

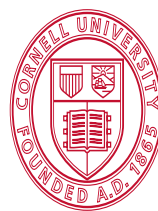


# LERGP Crop Update

## \*\* December 3, 2015 \*\*

**Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities**

*Diversity and Inclusion are a part of Cornell University's heritage. We are a recognized employer and educator valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities.*



Cornell University

# Business Management

Kevin Martin  
Penn State University, LERGP,  
Business Management Educator

## Vineyard Operating Budget Kevin Martin

With lower prices, more growers are looking for ways to reduce input costs. Before doing that, this baseline budget is a good target for long-term spending. For the most part, the budget is relatively conservative. We routinely interact with growers that reduce their budget by 20% from this baseline through innovation. We also interact with growers that reduce their budget by that and more with inadequate disease management or fertilizer management programs.

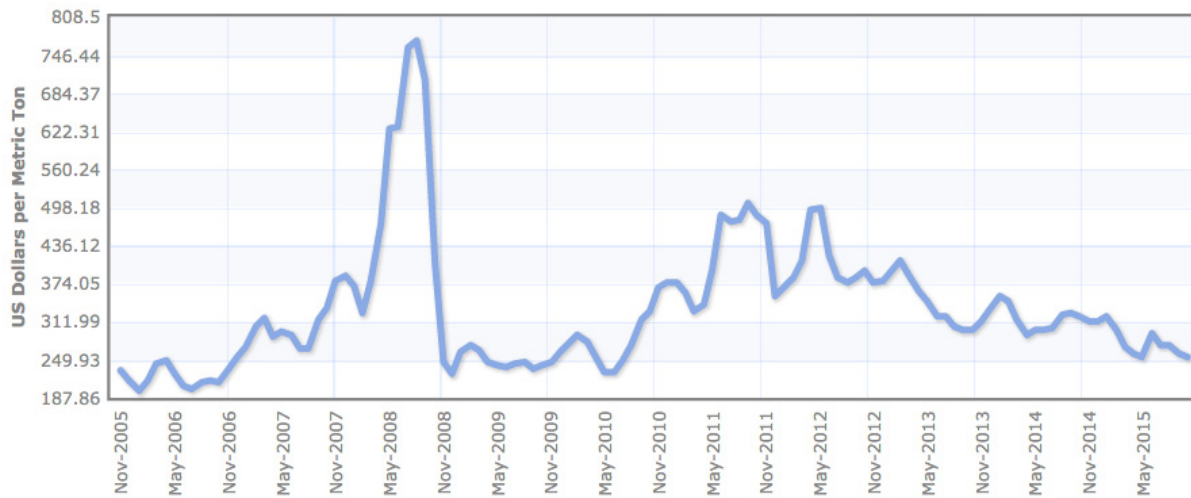
	Labor Cost	Equipment Cost	Material Cost	Total Cost
<b>Total</b>	<b>486.59</b>	<b>436.16</b>	<b>615.93</b>	<b>1,628.68</b>
Pruning and Brush Pulling	230.77			230.77
Tying & Renewal	\$101			101.01
Brush Chopping (2x)	11.20	20		31.20
Fertilizer (3x)	5.60	8.75	211.325	225.68
Trellis	32.00	28	90.6	150.60
Weed Control (3x)	19.60	41.25	120	180.85
Mowing (2x)	22.40	20		42.40
Fungicide, Pesticide (5x)	21.40	95.12	194	310.52
Harvest	30.09	150.00		180.09
Trucking	12.52	73.04		85.57
Crop Insurance				90.00

The best way to deviate from this baseline budget is to have a good understanding of your vineyard block. Information will dramatically improve efficiency, without having the same adverse impact on long-term quality as standard cost cutting measures. A fertilizer program should be based on a plan derived from soil tests. Without soil tests this is what a standard recommended practice would cost a grower. With a soil test recommended costs could be increased by 30% or reduced to \$15 per acre.

Disease management leads to similar results. Total spray applications should vary between 4 and 6. The material cost of those applications may range between \$225 and \$410 per acre. On the high end of that range, significant scouting is necessary to justify such an intensive program. Significant scouting can also allow a grower to safely reduce material costs and application numbers without being terribly concerned about unexpected problems.



