



# Cornell Cooperative Extension Finger Lakes Grape Program

## Quarterly Report: April-July 2020

### Program Highlights

- The FLGP spent considerable time during April and May providing growers with information about resources developed in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. We worked with the Agricultural Workforce Development Program and other CCE regional ag team members to create and disseminate information for farms to develop their required farm safety plans. All 18 growers who attended the first virtual Tailgate Meeting in June said that they became aware of the requirement to develop safety plans by the information in our *Vineyard Update* newsletter.
- The FLGP hired Ellen Coyne this past winter and spring to update our GIS-based vineyard map for the region. The map had not been updated for a couple of years, and over 4,000 acres of vineyards were updated or added during this period. This mapping effort found that the vineyard acreage reported for Steuben County in the 2017 Agricultural Census was significantly underreported. The FLGP AMG has decided to use the farm and acreage data from our map to calculate their program shares for the next five years.
- The FLGP is the lead or co-PI on three grants that were awarded over \$147,000 in total funding. We have also been awarded over \$27,000 in funding on three other grants where we are collaborators with other extension and research faculty.

### FLGP Extends Important Information on COVID-19 to Grape Growers

While wineries and many other farm-based businesses were closed due to the coronavirus outbreak, farms in New York were deemed to be essential businesses that could continue to operate. There was a vital need, however, for information on how farm businesses could operate while keeping their employees and any visitors safe at the same time. Staff from multiple CCE regional ag extension teams, along with campus-based programs such as Cornell's Agricultural Workforce Development Program, developed a wide range of important resources to help farms navigate the many new programs and requirements that were being put in place.

As these resources were developed, FLGP staff devoted a significant amount of time to sorting through them in order to bring what was relevant to the region's grape growers. A particular requirement that we focused our efforts on was the development and communication of resources for vineyards to develop their individual farm safety plans as required by the state. Many of the vineyards in the Finger Lakes are small operations with very few employees, and developing safety plans even for these farms could have seemed overwhelming. The development and extension of these resources through our *Vineyard Update* newsletter and at Tailgate Meetings allowed many grape growers to put together and implement these plans for their farms so their employees could work in a safe environment.

## GIS Mapping of Vineyards is Expanded and Updated

During the winter and spring of 2019-2020, the FLGP invested in a concerted effort to update and expand the GIS-based map of vineyards in the Finger Lakes region. Ellen Coyne, who has worked as a summer field technician for the past two summers, was hired to work with growers during the dormant season to improve the information contained in our vineyard maps. These maps are used by the FLGP to plan field trials, answer media questions about the industry, and to give a broader view of where vineyards are being planted and to what varieties. Growers are also provided with copies of the maps of their vineyards for their own use.



Ellen Coyne, who was our mapping specialist this winter

The map has also pointed out a few shortcomings in the most recent USDA Ag Census, conducted in 2017, with regard to grape acreage in the region. In particular, the Ag Census states that there are only 529 acres of grapes in Steuben County, while our updated map shows more than 1500 acres of vineyards in that county.

In May, the FLGP Administrative Management Group (AMG) decided to use the GIS vineyard map as the basis for calculating each county's shares for the program over the next five years, instead of using the 2017 Ag Census.

## Grant Funding Received

*Continuing Veraison to Harvest Newsletter and Fruit Sampling in 2020.* Collaborators: Tim Martinson – Cornell University; Alice Wise – CCE Suffolk County; James Meyers – Eastern NY Commercial Horticulture Program; Jennifer Russo – Lake Erie Regional Grape Program; Chris Gerling and Anna Katharine Mansfield – Cornell Enology Extension Program. Awarded by New York Wine & Grape Foundation/Lake Erie Regional Grape Research & Extension Program: \$3,717 (FLGP Award).

*Evaluation of a Berry Cuticle Supplement to Reduce Cluster Rots in Vineyards.* Collaborator: Alice Wise – CCE Suffolk County. Awarded by New York Wine & Grape Foundation/Lake Erie Regional Grape Research & Extension Program: \$17,589 (Year 2 of two-year project).

## Grant Funding Received (continued from page 2)

*Evaluation of Methods for Management of Field Bindweed in New York Vineyards.* Collaborator: Bryan Brown - NYS IPM Program. Awarded by New York Wine & Grape Foundation/Lake Erie Regional Grape Research & Extension Program: \$19,563 (Year 3 of three-year project)

*Determining the Efficacy of Cuticle-Enhancing Products to Reduce Cluster Rots and Fruit Fly Damage in NY Vineyards.* Collaborators: Alice Wise – CCE Suffolk County; Greg Loeb – Cornell AgriTech; Faruque Zaman – CCE Suffolk County. Awarded from the New York Farm Viability Institute: \$110,068 (June 2020 – May 2022)



*Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS).* Collaborators: Jennifer Russo – Lake Erie Regional Grape Program; Alice Wise – CCE Suffolk County; James O'Connell – Eastern NY Commercial Horticulture Program; Juliet Carroll – NYS IPM Program. Awarded through NY Department of Agriculture & Markets: \$19,050.

*Advancing Downy Mildew Resistance Management for NY Grape Growers.* Project PI: Kaitlin Gold – Cornell AgriTech. Specialty Crop Block Grant Award: \$5,000 (FLGP funding).

*Total Grant Funding Awarded: \$174,987*

*Total Funding to the FLGP: \$115,341*

## Cornell Cooperative Extension Finger Lakes Grape Program

Hans Walter-Peterson—Team Leader  
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The Finger Lakes Grape Program is a Cornell Cooperative Extension partnership between Cornell University and the Cornell Cooperative Extension Associations in Ontario, Seneca, Schuyler, Steuben, Wayne and Yates Counties.

