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MARKET INSIGHT

Agave Market Breakdown

An opportunity for the UK and EU to capitalise on a growing market



FACILITATE INGREDIENTS | UPDATED NOVEMBER 2026

BACKGROUND

After the boom, a maturing market with room to grow beyond North America

After a period of explosive growth, driven largely by tequila and mezcal in the US, the agave market is showing signs of maturation and stabilisation.

As premiumisation, cocktail culture and celebrity-backed brands settle, attention is shifting to international markets beyond North America, especially Europe (the UK, Spain, Germany and France) and Asia Pacific.

Maturation is also driving the development of other agave-based spirits and products, creating real opportunities for suppliers outside the traditional tequila-producing regions. With a firm focus on sugar reduction and adding fibre, Europe and the UK are well placed to benefit from increased supply and more stable prices.



KEY SELLING POINTS · MATURATION IN THE US MARKET

US tequila is maturing, not declining

Between 2019 and 2024, US tequila and mezcal volumes rose from 20.1 million to 32.2 million 9-litre cases, roughly 10% a year. Growth slowed to 2% in 2024, while the value of the US market is still forecast to climb from $9.5 billion in 2025 to $13.8 billion by 2034.

The overall trajectory remains positive. The slowdown is better read as a natural maturation phase than as a downturn.

32.2M

9-litre cases of tequila and mezcal sold in the US in 2024

~10%

average annual volume growth, 2019 to 2024

+2%

volume growth in 2024 as the category matures

$13.8bn

forecast US tequila market value by 2034

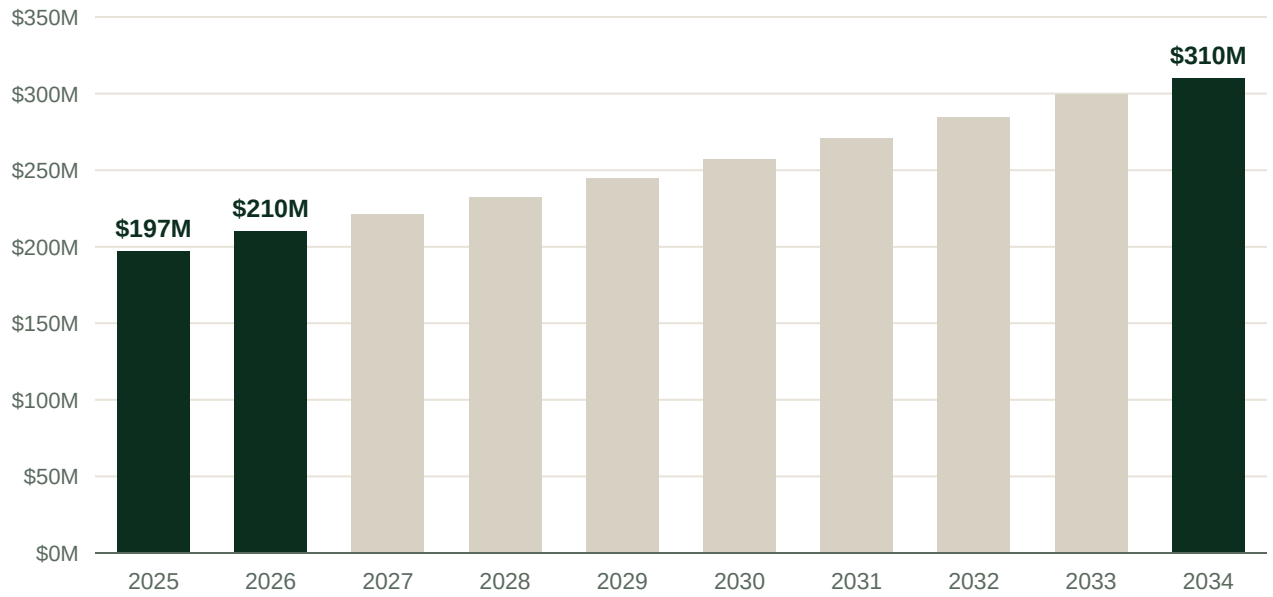


SOURCES DISCUS (2025); IMARC Group.

MARKET BREAKDOWN · MARKET SIZE

Agave syrup: a niche ingredient on a steady growth path

Global agave nectar (syrup) market, USD million
5.2% CAGR, 2026 to 2034 · Straits Research



2027 to 2033 interpolated at the stated CAGR; shaded lighter.

Forecasters put global growth for agave syrup at around 5 to 7% a year into the early 2030s, following a period of rapid discovery of Mexican products on the back of tequila in Western markets.

While growth across the wider agave category has slowed, syrup continues to expand, helped by wider use in EU and UK food and drink.

