

Viticulture and Enology in Tennessee

2003 Annual Report for SERA-IEG14 Grape Exchange Group

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2. Status of the Grape/Wine Industry:

Two more wineries came on board in 2003, bringing Tennessee's total up to 29. Interest in vineyard and winery establishment remains high. Grapes and wines remains the best example in Tennessee of "alternative agricultural enterprises," "value-added enterprises" and "sustainability" in Tennessee agriculture.

A recent amendment to the wine law allowed holding up to eight wine festivals per year in the state. The first "Tennessee Wine Festival" was held Sept. 28, 2002 at the Smokies Stadium, Sevierville, TN. Ten wineries, specialty products companies and several crafts vendors participated. Attendance was about 900 persons. The second festival at the same site is scheduled for Sept. 27, 2003.

The first "Wines of the South" competition was held Nov. 1, 2002, under the direction of Dr. Bill Morris. The competition was well-received. As a result, the competition will be held again this fall.

Tennessee is one of several southern states included in a grant concerning food safety training for vegetable and fruit crops. This is a 2-year grant that will focus on training extension agents and growers in food safety issues.

On December 9 and 10, 2002, an agent inservice training on grapes and wines was held at Chateau Elan Winery in Braselton, GA as a function of the Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium. Extension specialists from the University of Tennessee presenting portions of the training included Dr. Bill Morris, Dr. John Buchanan and Dr. Dave Lockwood. Five scholarships for agents from each of the four member states; North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee. Total attendance at the training was about 50 persons.

3. Activities -

Bill Morris:

Extension:

newsletters: regular contributor to the TVOS newsletter (published quarterly)

other: -Regular speaker at TVOS annual conference

-Educational advisor to TVOS

-Consultant for the Agricultural Development Center

-Administers and conducts the wine analysis program at UT

-Administers and coordinates awarding TVOS scholarships

-Advisor - Food Science Wine Club

Wines of the South:

This competition was set up to feature wines from Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, Texas and Louisiana. Registration forms were sent to 180 wineries. The competition was held Nov. 2, 2002 in Sevierville, TN. A total of 175 wines from 27 wineries in 8 states were judged by 15 judges from 4 states.

This year, registration forms were sent to 240 wineries. The competition is to be held at Governor's Crossing in Sevierville, TN on Nov. 1.

Activities (continued)

Tony Johnston:

Tony's National Guard unit was called to active duty shortly after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Recently, the tour of duty has been extended to include a second year.

Dave Lockwood:

Research:

Grape selection evaluations - A vineyard was established in 2002 at the Middle Tennessee Experiment Station in Spring Hill, TN including a total of 12 candidates: 5 named cultivars (4 from Arkansas and 1 from New York) and 7 advanced selections from the Arkansas program (2 wine and 5 table grapes).

In 2003, identical vineyards were established at the Plateau Experiment Station in Crossville, TN and at the Highland Rim Experiment Station in Springfield, TN. The 16 selections from the Arkansas program included 6 wine types and 10 table grapes.

In cooperation with Ohio State University and the University of Georgia, a trial utilizing *H. zealandica* nematodes for grape root borer larvae was established in a commercial vineyard in Blaine, TN. This project will encompass three years.

We were awarded a grant from EPA to conduct training and develop educational materials to allow growers to monitor grape root borer populations in their vineyards. The grant will cover a 2 year period, probably beginning in winter of 2003.

Extension

newsletters: "Fruit Notes" (published quarterly) - newsletter for tree fruit and small fruit producers

TVOS newsletter (published quarterly)

other: -Educational advisor to TVOS

-Regular speaker at TVOS conferences

-Member Viticulture Advisory Board

-Consultant to Ag Development Council

-Coordinated and presented information in a symposium, "Viticulture in the South," presented at the Southern Region American Society for Horticultural Science meeting in Mobile, AL, Feb. 3, 2003.