

# 2015 Year In Review



The Finger Lakes Grape Program (FLGP) is a regional extension program of Cornell Cooperative Extension, serving the grape and wine industry of the Finger Lakes where more than 200 farms produce over 90 different varieties of grapes from 10,000 acres of vineyards. The FLGP provides unbiased, research-based information to the industry in all areas of grape production including vineyard and pest management practices, vineyard nutrition and soils, new vineyard establishment, and farm business management as a means of supporting the industry's growth and long-term sustainability.

The year 2015 was a time of change for the FLGP. We are excited to have hired Gillian Trimber this fall as our new Viticulture Extension Educator. Gillian has quickly taken on a number of projects with the Grape Program, including the Vineyard Mapping project and working with new and potential growers. She will be a great addition to the FLGP team. We also were fortunate to have Luann Steel working as our field technician during the season, along with an excellent intern from Finger Lakes Community College's Viticulture & Enology program, Liz Keyser. I thank them all for their dedication and hard work in helping us to have another successful year helping this industry.

In addition to new faces on our FLGP team, we also added a new county to our program this year. We are pleased to now have Wayne County as one of the counties participating in the Finger Lakes Grape Program. You can read more about some of our work in Wayne County this year inside.

And finally, a quick 'thank you' to our Industry Advisory Committee members, who give us great ideas and advice on ways to better serve the Finger Lakes industry. If you have thoughts or feedback on how we can better serve the region's growers, please feel free to contact me or any of the members of the Committee, who are listed on the back page, to let us know how we can best meet the industry's needs.

*Hans Walter-Peterson*

*Team Leader*



Pictured (left to right): Gillian Trimber, Hans Walter-Peterson, Luann Steel  
Above: Liz Keyser



**Cornell University**  
Cooperative Extension  
Finger Lakes Grape Program



### Gillian Trimber Joins FLGP

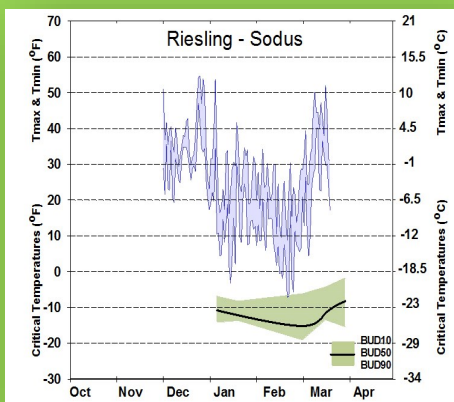
**Gillian Trimber** joined the Finger Lake Grape Program on September 21, filling the Viticulture Extension Educator position previously held by Mike Colizzi, who accepted a position working at the Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, NY. Gillian graduated from Cornell in 2013 with a degree in Viticulture & Enology, and gained her vineyard experience during an internship with Antinori in Italy, as well as 2½ years working in the vineyards at Sheldrake Point Vineyards on Cayuga Lake. She has also worked at the Cornell Plantations, and was a Nelson J. Shaulis Scholar during the summer of 2011 at the Experiment Station in Geneva, working on several research projects with various researchers at the Station.

Gillian will be wearing a number of different hats in her job with the FLGP, including managing the Teaching & Demonstration Vineyard, helping with various field trials and projects, organizing and planning meetings, and being our lead contact for new and prospective grape growers. Gillian has also taken on our GIS Vineyard Mapping project, meeting with growers to enter or update maps of their vineyard blocks. Gillian also brings a working knowledge of Spanish to the FLGP, and has an interest in developing programming for Spanish-speaking vineyard workers.

### Tailgate Meeting Continue to be Valuable Communication To with Growers

Since 2012, the FLGP has held informal field meetings called 'Tailgate Meetings' at vineyards throughout the Finger Lakes region. These meetings are held every other Tuesday during the growing season, and provide an opportunity for growers and FLGP staff to discuss current issues in the vineyards including emerging pest problems, timing of various cultural practices, adaptation to the year's growing seasons and changes in market conditions among others. The meetings also provide growers with opportunities to interact with one another, hearing about possible solutions to problems from fellow growers as well.