OTHER FORECASTS	VALUE	CAGR
Persistence	$246M (2026) to $378M (2033)	6.3%
GMI	$133M (2023) to $244M (2032)	~7%
Grand View	$174M (2023)	5.8%

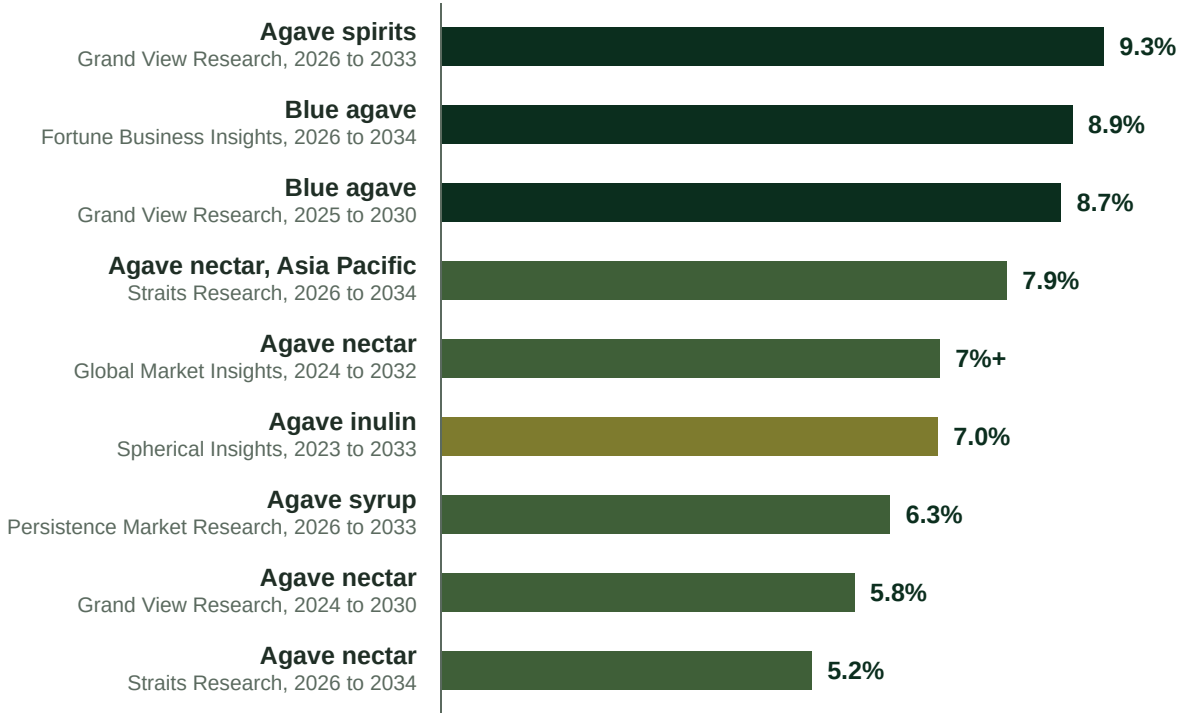
SOURCES Straits Research; Persistence Market Research; Global Market Insights; Grand View Research.

MARKET BREAKDOWN · SEGMENT GROWTH

Every agave category is forecast to grow

Forecast compound annual growth rate (CAGR) by category and publisher

Spirits and raw blue agave in green, syrup and nectar in sage, inulin in olive



North America is an established market for agave and gives a good read on where growth may go next.

Forecasts from different publishers point the same way: steady, mid to high single-digit growth as people discover agave products beyond tequila and spirits.

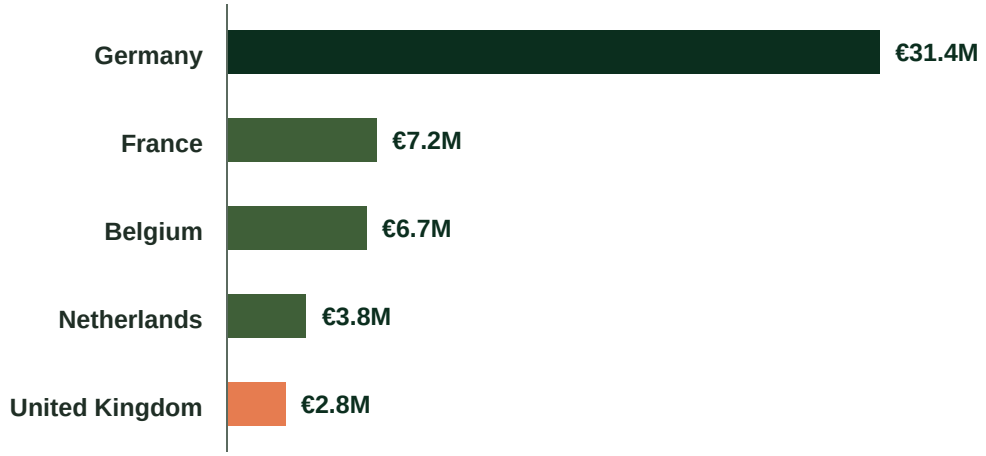
Publishers use different scopes and base years, so treat individual figures as directional rather than directly comparable.

