

**Mid-term Progress Report
Virginia Wine Board, 30 January 2015**

Title: Viticulture Research and Extension Associate

Principal Investigator:

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Type of Project: Extension
Amount funded: \$8,000
Amount remaining: \$3,100 (as of 5 January 2015)

Objective:

To increase the level of viticultural research and extension program support to grape and wine producers in Virginia and to help meet the research and extension needs of an expanding industry.

Progress:

The scope and continued expansion of the Virginia grape industry merits increased personnel support to provide extension, technical support of viticultural issues that constrain industry development. Part of this support is provided by Virginia Cooperative Extension assets, including state level *specialists* (e.g., Wolf, Bergh, Pfeiffer, Nita and others), local extension *agents* (e.g., Love, Sutphin, Lachance, Sastre and others), as well as graduate students, post-doctoral associates, research associates and classified staff. This project provides supplemental travel and material support, primarily for Tremain Hatch, at Virginia Tech's Winchester Agricultural Research and Extension Center. Tremain Hatch was hired as a Viticulture Research/Extension Associate in 2010, after completion of his MSc degree in viticulture at Virginia Tech. Salary and fringe benefit support for Mr. Hatch's position is provided by a 50:50 partnership of funding from the USDA/NIFA and from the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station. As such, Mr. Hatch has responsibilities to the stewardship of the Specialty Crops Research Initiative grant (USDA/NIFA) and roughly 50% of his time is available to directly support Virginia viticultural extension programs. This Wine Board grant only provides travel and material support of the 50% of his position devoted to viticulture extension. To a much lesser extent, the funding also supports a portion of Dr. Tony Wolf's viticulture extension travel (examples of which are provided below).

Mr. Hatch conducted the following activities/outputs over the first half of Fiscal Year 2015 (July 2014-January 2015) as related to his 50% time commitment to viticulture extension activities:

Specific Activities

- Conducted 33 individual vineyard visits to help grape growers assess vineyard site suitability, review existing vineyard operations, and trouble-shoot vineyard problems.
- Organized and participated in eight vineyard meetings across the state, including:
 - Provided seasonal updates at three in-season meetings [8 July, 21 August and 27 August]
 - Gave a beginners overview of grape growing to a Master Gardener group [8 July]
 - Attended and gave an overview of crop estimation and fruit sampling techniques at the Basic Juice Analysis workshop in Blacksburg [24 July]
 - Attended an apple grower's tour of central VA [15 July] and gave a talk about wine grape contracts at the Virginia Cider Industry meeting [6 November]
 - Provided an overview of the Virginia wine industry, research and extension resources to the Loudoun County Agriculture Education Summit, Virginia Agricultural Council and Gainesboro Ruritan Club
 - Organized and participated in a successful new grower workshop [20 November] for 50 attendees at the AHS AREC.
- Sent 103 email messages to grape growers, including 23 responses to new clientele exploring the prospects of commercial grape growing in Virginia
- Made or answered 36 extension-related phone calls to grape growers
- Served as an expert resource on eViticulture's (<http://eviticulture.org/>) *Ask an Expert* feature
- Responsible for regular updates to the viticulture website (<http://www.arec.vaes.vt.edu/alson-h-smith/grapes/viticulture/extension/index.html>)
- Served as primary author/developer of a new Vineyard Financial Calculator, an Excel spreadsheet that allows the user to model and evaluate different scenarios to understand vineyard costs and returns. The accompanying narrative is currently being developed.
- Served as lead researcher on a small research trial evaluating the merits of converting from cordon-training and spur-pruning to head-training and cane pruning with Cabernet Sauvignon vines at the AHS Agricultural Research and Extension Center. Results of this work were recently presented to attendees of 2 pruning workshops (19 and 23 January 2015). A report on this project was presented at the ASEV meeting in June in Austin, TX.

Some funds were also used to support extension travel and other expenses of Tony Wolf, which included site visits during the fall to the following vineyards (see following Table).

Summary: Project objectives were accomplished as proposed.

Major extension meetings attended by Viticulture Research/Extension Associate and/or T.K. Wolf, July – December 2014.

Date	Point of travel	Nature of visit	Mileage
8-Jul-14	Barrel Oak Winery	Commercial grower meeting & new grower master gardener primer	102
8-Jul-14	Delaplane Vineyards	Wolf, site visit to investigate herbicide injury. Also participated in seasonal updates at Barrel Oak this day	80
16-Jul-14	Narmada, Dayton, VA	Established vineyard and new vineyard site	197
23-Jul-14	Louisa county	New vineyard site, and visits to three other established vineyards	300
24-Jul-14	Blacksburg	Basic Juice Workshop on campus	387
28-29	Napa, CA	Wolf, participated in National Wine and Grape Initiative meeting; updates on our research and industry developments	
1-Aug-14	Amissville, VA	Narmada and 5 Rivers, site visits	98
15-Aug-14	Loudoun County, VA	New Vineyard Site near Lovettsville	235
6 and 18-Aug-14	Greene County and Loving Cup Vineyards	Wolf, attended VA Vineyards Association's Board of director's meetings, 2 locations	
20-Aug-14	Patrick County, Rappahannock Co, and Surry Co. NC	Two existing vineyard sites, and a grower meeting in NC	610
27-Aug-14	Loudoun County	LWGA meeting at Two Twisted Posts	92
26-Aug-14	Richmond	Wolf, live broadcast on WCVE regarding our research collaboration with Tayloe Dameron and use of root-restriction	180
3-Sep-14	Roanoke	Wolf, presented talk at Pesticide Educator's meeting organized by VA Cooperative Extension	190
8-Sep-14	Culpepper county	Three vineyard visits with County Agent Debby Dillion	247
22-Sep-14	Charlottesville	Impacts training workshop. Effort relates to our survey of public value of the viticulture extension program	196
25-Sep-14	Frederick, Rappahannock & Loudoun	Grant Johnson, new grower, Narmada, Stone Tower, Haberty	206
28-Oct-14	Fauquier and Loudoun County	5 Rivers, Magnolia Vineyards, Bluemont Vineyards & October 1 vineyard	~200
21-Oct-14	VA Wine Summit, Richmond	Wolf, gave panel presentation (VA Terroir)	180
5-Nov-14	Montgomery County	Belevue Vineyards, Campus cider workshop	400
7-Nov-14	Early Mt. Winery, Greene Co.	Wolf, participate in VVA Board of Directors meeting to finalize winter technical meeting details	
3-Dec-14	Fox Meadow Vineyard	Wolf, troubleshoot vine cold injury issues with vineyard mgr, Janice Cessna	40
4-Dec-14	Harrisonburg	Wolf, meet with VA Cooperative Extension leadership to strategize on fruit extension personnel needs	80
10-Dec-14	Barboursville	Meeting with Fernando Franco Re: economic model	206
15-Dec-14	Frederick County	Wolf, visits with personnel from Woodbine Farm to assess potential vineyard sites for new vineyard operation	