

Call to halt pricing plans 'for the good of our whisky'

DISTILLERS LEFT REELING AS MINIMUM COST PER UNIT OF ALCOHOL IS REVEALED

BY CAMERON BROOKS

Scotland's iconic whisky industry would be damaged "significantly" at home and abroad, and jobs could be lost, if a minimum price for alcohol is introduced.

The stark warning was issued by the Scotch Whisky Association (SWA) yesterday after Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon revealed the SNP government's preferred price of 45p per unit.

The organisation, which has 56 members, said distillery owners across the north and north-east were convinced the policy would break EU and international trade rules.

Producers fear that copycat action in export markets would have a "major negative impact" on the sale of whisky overseas during uncertain economic times.

The SWA said the cost of an average bottle of blended whisky would increase by 16% to £12.60, reducing the size of the domestic market by nearly 13%.

Value and own-label brands, which are sold by Asda for £9.20 a bottle and £9.95 in Tesco, would be worst affected.



Murdo Fraser: concerned

The organisation said research had shown the response to a 10% increase in price was an 8% reduction in sales.

SWA chief executive Gavin Hewitt said: "The Scottish Government's scheme fails to meet the basic tests of EU law and will do little to address alcohol misuse."

"This policy would, however, significantly damage Scotch whisky at home and abroad. We need consensus on a legal alternative."

"Excise duty reform so that all drinks are taxed on the same basis, according to alcohol content, and a ban on sales below tax, is a fair and socially responsible way forward."

"It would also raise more than £1 billion in extra revenue for the public finances."

Conservative health spokesman Murdo Fraser said it was disappointing that the Scottish Government was determined to "hurt" one of the country's most important and successful industries.

"Those in the industry are deeply concerned about the impact of minimum pricing," he said.

"For the good of the whisky industry, the SNP should now withdraw their plans for indiscriminate blanket minimum pricing and allow a consensus to be built around measures to tackle alcohol abuse upon which all parties can agree."

Plans outlining the impact that a 45p minimum price would have on whisky showed it would have no bearing on premium brands such as Highland Park and Glenfiddich, which cost about £28 a bottle.



PRODUCT	ABV	CURRENT PRICE	MINIMUM PRICE AT 45p PER UNIT	INCREASE REQUIRED
CIDER				
Tesco Strong Cider 3 litres	5.5	£2.90 (Tesco)	£7.43	£4.53
Diamond White 2 litres	7.5	£3.70 (Tesco)	£6.75	£3.05
Blackthorn Dry Cider 2 litres	5.5	£3.00 (Asda)	£4.95	£1.95
Asda Strong Dry Cider 2 litres	5.3	£2.90 (Asda)	£4.77	£1.87
Magners 12x440ml	4.5	£12.00 (Tesco)	£10.69	Not affected
Strongbow 4x440ml	5.3	£4.14 (Tesco)	£4.20	Not affected
GIN AND VODKA				
Tesco Value Vodka 70cl	37.5	£7.97 (Tesco)	£11.81	£3.84
Asda Smart Price Vodka 70cl	37.5	£7.97 (Asda)	£11.81	£3.84
Glen's Vodka 70cl	37.5	£10.29 (Tesco)	£11.81	£1.52
Gordon's Gin 70cl	37.5	£13.49 (Tesco)	£11.81	Not affected
Smirnoff Red Label 70cl	37.5	£13.48 (Tesco)	£11.81	Not affected
Absolut 70cl	40.0	£16.17 (Tesco)	£12.60	Not affected
WHISKY				
Asda Smart Price 70cl	40.0	£9.20 (Asda)	£12.60	£3.40
Tesco Value 70cl	40.0	£9.95 (Tesco)	£12.60	£2.65
Asda Blended 70cl	40.0	£10.70 (Asda)	£12.60	£1.90
Bell's 70cl	40.0	£14.47 (Asda)	£12.60	Not affected
Tesco Finest 70cl	40.0	£14.97 (Tesco)	£12.60	Not affected
Johnnie Walker Red Label 70cl	40.0	£14.97 (Asda)	£12.60	Not affected
Famous Grouse 70cl	40.0	£15.30 (Asda)	£12.60	Not affected
Glenfiddich 70cl	40.0	£27.97 (Asda)	£12.60	Not affected
Highland Park 70cl	40.0	£28.52 (Asda)	£12.60	Not affected
BEER AND LAGER				
Tesco Strong Lager 4x440ml	8.6	£4.96 (Tesco)	£6.81	£1.85
Tennents Super Lager 4x500ml	9.0	£6.00 (Tesco)	£8.10	£2.10
Carlsberg Special Brew 4x500ml	9.0	£6.16 (Tesco)	£8.10	£1.94
Stella Artois 24x330ml	5.2	£16.29 (Asda)	£18.53	£2.24
Carlsberg 15x440ml	3.8	£10.00 (Asda)	£11.29	£1.29
Tennents 4x568ml	4.0	£3.97 (Tesco)	£4.08	£0.11
Guinness 18x440ml	4.1	£16.00 (Asda)	£14.61	Not affected
Carling 4x440ml	4.1	£4.10 (Asda)	£3.24	Not affected
WINE				
Hardy's Voyage Red 750ml	14	£4.00 (Asda)	£4.73	£0.73
Tesco Liebfraumilch 750ml	9.5	£2.79 (Tesco)	£3.21	£0.41
Blossom Hill Chardonnay 750ml	13	£4.69 (Tesco)	£4.38	Not affected
Hardy's Voyage 750ml	12.5	£6.97 (Asda)	£4.22	Not affected
Echo Falls 750ml	12.5	£5.49 (Tesco)	£4.22	Not affected
Blossom Hill California Red 750ml	12.5	£4.69 (Tesco)	£4.22	Not affected
Echo Falls California Red 750ml	12.5	£5.27 (Asda)	£4.22	Not affected
ALCOPOPS AND FORTIFIED WINE				
Buckfast 750ml	15	£7.49 (Costcutter)	£5.06	Not affected
Sanatogen 70cl	15	£4.99 (Tesco)	£4.72	Not affected
Smirnoff Ice 70cl	4	£2.99 (Sainsbury's)	£1.26	Not affected
WKD Blue 4x275ml	4	£4.25 (Tesco)	£1.98	Not affected
Bacardi Breezer 10x275ml	4	£8.27 (Asda)	£4.95	Not affected

