

2005 Meeting of SERA 14

The Southern Extension Research Activity 14 (Grapes) held its 2005 Annual Meeting October 4-6 in Augusta, Missouri. States with representatives attending were Missouri, Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Kentucky, Florida, Mississippi and a state report was also submitted by North Carolina.

The meeting began with a reception held at the Montelle Winery in Augusta on Tuesday evening, October 4. Tours of the Montelle, Augusta, and Mount Pleasant vineyards and wineries the following day focused on exchange of information on the growing of grapes and the production of wine. The business meeting was held on the morning of October 5. The 2005 Nesbitt Award was given by the group to Keith Striegler, Mid-America Viticulture and Enology Center, Missouri State University, in recognition of excellence in grape and wine research and for outstanding service to the grape industry across the Nation. The Nesbitt Award is designed to honor the career of a professional member of the SERA014 grape working group for significant research and/or extension contributions to the grape industry in the Southern Region. An optional tour was made to the Chaumette and Crown Valley vineyards and wineries in the St. Genevieve area during the afternoon and evening of Thursday, October 6.

Minutes of the Business Meeting

The SERA 14 Business Meeting, including delivery and discussion of state reports, took place Thursday morning at the Mount Pleasant facilities. Justin Morris, Extension Administrative Adviser, reported that Greg Weidemann, Research Administrative Adviser, expressed his regret at not being able to attend and his best wishes for a productive meeting. Jim Anderson, program coordinator of the Missouri Grape and Wine Advisory Board, began that meeting by presenting information on how the Missouri grape industry is organized and conducts its activities. In addition to initiatives to support vineyards and wineries, promotion of tourism is a high priority for the board. A compilation of state reports had previously been distributed, and oral versions of the state reports were presented in an informal format that allowed emphasis on the most pressing issues in each state and discussion of these issues with other state representatives. Documents supporting major issues were also supplied. A report on the National Grape and Wine Initiative was provided for the group. The background and priorities of this new national initiative were presented by Justin Morris and then discussed by the group. Ed Hellman presented information on how the consortium is organized and on future meetings and funding opportunities. He also commented on the availability of funding for variety trials through the multi-state project NE-1020. It was decided that the 2006 annual meeting will be held in East Tennessee, with Dave Lockwood and Bill Morris serving as Co-Chairs for the meeting.

Attendees:

Andy Allen	Mid-America Viticulture and Enology Center
Bob Bates	University of Florida
Joe Cotta	Mount Pleasant Winery
Ed Hellman	Texas A&M University
Susan Howard	Mid-America Viticulture and Enology Center

Jim Kamas	Texas A&M University
Kaan Kurtural	University of Kentucky
David Lockwood	University of Tennessee
Bill Morris	University of Tennessee
Justin Morris	University of Arkansas
Phil Mulder	Oklahoma State University
Eric Stafne	Oklahoma State University
Keith Striegler	Mid-America Viticulture and Enology Center
Steve Stringer	USDA / ARS Poplarville, Mississippi
Sharon von Broembsen	Oklahoma State University

Sharon L. von Broembsen, Secretary

STATE REPORTS:

Arkansas report presented by Justin Morris

Vineyard mechanization as a total systems approach for all cultural operations, developed at the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, is generating significant national and international interest as it is being commercialized. This includes not only harvesting but also dormant pruning, canopy management, shoot and fruit thinning, shoot positioning, summer shoot removal, and leaf removal. New information was presented on leaf, flower cluster and shoot removal and the results of rootstock trials. Positive benefits of muscadine production, such as resistance to Pierce's Disease (PD) and health benefits, were championed. New information was presented on processing of specific types of grapes grown in this region, and on wine and juice production budgets.

Florida report presented by Bob Bates

Vinifera grape production is currently not feasible for FL because of PD, so results from muscadine variety trials and transgenic grape research, with emphasis on PD screening, are very important. Research validating the health benefits of muscadines, especially phytochemical content, and processing methods to improve them were discussed.

Kentucky report presented by Kaan Kurtural

The increased level of interest in grape production in Kentucky has been met with new programs to provide help for growers. Vineyard site selection assistance is being made available to the industry, which is based on GIS, climatological and topological raw data. Extension programs included workshops, field days and farm visits.

