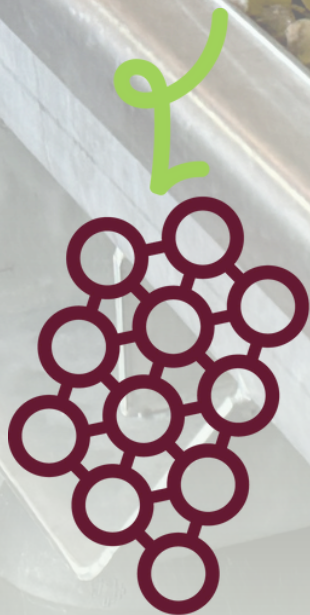




# Quarterly Report

## 4th Quarter 2024



FINGER LAKES  
**GRAPE**  
PROGRAM

RESEARCH · RELATIONSHIPS · RELEVANCE



Post harvest team outing at Keuka Springs Vineyard on Keuka Lake.

# Program Highlights

The team began intensive planning for B.E.V. NY, our annual grape and wine industry conference, while still harvesting some of our field trial trials. The two-day event will be held on Tuesday, March 4 and Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at the Hotel Canandaigua.

The Finger Lakes Grape Program (FLGP) wrapped up its field season by harvesting several trials at various vineyards throughout the region. Additionally, the team supported the FLCC viticulture and wine technology program by assisting with the harvest and transport of grapes to FLCC's Geneva winemaking facility for student use.

Hans Walter-Peterson was a member of the search committee for the Grape IPM Coordinator position at Cornell AgriTech's IPM House. The committee unanimously selected Dr. Kyle Bekelja, who will start in February 2025.

# Planning for B.E.V. NY 2025

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While in the midst of wrapping up the growing season, the winter conference season is also on the horizon. The FLGP is once again working with Cornell's Craft Beverage Institute and Cornell AgriTech to put on this winter's B.E.V. NY conference, which will be held at the Hotel Canandaigua on March 4-5, 2025. The conference will feature a two-day program that will highlight some of the most important topics for the industry, including the Spotted Lanternfly, the economics of grape production, the current state of the wine market, low and no-alcohol beverages, and more.

The first day of the conference will focus on more "nuts and bolts" topics of interest to grape growers and winemakers such as pest management, soil health, chemical taints in wine, and much more. The program has been approved for 3.0 pesticide recertification credits and will finish the day with the always-popular wine reception.

The second day will focus on broader issues of significance to the industry, including the current status of the wine market both nationally and regionally, which has been softening for most producers lately.

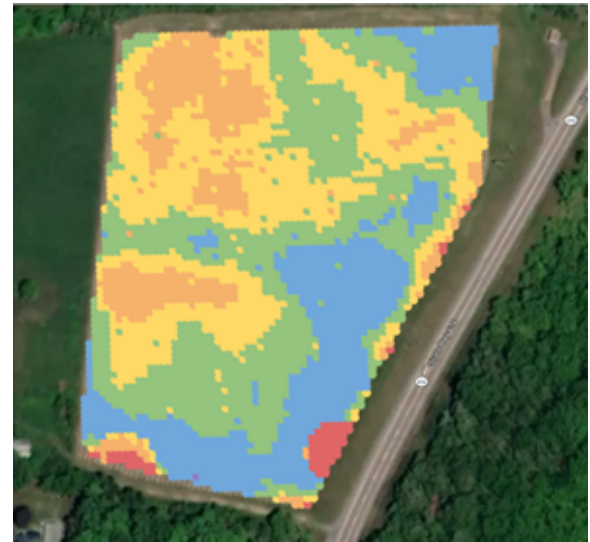
This year's trade show is being modified to an extent based on feedback from vendors after last year's meeting to give them better opportunities to interact with attendees during the meeting. Most of the space had been sold by the end of December.

Information about this year's conference is available at <http://www.bevny.org>.