SOURCES Grand View Research; Fortune Business Insights; Grand View Research; Straits Research; Global Market Insights; Spherical Insights; Persistence Market Research; Grand View Research.

MARKET BREAKDOWN · UK AND EU FOCUS

Europe already imports Mexican syrups at scale, led by Germany

Imports from Mexico of fructose syrups (HS 1702.60), 2023
The closest trade code for agave syrup · CBI



A similar story is playing out in the UK and EU, where alternative sweeteners are gaining ground as consumers prioritise health and wellbeing. Europe is also the largest market for organic-certified agave syrup.

Growth is slower than in the US, but the potential is clear. The UK is still a small importer next to Germany, which leaves plenty of room to build.

Interest in agave inulin is rising too, as gut health and fibre continue to be on-trend.

€59M

EU imports from Mexico in 2023, 23% of all EU imports under HS 1702.60

+4.1%

average annual growth in Mexican import value, 2019 to 2023

SOURCES CBI (2025). HS codes do not separate agave syrup from other fructose syrups, so figures are an approximation.

MARKET BREAKDOWN · REGIONAL SHARE

North America leads, but Europe already accounts for over a quarter of agave nectar demand

Share of the global agave nectar market by region, 2025
Straits Research



38.7%

North America, the largest region, helped by its proximity to Mexico, the key producing country

27.4%

Europe, with similar economic conditions and levels of affluence to North America

7.9%

forecast CAGR for Asia Pacific, the fastest-growing region to 2034

Europe is well placed to win further share as agave adoption and knowledge, particularly around applications, continue to build in the region.

SOURCES Straits Research.

WIDER AGAVE POSITIONING

Four reasons agave is well placed for growth

01

Low-GI and natural profile

Agave fits one of the fastest-growing spaces in food and drink: lower sugar, natural and premium. Its glycaemic index is around 15, against around 65 for sugar.

02

Supply and relationships

As usage grows and producers scale, consistent syrup supply becomes a commercial necessity. Securing volume and maintaining good relationships will matter more as the market matures.

03

Policy tailwind

The UK has cut its import tariff on agave syrup to zero until July 2027, making it more competitive on price against other sugars.

04

Riding on tequila

The tequila boom has opened the door to wider exploration of Mexican cuisine and ingredients, paving the way for agave products to have their moment.

0%

UK import tariff on agave syrup, suspended until July 2027

~15

glycaemic index of agave syrup, against ~65 for sugar

+57%

growth in UK agave spirits over the last five years

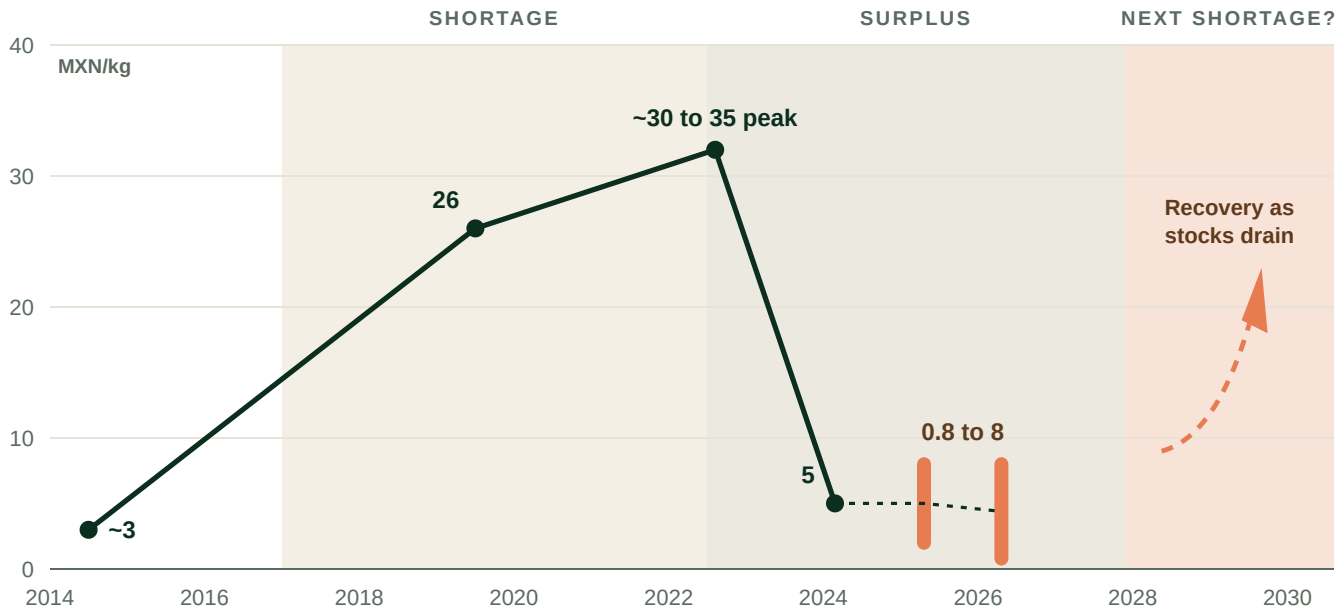
SOURCES CBI (2025); GOV.UK (2025); Park Street (2025).

