

**Final report to Virginia Wine Board
30 June 2007**

TITLE: Viticulture Extension Operations Support
VA Tech FRS # 547488

Principal Investigator: Tony K. Wolf

Award amount: \$9,400

Amount remaining at year-end: \$77 (+/-)

Objectives:

To support state-wide viticulture extension activities of Mr. Fritz Westover (Viticulture Research-Extension Associate), Ms. Ashley Meyers (Grape Pathology Extension Specialist), and Dr. Tony Wolf through the AHS Agricultural Research and Extension Center.

Comments on funding: Funding for this and other Virginia Wine Board projects was made available in early September, 2006. Proposed expenses in July and August were largely avoided or paid from other funds due to uncertainty of funding. Both Mr. Westover and Ms. Myers resigned their respective positions in January 2007, which was unforeseen at the time the grant proposal was submitted (February 2006). The combination of delayed funding and unexpected staff reductions led to less than expected travel costs and some residual funds at the end of the fiscal year. The amount shown as remaining at year-end is an approximation. The accounts manager at the AHS AREC (Wolf's work location) was on extended medical leave from early-May through July 2007. This resulted in delayed postings of some charges to the Wine Board accounts. Furthermore, in order to meet Wine Board administrative needs, we were unable to post some charges to the accounts after mid-June 2007. That said, this grant was important in providing a means for us to deliver our extension programs in 2006/2007, and we generally completed what had been proposed in the grant proposal.

Progress:

- Wolf, Myers and Westover participated in 6 mid-day vineyard field meetings in the summer of 2006 and spring 2007, with travel supported by this grant. The meetings were arranged by local Cooperative Extension agents in Rappahannock and Nelson Counties, although the meetings were often in other counties as well. Attendance at the vineyard meetings averaged 20 or more growers and subjects ranged from pest management to seasonal vine and vineyard management practices. Grower exit surveys have been very positive, with one result being that regular attendees of these vineyard meetings tend to avoid pitfalls and problems observed by uninformed growers.
- Wolf, Westover and Myers organized and conducted a Cooperative Extension in-service training program in August 2006. Supported in part by a VA Vineyards Association travel grant, the workshop continued training initiated in August 2005. As a result, more Virginia Cooperative Extension agents are competent to work directly with grape producers in their county or multi-county area and, in a follow-up survey, most of the attendees have reported that they have been more apt to work directly with grape growers in their county or area, rather than steering the growers to us.
- With some software and hardware funding provided by this grant, Mr. Fritz Westover developed three MacroMedia Breeze presentations on dormant grapevine pruning. The presentations, which feature animation and audio, are found on Wolf's website (<http://faculty.vaes.vt.edu/vitis>)

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- Myers and Westover conducted a 3-day visit of vineyards (3-5, October 2006) in southern and central Piedmont to map occurrence of Pierce's Disease, and to collect powdery and downy mildew samples for Wine Board project (Baudoin, fungicide resistance survey). Results reinforce two growing issues: (1) widespread occurrence of fungicide resistance to strobilurin fungicides and, (2) more northerly spread of Pierce's Disease in Virginia than originally envisioned. Both issues were discussed at the VVA's winter technical meeting (February 2007).
- Myers attended vine trunk disease workshop in Davis, CA in September 2006; a report of this meeting appeared in the September-October Viticulture Notes.
- A computer was purchased for viticulture lab (research and extension uses).
- We (Wolf and Westover) surveyed clients that Viticulture extension associate (Westover) communicated with and gave recommendations to over the past 12 months. Impacts and feedback were very positive and are useful. Most of the recommendations provided to clientele were followed and some respondents indicated that improvements were noticeable by the time of the survey – typically 6 to 12 months later.
- Grant supported travel and participation by Wolf in Virginia Vineyards Association's annual technical meeting (February 2007) and at VVA Board meetings.
- Myers and Wolf attended Eastern Section meeting of the American Society for Enology and Viticulture in Rochester, NY (July 2006), where Myers presented paper on her Pierce's Disease work.
- Westover attended World Congress of Soil Science in Philadelphia, PA and wrote short recap of the meeting for the July-August issue of Viticulture Notes
<http://www.ext.vt.edu/news/periodicals/viticulture/06julyaugust/06julyaugust.html>