

Scotch whisky enjoyed solid growth in volume and value during the first half of 2011 in the U.S. market, as premiumization accelerated despite challenging economic conditions. For the six months ending June 30, Scotch exports to the U.S. advanced by 8% to roughly 4.7 million nine-liter cases, while value rose by 14% to £267.6 million (\$422.8m), according to the Scotch Whisky Association.

The category leaders' emphasis on premiumization, along with the growing prominence of single malt Scotch, has clearly paid off. In 2000, Scotch's per-case value for exports to the U.S. was £32.45 (\$51.27), according to Impact Databank. By 2005, it had climbed to £39.92 (\$63.07). Last year, it reached £56.61 (\$89.44).

For the first time ever, a single malt entry became one of the U.S. Scotch market's top five brands in 2010. Pernod Ricard USA's The Glenlivet, the longtime U.S. single malt leader, grew by 8% to surpass the 300,000-case threshold. Despite the economic downturn, The Glenlivet's U.S. sales volume has expanded by roughly one-third over the past two years, propelling it past Diageo's J&B into the market's number-five Scotch slot.

U.S. Scotch market leader Johnnie Walker, meanwhile, continues to premiumize. The brand, including Black, Red, Blue, Green, Gold and Swing, had total volume of 1.61 million cases in the U.S. market last year. Black continues to comprise a greater portion of the total Johnnie Walker brand, reaching an estimated 810,000 cases last year compared to Red's 720,000 cases. Back in 2000, Black was the smaller player with 550,000 cases, compared to Red's 675,000 cases.

USA - Top Five Scotch Whisky Brands (thousands of nine-liter case depletions)							
Rank	Brand	Importer	2005	2009	2010	AACGR² 2005- 2010	Percent Change 2009- 2010
1	Johnnie Walker ¹	Diageo North America	1,415	1,579	1,610	2.6%	2.0%
2	Dewar's	Bacardi USA	1,375	1,400	1,200	-2.7%	-14.3%
3	Clan MacGregor	William Grant & Sons USA	650	637	594	-1.8%	-6.8%
4	Chivas Regal	Pernod Ricard USA	484	397	402	-3.6%	1.3%
5	The Glenlivet	Pernod Ricard USA	232	286	309	5.9%	8.0%
	Total Top Five		4,156	4,299	4,115	-0.2%	-4.3%

¹ includes Black, Red, Blue, Green, Gold and Swing
² average annual compound growth rate

Source: IMPACT DATABANK

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