RAW MATERIAL · SUPPLY CYCLE

Agave runs on a 7 to 10 year cycle, and prices swing from boom to bust

Blue Weber agave price paid to growers, MXN per kg

Reported data points; terracotta bars show the reported range for 2025 and 2026



The agave market is inherently cyclical, because supply is built around a slow-growing plant.

The core structural problem is the 7 to 10 year maturation window for blue agave. When prices spike and farmers plant in a hurry, that supply can’t reach the market for the best part of a decade, by which point demand has completely changed.

Phase timings and the recovery arrow are Facilitate’s view, based on planting lags and current inventory.

SOURCES Mexico News Daily (2019); Mexico News Daily, citing FT and CRT (2024); AFP (2025); Vinetur, citing CRT and IWSR (2026).



RAW MATERIAL · SHORTAGE AND SURPLUS

From shortage to “tequila lake”, and back again

Shortage cycle 2017 TO 2022

Demand outpaced supply as tequila exports surged. With blue agave taking 7 to 10 years to mature, planted area couldn’t respond fast enough, and prices reached around MXN 30 to 35/kg.

Surplus: the “tequila lake” 2023 TO 2027

Plantings from the boom years matured at once, just as US demand softened. Tequila production fell from 651.5 million litres in 2022 to 495.8 million in 2024, inventories reached around 525 million litres, and spot prices fell to MXN 2/kg or less, with some fields abandoned.

Predicted next shortage 2028 TO 2030+

Low prices are already discouraging new planting. As demand recovers and inventories drain, the maturation lag is likely to create the next supply crunch. The cycle repeats.

SOURCES Vinetur, citing CRT and IWSR (2026); Mexico News Daily, citing FT and CRT (2024); AFP (2025).



RAW MATERIAL · TIMING

2026 to early 2027 is the window to lock in supply

Despite the current oversupply, the Tequila Regulatory Council (CRT) reported inventories of around 525 million litres at the end of 2023, close to a full year's production.

That stock is also the key risk signal for the next shortage: it masks how little new planting is happening right now. For businesses that are on-trend and planning ahead, that is good news.

For food and spirit producers, the window to secure long-term supply contracts at favourable rates is now, before the inventory overhang drains and prices start to recover.

2026 to early 2027

Key timing to lock in favourable pricing, or to buy in stock and reduce the risk of future price increases.

SOURCES Mexico News Daily, citing FT and CRT (2024); Vinetur, citing CRT and IWSR (2026).

KEY MARKET TARGETS

Where agave wins: four target applications

01

Syrups in cocktails

A well-documented use for agave syrup, driven by booming agave spirit sales and wider exploration of Mexican flavours.

02

Syrups for sweetening

A different sweetening profile to sugar, and around 1.4 times as sweet, allowing lower dosage rates.

03

Inulin as a prebiotic fibre

An alternative to chicory inulin with application benefits, a stronger origin story and organic certification as standard.

04

Agave distillation

UK provenance and storytelling within a Mexican-inspired spirit, in one of the fastest-growing areas of the spirits category.

