

KANE'S BEVERAGE WEEK

The Alcohol Beverage Executive's Newsletter

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India Agrees to Eliminate or Cut Tariffs on U.S. Wine and Spirits

The agreement is part of a “framework” of an interim agreement between India and the U.S. under which India agreed to cut or eliminate tariffs on all U.S. industrial goods and a wide range of U.S. food and industrial products including dried distillers’ grains (DDGs), red sorghum for animal feed, tree nuts, fresh and processed fruit, soybean oil, wine and spirits, and additional products.

India also agreed to address long-standing non-tariff barriers to U.S. food and agricultural products.

In return, the U.S. will apply a reciprocal tariff rate of 18% on some goods originating in India and once the interim agreement is concluded remove the reciprocal tariff imposed on Sept. 5, 2025, on a wide range of goods including generic pharmaceuticals, gems and diamonds, and aircraft parts.

In its statement DISCUS President/CEO Chris Swonger noted that “last year’s tariff reduction on U.S. spirits imports to India was an important first step that opened new opportunities for Bourbon producers in the world’s largest whiskey market.

“With India now reaching agreements with the EU and the UK to significantly reduce tariffs on their spirits, we are hopeful that this new U.S.–India agreement will secure comparable tariff reductions across all categories of U.S. distilled spirits, ensuring fair and competitive access to the Indian marketplace.” Swonger said.

Related: [**FACT FOCUS: Trump says tariffs have created an economic miracle. The facts tell a different story**](#) (Associated Press)

Gallo Agrees to Buy Four Roses from Kirin

Kirin said it agreed to sell **Four Roses**, the legendary Kentucky bourbon brand, to **Gallo**. Terms weren’t disclosed, but it’s understood Gallo will pay up to \$775 million plus a \$50 million earn out.

“Since our acquisition of Four Roses in 2002, the business has achieved strong growth, primarily in the U.S. market, and contributed to the growth of Kirin’s enterprise value,” the company said in a statement. Kirin added that it regularly reviews its portfolio from a long-term perspective and decided the sale was the best strategic move.

Four Roses doubled its capacity in a \$55 million expansion in 2015. It operates a distillery and visitors center in Lawrenceburg, along with a warehouse, bottling facility, and another visitors center in Coxs Creek near Bardstown.

Four Roses will join Gallo’s spirits portfolio, which includes Horse Soldier Bourbon, The Dalmore Scotch, and Shackleton Scotch.

The sale will allow Kirin to "reallocate its resources toward businesses that could further grow by leveraging Kirin's own organizational capabilities,"

New: Lagavulin 11 Year Old Sweet Peat

Lagavulin 11 Year Old Sweet Peat Single Malt Scotch Whisk is the Lagavulin Distillery's first new permanent expression in nine years. Aged in first-fill American oak ex-bourbon casks for 11 years, Sweet Peat brings peat smoke into balance with sweetness drawn entirely from oak and malt, revealing notes of toffee apple, vanilla and gentle spice while remaining unmistakably Lagavulin in character.

What They're Saying: "Sweet Peat reflects careful cask selection and deliberate pacing," said Dr. Stuart Morrison, Diageo Master Blender. "On the palate, it opens with a gentle sweetness and salinity before bonfire smoke and oak spice come into focus. Notes of honeyed malt and toffee apple build through the mid-palate, finishing long with lingering peat smoke, dark chocolate, and soft vanilla."

How it's made: Crafted with heavily peated malt and local Islay water, the spirit undergoes careful fermentation in wooden washbacks to build depth and texture, followed by distillation through Lagavulin's four distinctive squat, pear-shaped copper pot stills. This measured process produces a full-bodied, structured new make, allowing peat to remain central through maturation, while layers of sweetness emerge in balance with Lagavulin's signature smoke.

Availability: Nationwide; \$69.99.

Heineken 0.0 Adds Flavor to N/A Lineup with 2 New Offerings

Heineken is expanding its leadership in the non-alcoholic beer category with the launch of two new non-alcoholic flavors—**Cold Pressed Lime** and **Nectarine Juniper**—marking the next evolution of the brand's alcohol-free portfolio. Both flavors are double-brewed to remove alcohol and blended with the same ingredients used in Heineken 0.0 to create a balanced fruit flavor that's perfect for any social occasion, whether it be at the bar, the beach or at a BBQ.

While flavored beers represent 22% of the overall category, the flavored non-alcoholic segment has lagged at 7%—a gap Heineken 0.0 is now closing. Cold Pressed Lime and Nectarine Juniper are the company's first endeavor in the flavored non-alcoholic space and reinforce the brand's continued leadership in the category.

"When we introduced Heineken 0.0, we proved that 'alcohol-free' and 'great taste' can go hand in hand," said **Maggie Timoney**, CEO of **Heineken USA**. "Innovation is in our DNA and we see flavors as the next chapter of growth. This subsegment is growing twice as fast as the overall non-alcoholic category; one in three non-alcoholic shoppers also say taste variety is the top reason for their purchase. These new flavors represent the next evolution in our mission to provide even more premium choices for the growing number of people embracing a balanced, social lifestyle."

