

## Man arrested as estimated £500,000 of counterfeit wine and prosecco seized in NFCU operation

On 3 March, a 61-year-old male was arrested for conspiracy to defraud in relation to the importation and distribution of counterfeit and misrepresented wine and prosecco. NFCU Officers, alongside Metropolitan Police, seized 90 pallets of wine and prosecco from three warehouses across North London and Essex. The pallets contained over 67,000 bottles with an estimated retail value of approximately £500,000. The man was later released under investigation, and enquiries remain ongoing.

The operation brought together multiple partners across law enforcement, local authorities and trading standards including the Metropolitan Police and their North Regional Organised Crime Unit Gangs Partnership and Safer Neighbourhood Team, Enfield Local Authority and Trading Standards, Epping Forest District Council, Essex Trading Standards, as well as the FSA's Wine Inspection Team.

There is no indication of a health risk to the public, however if you have concerns about a product you have purchased, contact your local Trading Standards.

"Seizing over 67,000 bottles of counterfeit product and making an arrest sends a strong message to those who seek to profit from deceiving consumers - we will take action.

This operation is a clear example of what we can achieve when agencies work together with a shared purpose. I want to thank all partners involved in this operation for their professionalism and commitment throughout.

Food fraud is not a victimless crime. It undermines legitimate businesses and erodes consumer trust. In this case, the concern is one of authenticity and quality - consumers deserve to know that what they are buying is exactly what it claims to be. The NFCU remains committed to protecting consumers and ensuring that criminal activity has no place in the UK food system."

**Andrew Quinn, Head of the National Food Crime Unit**

If you suspect food fraud, report it to Food Crime Confidential on [food.gov.uk/report](https://www.food.gov.uk/report) or by phoning 0800 028 1180 (0207 276 8787 for non-UK mobiles and calls).