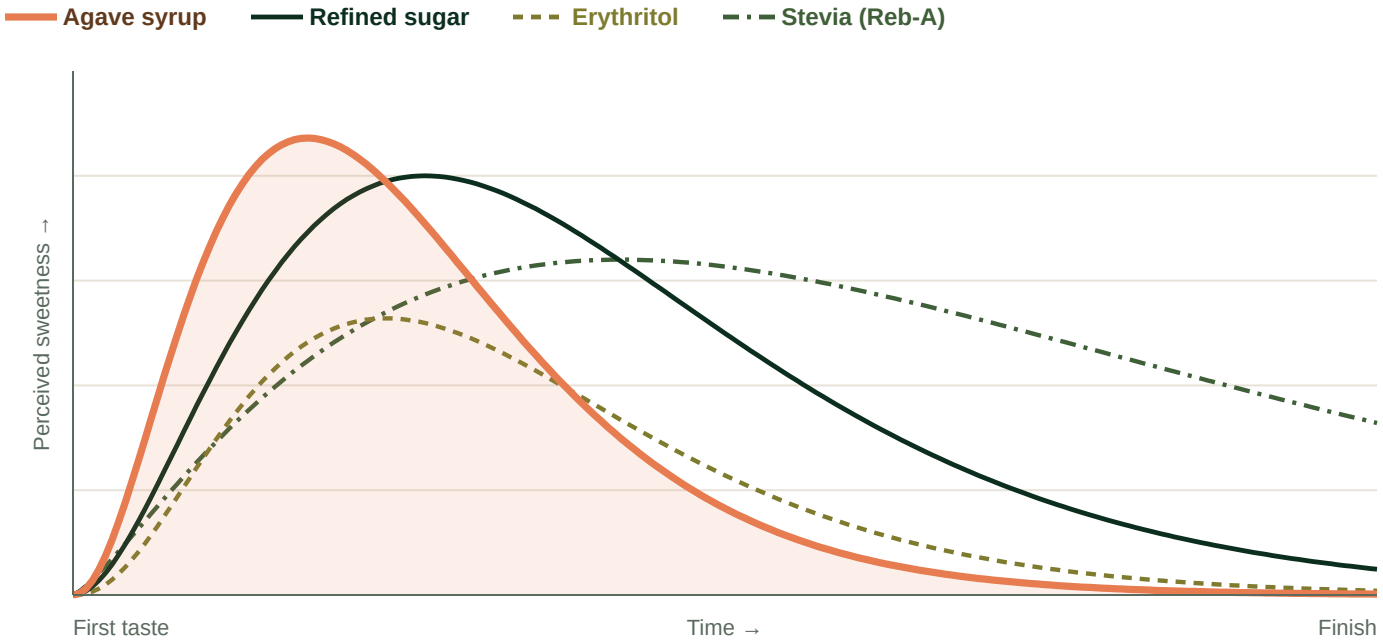


SWEETENING PROFILE

Agave’s sweetness arrives fast and finishes clean

How sweetness builds and fades over time

Illustrative profiles based on published sensory research; intensities not to scale



Fructose, the main sugar in agave syrup, is perceived earlier than sucrose, reaches a slightly higher peak and fades more quickly.

In practice, agave gives a quick, clean hit of sweetness that doesn’t linger, while high-intensity sweeteners such as stevia tend to build slowly and hang on.

SOURCES Hanover and White (1993); Tan et al. (2019).

SWEETENING PROFILE

How agave compares with other sweeteners

Agave syrup

Fructose-dominant, with up to 90% fructose. A fast onset, a slightly higher peak and a quicker, clean finish than sugar, with minimal side tastes. Around 1.4 times as sweet as sugar.

Refined sugar

A rapid onset, peaking within seconds, followed by a smooth, even decline. Clean and predictable, with minimal side tastes: the benchmark profile others are measured against.

Erythritol

A quick onset similar to sugar, but at around 60 to 70% of its sweetness. A short linger with little residual taste, and a noticeable cooling effect as the crystals dissolve.

Stevia (Reb-A)

A slower onset than sugar with a long sweetness tail. At higher levels Reb-A carries lingering bitter, metallic and liquorice notes that reduce perceived sweetness.



SOURCES Hanover and White (1993); Tan et al. (2019); CBI (2025).

SYRUP POSITIONING

A premium alternative with practical advantages over other sweeteners

CHARACTERISTIC	AGAVE SYRUP	TABLE SUGAR	HONEY	HIGH-INTENSITY SWEETENERS
Glycaemic index	~15 (11 to 19 in testing)	~65	Varies widely (32 to 87)	0 to low
Sweetness vs sugar	~1.4x	Benchmark	Similar	100x or more
Vegan	Yes	Yes	No	Often
Natural origin	Yes, plant-based	Yes, plant-based	Yes	Varies
Calories per 100g	~310 kcal	~387 kcal	~304 kcal	0 to 4 kcal
Solubility	High, even in cold applications	Partial in cold	Partial in cold	High
Flavour impact	Very low	Neutral	Distinctive	Distinctive

SOURCES CBI (2025); University of Sydney GI testing, via Wikipedia; Glycemic Index Foundation; USDA FoodData Central.