# Grant-funded activities

## Project: Cost Effective Spatial Data Visualization and Decision Support for Small and Medium-Sized Vineyards (Funding source: USDA – NIFA)

The final field activities for this year included harvesting sample vines in each of the cooperating growers' vineyard blocks that have been used for this trial. The location for each harvest sample was based on predicted yield maps that were made from NDVI scans of each vineyard at bloom (early June). The samples were used to determine how accurate the yield predictions were in each vineyard. Our results varied widely, from almost no correlation between bloom NDVI and yield, to approximately 80% correlation at others. Although this grant is ending in early 2025, we intend to continue to work with some of these growers to try to improve these results.



## Project: Veraison to Harvest Newsletter (Funding source: New York Wine & Grape Foundation)

This project has been an ongoing one for the regional grape programs since 2007. Each week during the ripening season (September – October), grape samples are collected from multiple vineyards around the state and sent to the Craft Beverage Analytical Lab at Cornell AgriTech for basic chemical analysis (sugar content, acidity, nitrogen content). These results are sent out to the industry each week in the Veraison to Harvest newsletter, which also includes brief summaries about harvest progress across the state and highlights from relevant viticulture and enology projects that year. A graduate student is currently analyzing this ripening data alongside weather conditions from each year to look for indications about how climate variation each year (or across years) might be affecting ripening. Her results will be presented at B.E.V. NY this winter.



Newsletters from this project can all be found at <https://cals.cornell.edu/viticulture-enology/research-extension/veraison-harvest>.

# Interviews for Grape IPM Coordinator

Hans Walter-Peterson has been serving as a member of the search committee to fill the Grape IPM Coordinator position, which will be housed at Cornell AgriTech. The search committee held virtual interviews with 10 candidates in August, and invited four for final interviews that were held over two days each in Geneva (AgriTech) and in Portland NY (CLEREL). All four candidates demonstrated different strengths that they would bring to the position. Dr. Kyle Bekelja was ultimately chosen by the committee to be the new Grape IPM Coordinator. He will start in his new position in February, 2025.



Kyle Bekelja (Virginia Tech University)

## Presentations

Ontario County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting (Canandaigua, NY). "The Finger Lakes Grape Program: Helping to Prepare Grape Growers for New Realities and How Everyone Can Help". October 18, 2025.

Surry County (North Carolina) Extension Workshop (virtual). "The Case for Hybrid Grapes." October 24, 2025.

## Proposals Submitted

"Evaluation of Management Options for Sour Rot in Grapes Without Insecticides" (Co-PI: Dr. Katie Gold).

Submitted to USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant program.

Proposed project dates: 4/1/2026 – 3/31/2028.

Proposed budget: \$102,130.

Project summary: Sour rot is a complex disease of grapes that can cost growers hundreds of dollars per acre in lost revenue. Standard management practice includes using insecticides to control the fruit fly vector, but resistance to those materials has quickly become widespread. The Finger Lakes Grape Program will evaluate options for sour rot management that could reduce or eliminate the need for insecticides and would be practical for growers to implement.

# Enroll In the FLGP

Enrolling in the FLGP gives growers access to research-based information that enhances productivity, profitability, and sustainability for the grape industry in the Finger Lakes region.

Benefits of enrollment in the FLGP include:

Finger Lakes Vineyard Update - our electronic newsletter sent every week during the growing season.

Verasion to Harvest - weekly updates on fruit maturity and other harvest related information leading up to and during harvest season.

Important announcements about upcoming events, meetings and workshops.

For more information visit: <https://blogs.cornell.edu/flxgrapes/>



## FLGP Industry Advisory Committee Members

### Ontario County

Eric Amberg, Amberg Grapevines

TJ Brahm, Randall Standish Vineyards

### Schulyer County

Tina Hazlitt, Sawmill Creek Vineyards

John Santos, Hazlitt 1852 Vineyards

### Seneca County

Cameron Hosmer, Hosmer Winery

Ian Wagner, Wagner Vineyards

### Steuben County

Peter Weis, Weis Vineyards

Matt Doyle, Doyle Vineyard Management

### Wayne County

Steve Sklenar, Sklenar Vineyard

Vacant

### Yates County

Tara Farnan, Buzzard Crest Vineyards

Adam Folts, Vineyard View Winery

### Other Members

Chris Gerling, Cornell AgriTech

David Orzel, Nutrien Ag Solutions

Justine Vanden Heuvel, Cornell University

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