

# Lake Erie Regional Grape Program

A cooperative program between Cornell and Penn State Universities, Cornell Cooperative Extension Associations in Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Erie and Niagara Counties, Penn State Extension – Erie County, NYS IPM Program, National Grape Cooperative, Constellation Brands, Walker's Fruit Basket and growers of the Lake Erie Grape Industry



**Cornell University**  
Cooperative Extension



**PennState Extension**

Second Quarter Report 2019

## Coffee Pot Meetings

The LERGP Extension team continued the popular Coffee Pot meetings in 2019 with the first meeting held on May 1 at the John Mason Farm in Lake City, PA. At the end of June, the team had traveled to 8 different grower locations across the Lake Erie region, interacting with 132 growers. Coffee Pot meetings have no set agenda and the discussions are driven by growers' questions and what is happening in the local vineyards. Growers have been encouraged to invite the team for vineyard visits after a Coffee Pot meeting to take advantage of having all team members in the area at one time. Some of the hottest topics at the meetings thus far are: The delay in growth caused by the cool, wet spring; crop potential and the need to crop estimate; disease and insect management; NYS labor laws; and Spotted Lanternfly. Weekly Coffee Pot meetings will continue every Wednesday



*Coffee Pot meeting*

with the last one of 2019 being held on July 31. More information on Coffee Pot meetings can be found at: <https://lergp.com/events>





## Vineyard Improvement Program

This past quarter has brought 3 more applicants bringing the total applicants to 9 and total grape acreage covered with this program to 102.6 acres. Site visits were conducted for those three applicants and verified that it was in fact a Concord vineyard. There are currently 5 applicants from Chautauqua County, 1 from Steuben, 1 from Schuyler, and 2 from Niagara county.

Information was disseminated to growers and landowners through press releases, crop update articles, newsletter articles, field representative meetings and coffee pot meetings. County extension agents were also given the information to share in their counties at the AMG meeting in May.

The first and largest applicant has been approved this quarter with a voucher for \$50,000 submitted. The process is about to be completed at the beginning of the next quarter with the bookkeeping help of Chautauqua County CCE .



*Cover crop in new vineyard planting*



## Viticulture

During this quarter, goals for the new viticulturist efforts were introduction to cooperating entities and stakeholders in the regions. These were met by attendance and discussions about the program benefits with the Niagara County Agriculture Board, the Chautauqua County Cornell Extension Agriculture meeting, as well as the LERGP county Executive Directors AMG meeting. Also, an office visit to meet with Cattaraugus County ED, Dick Rivers, about the benefits of our program and invited him to visit the Cornell Extension Regional retreat to see what the organization is like.

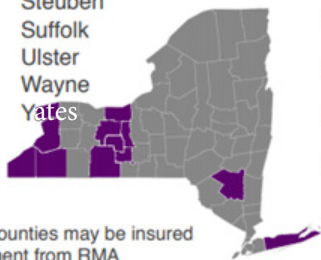
Viticulturist time focused on learning the industry and meeting stakeholders: including four winery visits, eight coffee pot meetings, 32 farm visits, and three field representative meetings. Three educational tours at CLEREL facility were hosted and an extension/outreach event about Worker Safety Protection was co-hosted with National Grape Cooperative with 42 in attendance. Other accomplishments include: two soil recommends consultations, developed and implemented research trial in wine grapes with a cooperating stakeholder, and submitted a grant pre-proposal to Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program for research trial in sustainable soil/vine health and agriculture education. Contributions were made to timely informational Crop Updates and monthly Newsletters, press releases, and podcasts.

For Professional Development, attended the National Viticulture Enology and Extension Leadership Conference in Fredericksburg, Texas, the American Society Viticulture and Enology National Conference in Napa, California, and was a guest speaker reporting on the outcomes of the SCRI Efficient Vineyard Project for Dr. Terry Bates. New viticulturist also attended the New Staff Orientation Meeting through CCE and the CCE Regional Retreat, established many professional contacts and future plans to meet and learn their extension efforts.

### Over 40 grape varieties are insurable in these counties:

Cattaraugus  
Chautauqua  
Erie  
Niagara  
Ontario  
Schuyler  
Seneca

Steuben  
Suffolk  
Ulster  
Wayne  
Yates



Grapes in other counties may be insured by written agreement from RMA

### NYS Grape Crop Insurance



**for every \$1 grape producers spent on crop insurance premiums from 2012 to 2016, they received \$2.07 in losses**

## Crop Insurance Education

LERGP continues a project funded by USDA RMA in crop insurance education. Yield based crop insurance provides a unique and effective risk management tool that decreases the financial production risk associated with adverse weather events. The program continues to evolve through each iteration of the farm bill and LERGP informs growers of those changes at coffee pot meetings.

LERGP also provides promotional educational material in the crop update and newsletters to encourage good risk management practices and the purchase of crop insurance when appropriate. As the industry consolidates we find larger vineyards much more likely to participate in crop insurance. LERGP has focused on the record keeping requirements of crop insurance. This will allow growers without crop insurance to market their vineyards to growers interested in expanding with a high yield guarantee. Through this education program, LERGP seeks to assist growers in increasing the value of vineyards while lowering financial risk.



*Field demo at a winery in the Finger Lakes showing the use of sensor technology and variable rate shoot thinning.*

**The Efficient Vineyard Project** is moving along at a brisk pace in its final year with two trips to California already completed to demonstrate variable rate shoot thinning. Both of these attracted local growers who were looking at mechanization as a possibility within their vineyards. In the Lake Erie Region 250 acres of grapes have been scanned through the loaner sensor program in 2019 with another 800 signed up for NDVI (canopy) scanning, apparent electrical conductivity (soil) scanning or both. James Taylor and his collaborators joined us from France to teach us how to use the GEOvit program that they have been developing for growers. This will create an interface where the growers can input their data, input their desired outcomes, and the program will produce a map with the recommended nutrient application, shoot thinning, or crop thinning for the block in question.



To date in 2019:

Publications - Lake Erie Vineyard Notes Newsletter (5) and LERGP Crop Update (17)

Podcasts - 25 weekly podcasts (125 total) available on <http://lergp.com/podcasts/>

Web resources - <http://lergp.cce.cornell.edu>, <http://lergp.com> and <https://www.efficientvineyard.com>

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