RTD COCKTAILS

Spirit-based RTDs are where the momentum is

Spirit-based RTDs remain the strongest-growing part of the ready-to-drink category, outpacing malt-based products in value and momentum.

The “drink less, drink better” shift is driving premiumisation, with consumers actively choosing **fewer, higher-quality serves**.

In the UK, RTD sales in shops and supermarkets reached **£704 million in 2025**, up 17% in value, with 44% of RTD sales coming from drinkers switching from spirits. Demand for ready-made Margaritas grew by more than 150% in a year, faster than any other cocktail.

Recent duty increases across beer, wine and spirits are encouraging consumers to trade up within RTDs, where premium options offer better perceived value.

SOURCES IWSR (2024); WSTA/NIQ via The Spirits Business (2026); NIQ via Asian Trader (2025).

RTD KEY STATS

The RTD opportunity in numbers

£704M

UK off-trade RTD sales in 2025

+17%

UK RTD value growth in 2025, with volume up 12%

+150%

growth in UK demand for ready-made Margaritas, 52 weeks to July 2025

44%

of UK RTD sales come from drinkers switching from spirits

19%

of UK RTD drinkers in 2024 were new to the category

$16.2bn

forecast European RTD cocktail market by 2030, a 10.9% CAGR

SOURCES WSTA/NIQ via The Spirits Business (2026); NIQ via Asian Trader (2025); IWSR (2024); Business Market Insights.

RTD GROWTH

A maturing category: fewer, smarter launches

What's accelerating growth?

- Spirit-based RTDs and "drink less, drink better" premiumisation
- Strong presence in the on-trade and at festivals and large events
- New drinkers: 19% of UK RTD consumers in 2024 were new to the category
- Duty increases pushing consumers to trade up within RTDs

Category maturity signals

- New product launches slowing, from more than 3,300 in 2021 to fewer than 1,000 in the first half of 2024
- Fewer but smarter launches, consolidating around core spirits
- Premium growth outpacing volume
- Tequila-based serves gaining fast, led by the Margarita



SOURCES IWSR (2024); WSTA/NIQ via The Spirits Business (2026); NIQ via Asian Trader (2025).



INULIN

Fibre is the trend to watch, and agave inulin is ready for it

Fibre is set to be one of the big food trends of 2026. On Ocado, searches for “high fibre” rose **87% year on year**, with younger shoppers in particular looking to reach the recommended 30g of fibre a day.

With fibre such a focus, agave inulin is well placed to win business in “source of fibre” and “high fibre” applications.

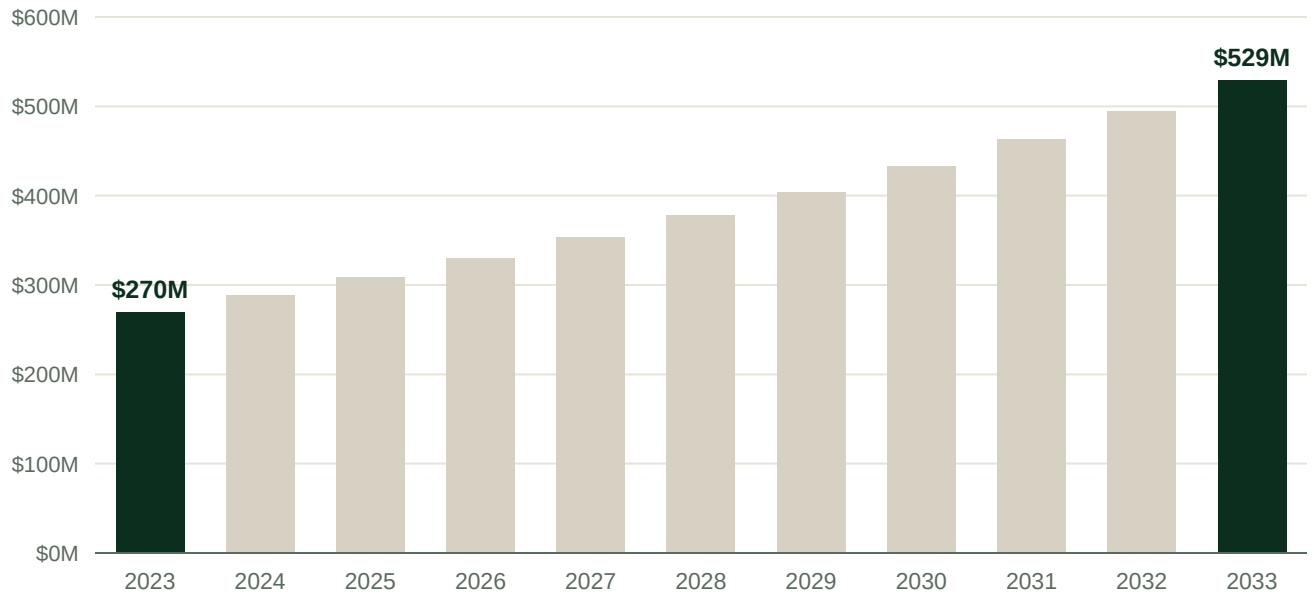
Its higher cost compared with chicory inulin will be a barrier for some applications. But agave fructans’ branched structure, stronger interaction with water and other benefits over cheaper chicory mean there is a real opportunity in fibre-focused products for 2026 and beyond.