In 2015, the FLGP hosted nine Tailgate meetings for grape growers in all six counties that support the FLGP, with over 140 growers from throughout the region attending. One of the major issues discussed at the Tailgate meetings this year was the availability of financial assistance through USDA's Tree Assistance Program to help offset replanting costs due to winter injury to vines as a result of the two previous winters. Three growers reported having follow-up meetings with Farm Services Agency staff to apply for assistance as a result of attending these meetings this year.



**Riesling bud hardiness test results during winter of 2015 at a Wayne County vineyard.**

### Wayne County Joins the Finger Lakes Grape Program

This past year, Wayne County became the sixth county to participate in the Finger Lakes Grape Program, joining Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben and Yates Counties. This means that growers in Wayne County are able to enroll in the FLGP at a lower cost than before, but perhaps more importantly, the FLGP will be working directly with the growers in the county to provide information about pest management, growing practices, vineyard establishment and more. Two Wayne County grape growers joined the FLGP's Industry Advisory Committee this year – David Smith (Smith Brothers Farms) and Serena Michels (White Pine Vineyard).

The FLGP held our first Tailgate Meeting in Wayne County on June 2, 2015 at Smith Brothers Farm. We also incorporated Wayne County vineyards into two of our annual vineyard monitoring projects. From August through October, we collect fruit samples to assess ripening as part of our 2015 Veraison to Harvest sampling. These results, along with those from other vineyards in the Finger Lakes and New York, are reported to the industry every week during harvest. We have also collected bud samples in Wayne County as part of our winter bud hardiness monitoring project, which assesses grape buds' abilities to survive cold temperatures, and gives guidance to growers on whether or not they need to alter their pruning practices.





### **Comments from B.E.V. NY 2015 Program Evaluations**

"Good in-depth coverage."

"Presenters are engaging [and]  
extremely knowledgeable on their  
respective subjects."

"I always learn new things when I  
attend."

### **B.E.V. NY 2015 Conference Attracts over 500 Attendees to Learn About Business, Enology, and Viticulture**

For the second consecutive year, the FLGP, Cornell's Enology Extension Program and the Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management came together to present B.E.V. NY, our three-day conference which brings important research-based information on business, winemaking and grape growing topics to the grape and wine industry in the Finger Lakes and beyond. The conference attracted over 500 attendees over the three days of the conference, along with 40 exhibitors for the two-day Trade Show. The conference brought together local experts from Cornell, Penn State, Finger Lakes Community College and industry, as well as from California and Canada to bring important information to the industry on how to produce and market their products. The conference also partnered with the New York Wine & Grape Foundation to host the Unity Luncheon on Thursday, during which the Foundation presents awards to those who have made significant contributions to the well-being and growth of the grape & wine industry in New York.

Conference evaluations showed that the vast majority of those attending like the format of the event and gained a great deal of insight from the information presented. The dates for B.E.V. NY 2016 are March 3-5, 2016.

### **First Teaching & Demonstration Vineyard Produces a Full Crop of Grapes and Trained Students**

The Finger Lakes Teaching and Demonstration Vineyard continues to grow and change, providing new channels for outreach and education. After a successful winter of pruning workshops and outdoor viticulture classes, spring of 2015 brought the opportunity to add new vines. Despite heavy rain in May and June, survivorship of the young plants seems good, and the new planting has served as a useful tool for teaching about vineyard establishment.

Collection of phenology data on each variety continued in 2015, allowing for comparison of budbreak, cluster development, and ripening across years and cultivars. This includes evaluation of table grape varieties Marquis and Jupiter, as well as emerging wine grapes Chenin Blanc, Grüner Veltliner, and Zweigelt to better understand how they function in our region. NY 81, a variety recently developed by Cornell, is planted near its parents Riesling and Cayuga White for comparison. We have also been working with scientists at the Experiment Station in Geneva to determine the cause of virus-like symptoms in our Zweigelt vines, which are also appearing in some commercial vineyards.

