by truck to stores across the state and beyond. This long journey has major costs both to the environment and to people's

health. At the same time, California produces 90 percent of America's wine and exports nearly the same amount as it imports each year.

### **Locally grown versus imported wine in California**

The transportation associated with importing wine from France into California causes the release of about 10.4 million pounds of pollutants each year. This includes roughly 10.2 million pounds (5,100 tons) of global warming pollution annually—the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide emitted from 900 vehicles. Another 228,000 pounds (114 tons) of soot and smog-forming pollutants are released into the air—the amount of pollution from 26,000 vehicles. This pollution is responsible for dozens of asthma attacks and hundreds of missed school days due to respiratory disease in California children.

## **Wine:** Buying Local Helps Reduce Pollution And Protect Your Health

*In 2005, the transport of wine from France to California using trucks and cargo ships resulted in the release of an estimated 10.4 million pounds of pollutants that contributed to global warming and caused unhealthy air quality in California.*



### **Three things you can do to help reduce your food miles**

Choosing to buy local food can reduce global warming pollution, improve air quality, and protect your health. Here are three steps you can take as an individual to protect your environment and your health—without sacrificing the taste and quality of your food:

- 1.** Buy locally produced wines.
- 2.** Ask the grocery stores, restaurants, and work cafeterias that you frequent to carry local foods. You can find a sample letter to send to them at [www.nrdc.org/foodmiles](http://www.nrdc.org/foodmiles).
- 3.** Encourage businesses and government bodies in your area to create farmers' markets and to adopt procurement policies that favor locally grown, organic, and sustainably harvested foods.

### **The Environmental and Health Price Tag in California**

- 10.2 million pounds of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)
- 218,000 pounds of smog-forming nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>)
- 10,000 pounds of particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>)
- Up to 27 cases of asthma per year
- Up to 500 missed school days per year