SOURCES Ocado Retail (2025); SACN (2015); FoodNavigator (2019).

INULIN · MARKET GROWTH

The agave inulin market is forecast to nearly double by 2033

Global agave inulin market, USD million
6.97% CAGR, 2023 to 2033 · Spherical Insights



2024 to 2032 interpolated at the stated CAGR; shaded lighter.

Worldwide growth of around 7% a year is expected, driven by fibre's move into everyday diets, attention on daily fibre intake and a broader push to improve nutrition in retail products.

Consumers are becoming more "clued in", with a wealth of nutrition knowledge at their fingertips.

SOURCES Spherical Insights.

INULIN POSITIONING

Three angles that set agave inulin apart

Organic

Agave inulin is often produced organic as standard, whereas conventional is the norm for chicory. Brands looking for an organic label declaration are a key target.

The fibre gap

96% of Britons are not eating enough fibre. The average adult eats 16.2g a day, against a recommended 30g.

Mexican story

Mexico carries strong provenance appeal as consumers broaden their culinary horizons, a chance for Mexican-produced ingredients to add label appeal.

87%

year-on-year growth in “high fibre” searches on Ocado

96%

of Britons fall short of the recommended daily fibre intake

16.2g

average adult daily fibre intake, against 30g recommended



SOURCES Ocado Retail (2025); M&S, citing NDNS (2026); SACN (2015).



AGAVE SPIRITS

One of premium drinks' most compelling growth stories

The global agave spirits market was worth an estimated **$16.1 billion in 2025** and is forecast to reach **$32.9 billion by 2033**, growing at 9.3% a year, with demand for premium and ultra-premium spirits the key driver.

Tequila anchors the category with around 78% of revenue. Momentum is building in mezcal as consumers look for distinctive, high-quality experiences rooted in its Mexican origin.

Education on tequila and mezcal is growing in the UK and EU, with consumers increasingly **sipping rather than shooting**, alongside a shift towards organic cultivation, single-estate sourcing and transparent production.

SOURCES Grand View Research.

THE UK OPPORTUNITY

Why the UK can play a part in agave spirits

Germany holds the largest share of Europe’s mezcal market and a significant share of its agave spirits consumption. The UK sits alongside France in a growing European premium tier, with a bar scene and retail landscape that have shown a consistent appetite for craft and artisanal spirits.

Tequila and mezcal are protected by denomination of origin and must be produced in specific regions of Mexico, but agave spirits can be distilled anywhere in the world under a different name.

The UK’s strengths map well onto what the category needs: **world-class craft distillery infrastructure, a sophisticated premium on-trade and consumers who are increasingly curious about provenance and process.**

