

Tesco launches lightest-ever bottle

14 Jan 2010 by Jancis Robinson

Those who have been following our campaign against unnecessarily heavy wine bottles (see, for example, [Name and shame heavy bottles](#)) may be interested to know that the UK's biggest, and now international, supermarket chain Tesco is launching with much fanfare what they call 'the lightest ever wine bottle'.

The new bottle, weighing just 300g, is the result of collaboration between [WRAP](#), Kingsland Wine and Spirits and Quinn Glass. It is apparently 30% lighter than the lightest bottles that the supermarket giant previously used for bottling its own-label wines in the UK (Tesco have long earned eco-points and save valuable pennies by importing considerable quantities of wine in bulk). These new 300g bottles are expected to reduce Tesco's glass usage by a further 560 tonnes a year.

Andrew Gale, who has one of those lovely long job titles of which large companies are so fond, Category Technical Manager for Tesco Beers, Wines and Spirits, reports, 'Tesco has one of the largest wine ranges of any retailer and a traditional 12 bottle case weighs about 6kg in glass alone, presenting a real opportunity for us to make a difference. We have committed to bottling all entry-level New World wines in the new 300g option.'

In order to reduce the weight whilst retaining the strength and durability necessary for a wine bottle, the classic shape has been adjusted slightly to have more markedly sloping shoulders and to be a little shorter overall. I am due to take delivery of one of these new light bottles today but Tesco maintain that people may not notice the changes that have been made.

Gale continues: 'Our customers tell us they are happy to buy lighter bottles so it is unnecessary to support marketing through glass weight. We are also working with suppliers to discourage the use of heavyweight bottles even on branded products.'

Tesco reports that bottling in the new 300g glass bottles is one of the final stages in their 'strategy to significantly reduce carbon emissions on wines brought into their stores. Already the majority of New World wines are shipped to the UK in bulk and bottled in the UK, rather than bottled at source'. Since starting bulk shipping in 2003, Tesco now imports 10 million litres of wine a year in bulk to provide 57 different lines.

The first of these 300g bottles to hit Tesco shelves is expected to be filled with Tesco Australian Red NV, which could risk a consumer perception of these ecologically highly respectable new bottles as being associated with low-cost pure and simple.