Biggest fall in drinking since 1948

UK TAXES ON BEER SECOND HIGHEST IN EU

THE UK has seen its biggest fall in alcohol consumption in 60 years, according to new figures from the British Beer and Pub Association.

It said 2009 saw the sharpest year-on-year decline in alcohol consumption across the board since 1948.

The figures are compiled primarily from HM Revenue and Customs data for the amount of alcohol sold by producers and importers into the UK.

They follow recent data from the Office of National Statistics which found 39% of men and 31% of women exceed the daily guidelines on how much they should drink.

The association, which represents the brewing and pub sector, said the data showed a 6% decline in total alcohol consumption in 2009, making it the fourth annual decline in five years.

UK drinkers are now consuming 13% less alcohol than in 2004, with consumption remaining below the EU average.

UK taxes on beer remained among the highest compared with other countries and were the second highest in the EU - 10 times higher than in Germany and seven times higher than in France.

Other statistics in the association's statistical handbook for 2010 show beer is by far the pubgoer's favourite tipple, making up 60% of all alcohol sales in pubs, hotels, and restaurants. Wine is in second place at 17%.

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The future is bright for Printagraph

Despite the recent economic challenges the future is looking bright for the Aberdeen based company Printagraph.

Focusing on Visual Communications Printagraph has developed a one stop solution for all its clients' requirements.

Services offered are:

- Conceptual Design
- High quality short and long run printing
- Display and exhibition creation
- Office supplies and furniture
- Corporate gifts and branded products
- Supply and maintenance of office printers and multi functional devices

Established in Aberdeen over 25 years ago, Printagraph has continued to achieve year on year growth with current turnover levels 10% up from last year and now exceeding £3.4M!

This continued growth provides stable employment within the local area for more than 35 permanent staff who pride themselves on consistently delivering innovative solutions on time, on budget and to the highest standards.

The company has also gained ISO 9001 & 14001 Accreditations providing clients with a level of comfort on quality and environmental aspects.

Always striving to develop and improve, the company has invested in a 20,000 square foot facility with the very latest levels of technology allowing the company to keep pace with the ever changing demands of its clients. Printagraph

has also recently started working intensively alongside Scottish Enterprise who are supporting the company in achieving its sales and marketing plans, a very exciting development.

Recent investments include a state of the art digital printing press - one of only

range of products and services.

Recognizing that people are the driving force behind the success of any business, Chairman Danny Cowie has recently appointed Keith Tait as Managing Director heading up a Management team of Charlie Leslie

creating the company Revolve Systems supplying and maintaining office printers and multi functional devices. This compliments Printagraph's existing services and provides a greater managed offering for existing and prospective clients.

to corporate social responsibility and actively supports several charitable organizations directly and indirectly.

Chairman Danny Cowie added: "Since 2002 we have raised over £70,000 for local cancer charities by hosting annual golf events and hill

walks. We are developing this further this year by working with Gordon Townson, Jasmine Holdings and the other companies to drive The Jasmine Charity Challenge which involves working with senior pupils from six local academies to raise awareness of and money for local charities.

For more information about Printagraph, visit www.printagraph.co.uk.

With the continued growth and reinvestment of profits Printagraph has a solid and long term future within the area and has further invested in Jasmine Property Investments, the group's new property company. JPI is building up a wide ranging portfolio of properties and has also recently acquired The Barber's Pole

Printagraph also maintains its ongoing commitment

two in Scotland and capable of producing extremely high levels of quality for variable data and short run custom driven targeted printed material. The company has literally just announced the forthcoming installation of a 5 colour printing press ensuring longer print runs are catered for. This press will be installed in the coming weeks and will further enhance the company's already unrivalled extensive

(Finance and IT Director), Keith Adams (Production Director) and a recent addition to the Management Team, Andrew Hall (Commercial Director).

Andrew brings a wealth of experience in the industry and has already proved to be a great success.

A further exciting development comes with the joint venture between Printagraph and Sean Hills

■ The Printagraph workforce with, centre, from left, production director Keith Adams, managing director Keith Tait and commercial director Andrew Hall.

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I have worked at Printagraph for 5 years now and I have found it a great place to work, offering me the opportunity to develop with the growth of the company. There is a real team atmosphere and I have made a lot of friends here.

Ross Lawrence
(Digital and Litho Operator)

from thought to finish we deliver

we design

we print

we display

we promote

we supply

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