

Weinakademiker Project 2015

A way forward for German Riesling in the Danish Supermarket Sector.

Abstract

I wrote the paper because several things let my attention to a misfit between the amount of attention German Riesling receives in the press and the number of German Rieslings I could find in the Danish Supermarkets. Furthermore, the market share of German wines is much bigger, if still small, than the representation on the supermarket shelves. I wanted to find out if there is any good reason for these differences, and if there is a potential market for expanding the selection of German Rieslings in the supermarkets.

My main method of investigation has been interviewing/discussing the subject with different stakeholders. Consumers, buyer, journalists and people employed in the supermarkets. I chose this method for several reasons. There are no literature on the subject. The consumers always speak the truth.

The Danish wine market is showing signs of growth, and even though it is a slow growth trends are clear. White wine and sparkling are growing. These two categories still only account for 1/3 of the entire market, but red wine is stable, so this relation is changing. German wines have 6% of the Danish market, but not close to 6% of the shelves on the Danish supermarkets. This suggests room for improvement in sales.

My consumer interviews focused on consumer perception of Germany and Riesling. I did this to get an idea of how difficult it will be to extent the scope of German Riesling in the Danish Supermarkets. Germany still has a relatively poor reputation among Danish consumers, even though there are differences between segments. Riesling on the other hand is perceived as relatively high quality.

I have looked at the Norwegian market, since 30% of all white wine sales are German, and almost entirely Riesling. The success in Norway has not come overnight, but as a process where Vinmonopolet¹ has focused on all styles of German Riesling for a long time. Education of both staff and consumers have led to the fact that German white wines are the bestselling in Norway.

¹ Vinmonopolet is the Norwegian state monopoly for Wines & Spirits.

In the assignment, I conclude that there are very good opportunities to be the first mover in the supermarket segment concerning German Riesling. Even though most industry people believe it will take dedication and work to promote German Riesling, almost all believe German Riesling will have a great future, not only in Denmark.

My recommendations are

- Expand the assortment of German Riesling to show a range of styles and quality
- Educate your staff and your customers in the wine styles and their gastronomic appeal to Danish food
- Have staff present in the stores

There are limitations to this assignment. Doing more interviews will give better insights into the potential for German Riesling in Danish supermarkets. Nevertheless, the investigations made for this assignment shows a clear pattern. Furthermore, the conclusions and recommendations are in one sense very general. Their applications goes for other wines as well. The main difference is that German Riesling today has a versatility in styles, prices and qualities that match the potential market.

Word count: 510 words