As of 2015, the majority of the grape varieties are finally mature and producing a full crop, with more than eight tons harvested in total. Over 4,000 pounds of fruit was provided to Finger Lakes Community College (FLCC) to be processed by students at the school's newly opened winemaking facility in Geneva, NY. Doing so enabled FLCC students in the Viticulture and Wine Technology program to work with the crop they cared for throughout the season, from counting buds in January to blending carboys in December, and to be immersed in the complete process of grape and wine production.

Beyond FLCC participation, 1,500 pounds of fruit was used in graduate student research, and the remaining crop was sold to commercial vineyards to help support the costs of maintaining the project. Anthony Road Winery is currently selling a varietal wine from our Grüner Veltliner fruit grown in the Teaching Vineyard, and 500 pounds of seedless table grapes were sold to the public through the Cornell Orchards Store. Both of these outlets, as well as our hands-on work with students and growers, help in our efforts to build and demonstrate the potential of the Finger Lakes grape-growing region.

*We thank the Genesee Valley Regional Market Authority for providing support for the Teaching & Demonstration Vineyard.*



***Gillian Trimber teaching at a  
pruning workshop held at the  
Teaching & Demonstration  
Vineyard.***

# ENROLL IN THE FLGP

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

Benefits of enrollment in the FLGP include:

- *Finger Lakes Vineyard Update* – our weekly electronic newsletter sent every week during the growing season.
- *Veraison to Harvest* - weekly updates on fruit maturity and other harvest-related information leading up to and during harvest season.
- *Finger Lakes Vineyard Notes* – newsletter with articles written by extension staff and researchers from the FLGP, Cornell, and other organizations.
- Important announcements about upcoming events, meetings and workshops.

For more information or to enroll online, visit <http://flgp.cce.cornell.edu/enrollment>.



## FLGP Industry Advisory Committee Members

### Ontario County

Eric Amberg, Grafted Grapevine Nursery  
Rich Jerome, Jerome's U-Pick Fruit Farm

### Schuyler County

John Santos, Hazlitt 1852 Vineyards  
Tina Hazlitt, Sawmill Creek Vineyards

### Seneca County

Cameron Hosmer, Hosmer Winery  
Bill Dalrymple, Dalrymple Farm

### Steuben County

Matt Doyle, Doyle Vineyard Management  
Mel Goldman, Keuka Lake Vineyards

### Wayne County

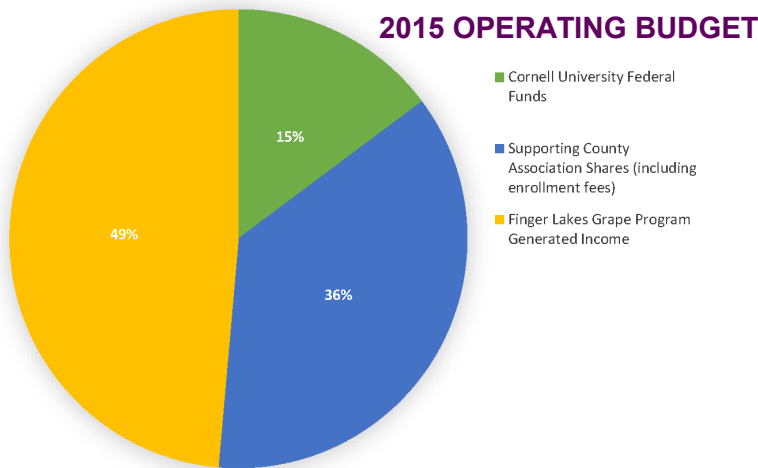
David Smith, Smith Brothers Farm  
Serena Michels, White Pine Vineyard

### Yates County

Harry Humphreys, Humphreys Vineyard  
Eileen Farnan, Barrington Cellars

### Other Members

Rich Stabins, Constellation Brands (processor representative)  
Gregg McConnell, Farm Credit East (financial representative)  
Derek Wilber, Swedish Hill Winery (winemaker representative)  
Justine Vanden Heuvel, Cornell University (faculty representative)  
Chris Gerling, Cornell University (Enology Extension)



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