Dos Equis: Big Game Network Should Pay Us \$8 Million to Air Our Ad

In addition to asking the network to Pay it \$8 million to air the Dos Equis ad, "The most interesting man in the world" has a few additional terms:

- One (1) treasure chest from the underwater wreckage of a sunken galleon, naval warship, or pirate brigantine (purchaser assumes all legal, spiritual, and bodily risk for aforementioned deeply cursed doubloons)

- A size 15 bowling ball that has hit at least one-hundred 7-10 splits - with the accompanying score cards to prove it (must be signed, dated and include any concessions consumed during the matches).
- A watercolor painting of an endangered rhinoceros with a statement from the artist on why watercolor was chosen as the medium and what the rhinoceros represents.
- One (1) authentic Scottish claymore sword forged no later than the 18th century, with verification of Scottish origin.

The campaign **launched [HERE](#)**. You can visit the website to learn more about how the Big Game network can make an offer for the ad. Not a TV network executive? *Everyone* (even without the \$8M) can still visit the page for a chance to win some of The Most Interesting prizes.

Guinness Brings ‘Guinness Gives Back’ Platform to San Francisco

As excitement builds around football’s biggest weekend, Guinness partnered with Pro Football Hall of Famer Joe Montana to bring its Guinness Gives Back platform to San Francisco.

The collaboration centered on a hands-on volunteer repack with the SF-Marin Food Bank, where Montana joined Guinness employees and local volunteers to help prepare meals for Bay Area neighbors.

The initiative also introduced Guinness Legends Lager, a limited-edition Pale Wheat Lager created with Montana and available exclusively in Northern California. The product serves as an extension of the community effort – for every 4-pack produced, Guinness will donate \$5 to the SF-Marin Food Bank (up to \$35,000)..

Frank Family Vineyards Announces 2026 Nationwide Beach Cleanup Series

Frank Family Vineyards, one of Napa's most beloved and iconic wineries, has announced a new series of nationwide cleanups through July 2026 as part of its ongoing partnership with 4ocean. 4ocean is a leader in the clean ocean movement, focused on removing plastic waste and other man-made debris from the world's oceans, rivers and coastlines. The series is part of the winery's "Frank for a Cause" charitable giving campaign and reinforces Frank Family Vineyards' long-standing commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship.

Since June 2024, Frank Family Vineyards has supported the cleanup of 14 beaches worldwide and has funded the removal of more than 43,000 pounds of trash and plastic while employing 44 full-time boat captains and crews. The 2026 series kicked off in January with a community beach cleanup and fishpond restoration at the Waihe'e Coastal Dunes & Wetlands Refuge in Maui where 45 participants collected 139 pounds of trash and built 40 feet of stone wall foundation as part of the refuge's historic fishpond project. Upcoming cleanups include:*

- * Saturday, March 14, 2026: Tampa, Florida
- Friday, April 24, 2026: Galveston, Texas
- Saturday, May 30, 2026: San Diego, CA
- Saturday, June 27, 2026: New York, New York

Ciroc Vodka Official Sponsor of Nexo Dallas Open

CÎROC Ultra-Premium Vodka today announced a new three-year partnership as the Official Vodka of the Nexo Dallas Open, introducing its CÎROC Athletic Club platform to a new audience as the brand continues its expansion into modern sport and leisure culture.

Beginning in 2026, CÎROC Vodka will be integrated across the Nexo Dallas Open experience, bringing its signature blend of premium hospitality, contemporary sport, and refined social energy to one of the fastest-growing tennis tournaments in the U.S. This year's tournament will take place February 7 through February 15, 2026, at the Ford Center at The Star in Frisco, Texas.

As part of the partnership, CÎROC Vodka will activate through the tournament, including featured cocktail experiences, branded mobile bars, and a dedicated on-site presence designed to elevate fan engagement on and off the court. Programming will align with the CÎROC Athletic Club's broader mission of inviting consumers to experience sport as a lifestyle and encouraging fans to connect, unwind, and Leisure Well.

"The Nexo Dallas Open represents everything the CÎROC Athletic Club stands for: world-class sport, cultural relevance, and the joy that comes from shared moments," said Nick Tran, President and CMO of First Round Collective. "This multi-year partnership allows us to build something lasting with the tournament and its fans and to create an elevated experience that goes beyond the game."

Held annually, the Nexo Dallas Open has become a premier stop on the professional tennis calendar, drawing elite athletes, tastemakers, and fans from across the country. Over the course of the three-year partnership, CÎROC Vodka will play an integral role in shaping the tournament's hospitality and social atmosphere, reinforcing the event as a destination where sport and lifestyle converge.

To Your Continued Success,
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JOEL WHITAKER, Editor

Thanks for reading!