+57%

UK agave spirits growth over five years, with premium tequila behind 69% of it

£276M

UK on-trade tequila sales in 2024, up 3.2% in value

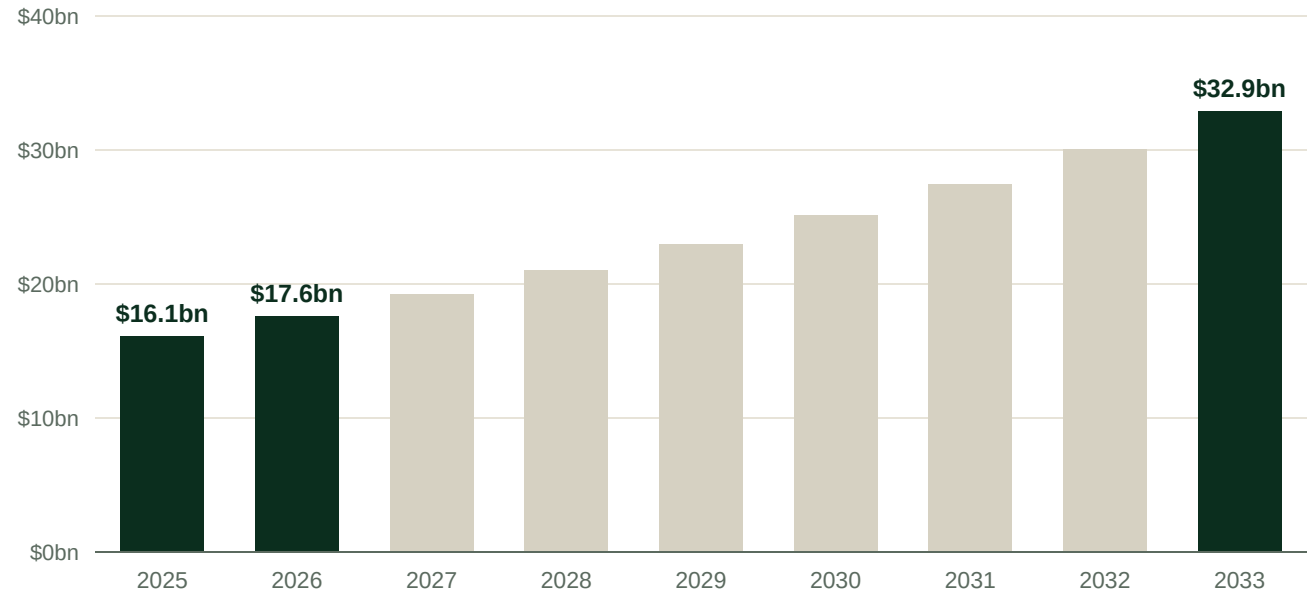
SOURCES Grand View Research (mezcal); Grand View Research; Park Street (2025); CGA via The Morning Advertiser (2025); Mondaq.



AGAVE SPIRITS · MARKET SIZE

The global agave spirits market is forecast to double by 2033

Global agave spirits market, USD billion
9.3% CAGR, 2026 to 2033 · Grand View Research



2027 to 2032 interpolated at the stated CAGR; shaded lighter.

As you would expect, tequila will continue to dominate the category.

Mezcal is set to grow strongly, giving distillers room to create distinctive, high-quality spirits with flavour profiles that differ from tequila.

Growth is also expected in other agave spirits, which is where UK and EU-based distillers are positioned.

SOURCES Grand View Research; Grand View Research (mezcal).

AGAVE SPIRITS · SEGMENTS AND REGIONS

Tequila dominates today, but the faster growth sits elsewhere

Share of global agave spirits revenue, 2025
Grand View Research



14.2%

forecast annual growth for mezcal, 2026 to 2033

38.5%

North America’s share of agave spirits revenue in 2025

APAC

the fastest-growing region for agave spirits to 2033

Germany

the largest market for mezcal in Europe

Non-Mexican agave spirits are still an emerging line that most market reports don’t track separately. Tequila and mezcal are tied to Mexico by denomination of origin rules; agave spirits distilled elsewhere carry no such restriction. That gap is precisely where UK distillers can operate.

SOURCES Grand View Research; Grand View Research (mezcal).



UK POSITIONING

UK distillers are already in the space

- Global agave spirits is a $16.1bn category growing at 9.3% a year to 2033, with mezcal forecast to outpace the overall market.
- Non-Mexican agave spirits are an emerging sub-segment, driven by craft distillers in India, South Africa, Australia and now the British Isles.
- UK distilleries are already active: Dark Art Distillery (Véspero, Kirkcudbright, Scotland) and Pocketful of Stones (The Lost Mexican, Penzance, Cornwall) are two examples.
- Consumer trends are aligned: premiumisation, additive-free production, provenance storytelling and craft credentials are exactly what a UK agave offer can deliver.
- The window for early-mover advantage is open, but the positioning premium will compress over time.

SOURCES Grand View Research; STV News; Drinkfinder; Mondaq.

SUMMARY

What this means for UK and EU businesses

01

The global agave spirits market is heading for around $33bn by 2033 at 9.3% a year, with mezcal among the fastest-growing segments.

02

Beyond spirits, agave syrup and inulin are expanding categories, driven by health trends and consumers seeking natural sweeteners and dietary fibre.

03

Supply remains the defining constraint: the 7 to 10 year agave cycle has repeatedly swung the market between shortage and surplus.

04

Europe and Asia Pacific are the growth frontiers for both agave spirits and agave-derived food ingredients.

05

For UK operators, the opportunity spans distillation, finishing and ingredient supply. Agave offers versatility.

06

2026 to 2030 is the entry window for early movers, both to secure supply at favourable prices and to help define the UK agave category.

APPLICATION EXAMPLES

Agave at work across food and drink



SOURCES AND FURTHER READING

Sources and further reading

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UK AGAVE SPIRITS

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Market research figures are taken from publishers’ public summaries and press releases, accessed November 2026. Full reports may contain more detail or revised numbers.

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QUESTIONS?

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