Mississippi report presented by Steve Stringer

Breeding to enhance nutraceutical benefits of muscadines, including phenolics, ellagic acid and resveratrol, is being conducted in MS. Hurricanes in September 2005 destroyed most of the trials; however, the work will be continued.

Missouri report presented by Keith Striegler and Andy Allen

Major emphasis has been on advisement programs including workshops, field days, conferences, a production short course, newsletter, electronic advisory, site visits, and a vineyard best management practices project. This latter is a three-year cooperative project with AR. Plots were set out in three "lighthouse" vineyards in each state to demonstrate the effects of specific practices and data was collected from these. Monthly tailgate meetings are held at these lighthouse vineyards throughout the season. These meetings emphasize the management practices occurring at that time, especially pest management practices. The tailgate BMP program has been very well received by growers. Research results pertinent to grape production in MO were presented on cultivar evaluation, production systems, and pest management including the propagation of virus free material. Varieties from Eastern Europe and New York are being evaluated for local potential. Those from Eastern Europe are being screened for viruses and the material cleaned up when necessary. Results from rootstock trials emphasizing local needs were presented.

Oklahoma report presented by Phil Mulder

The Oklahoma Grape Management Course was presented at the Oklahoma Pecan and Fruit Research Station for the fifth consecutive year. The course meets monthly throughout the year targeting management actions for the appropriate stage of production. Topics discussed in class are reinforced in the demonstration wine grape vineyard each month. Over 400 growers, potential growers and county educators have participated in the course. Surveys were conducted in Oklahoma vineyards in 2003 and 2004 for *Xylella fastidiosa* (XF), the causal pathogen of PD, and for potential vectors. The pathogen was not detected in these surveys, but has been recently found in ornamental shade trees in several urban centers in central and northeastern Oklahoma. Although the glassy winged sharpshooter has not been found in Oklahoma, other potential vectors were found during the surveys.

Tennessee report presented by Dave Lockwood

Significant increases in grape production continue in Tennessee, and indications are that certain legal constraints on winery sales may change. A source of state funding to provide support for the industry may be enacted. Regional management guides are being prepared. Results from research on grape root borer were presented and discussed.

Texas report presented by Jim Kamas and Ed Hellman:

The wine grape industry is expanding rapidly in Texas. TAMU Extension offered a three-day viticulture short course this past year. A survey is underway which will obtain important statistics on the wine grape industry. A survey of vineyards for PD is underway in which the goal is to visit every vineyard in the state. The survey form collects other information, which is being integrated with GIS into a database. A new study is investigating PD risk factors in west Texas, which has been considered to be a very low PD risk region, yet two vineyards in the region are confirmed with PD. Part of these studies will be to collect information on native host infectivity, insect vectors and weather data. Research is also being conducted on use of abscisic acid to delay budbreak to avoid frost.

Texas has obtained increased funding for PD research to study the dynamics of disease spread, supplemental hosts of the pathogen and vectors, known and potential insect vectors, vector-host relationships, vineyard ecosystem composition, and genetic analysis of XF strains. These studies will have relevance to California and other states as well as Texas. At a site north of Paris Texas, near the Red River between Oklahoma and Texas, 80% of grapevines were symptomatic for PD. The pattern of disease indicated that the disease had spread out from house ornamentals. Sharpshooter egg masses were abundant and the vector is being identified. Management of PD includes site selection, weed control, and imidacloprid injection through drip irrigation. The use of resistant rootstock to increase survivability of Chardonnay in high PD areas has not been effective.

Next Meeting Site: Tennessee

Nesbitt Award to Keith Striegler: The Award is named in honor of William Belton Nesbitt, who served on the faculty of the Department of Horticultural Science, North Carolina State University, from 1966 until 1983, and whose grape breeding efforts produced numerous *Vitis rotundifolia* cultivars.

Optional tours:

Following the business meeting, information on these is available at the following websites:

Chaumette Vineyards and Winery www.Chaumette.com

Crown Valley Winery www.CrownValleyWinery.com

Information on these vineyards is available at the following websites:

Augusta Winery www.AugustaWinery.com

Montelle Winery www.Montelle.com

Mount Pleasant Winery www.MountPleasant.com