Understanding commodity prices can be a fun little hobby to reduce costs as well. If, you know, reading charts is your idea of a good time. It's difficult to see peaks and valleys amidst the noise of long-term trends. It's also hard to know if historical pricing of commodities even matters. In the end, even large growers should be spending so little on their fertilizer program that it might not even make a difference. For example, at peak urea prices a grower would have spent no more than \$21 per acre on materials. This year that same grower might spend \$10 per acre. You can see on the chart how unusual it would be to save more than \$10 per acre by timing prices correctly. Typical savings are much closer to \$3 per acre. So like I said, it is not impossible to save a little money with chart analysis. If that's beyond the scope of your interest, you can do just as well (or better) working outside and saving on paid labor.



**Figure 1: Urea Prices show that typical volatility does not impact grape operations. Market conditions in 2008 almost led to a situation where Urea prices could have become a significant problem for the industry.**

To put it simply, there is some room for growers to remain sustainable and reduce cost. A lot of those cost reductions end up being temporary as soil chemistry or disease inoculum levels change over time. Without information even logical low cost strategies tend to involve unacceptable levels of risk. With the right information, that level of risk can be assessed.



## Pruning goals for 2016

With the end of the year only a few weeks away, most growers have started a portion of their pruning. It is clear to anyone who travels through the belt that every grower has a different pruning strategy. Hand or machine pruned, 60 to 200 buds, it seems that every grower has a different goal in mind. Balance pruning every vine is a great approach, but that is not exactly how the current system works. Pruning machines pull and cut somewhat indiscriminately, or a crew is told a bud number (60, 90, or 120) and they go to work.



When aiming for a specific bud number there are many factors taken into account, such as vineyard/vine health or leaving extra buds in case of a spring frost. Basically, you are deciding how to maximize yield without hurting quality. To sum up the conversations I've had recently, based on the gloomy economic forecast, there are two different approaches growers are taking. One strategy is to leave a high number of buds and push next year's crop to compensate for the low prices. The other plan is more long term and focuses on restoring vine health by reducing the number of buds left in order to bring up vine size or incorporating a vine renewal program.

In general, vineyards have decent wood this year leaving them with options heading into 2016. Although early in the dormant season, some growers are comparing the nice weather this year to the 2011-2012 winter when bud break occurred two weeks early followed by multiple frost events. In response, some growers are leaving more buds than they normally do to compensate for the possible damage. There is no way to confirm or predict a coming spring frost, but with this approach there seems to be less risk involved. If the region does not have spring frost there are options, such as thinning, to control the crop size.



## Welcome Scott Ebert!

The Lake Erie Regional Grape Program is pleased to announce the addition of Scott Ebert, field technician, to the Extension team. In his role as field technician Scott will assist LERGP members in developing, implementing and evaluating applied research projects at CLEREL and in grower vineyards, as well as, working with the team in the setting up and conducting of extension programming and activities. A native of Dunkirk, NY, Scott received his Bachelor of Science in Biology from the State University of New York at Fredonia. Scott brings some experience in Concord grape production as he worked as Luke Haggerty's assistant in the cover crop and NDVI sensing trials.

One of Scott's first priorities will be to ensure more robust, accurate data streams from the Cornell and LERGP owned NEWA instruments found in the Lake Erie region. Scott has been busy speaking with the technician at Rainwise to come up with a strategy that will allow us to take down stations for repair and calibration at the Rainwise Company in Trenton, ME without the loss of data. This will be accomplished using data from sister stations to fill in the missing data. While not perfect, it is better than huge data gaps. We hope to start by sending in the stations at Ransomville, Versailles, Portland (CLEREL) and the North East Lab.

It is our intent to keep Scott busy enough that you will eventually run into him during his travels around the grape belt. If you see him carting away a weather station, please do not call the sheriff, it is part of his job. We hope you will join the LERGP team in welcoming Scott to the team.



# Employment Opportunity

LERGP is hiring. We currently have 3 part time temporary positions open. The full job descriptions can be found at the following link:

<https://cornellu.taleo.net/careersection/10165/jobsearch.ftl>

the Job titles and Numbers are as follows:

Videographer – Job Number 30204  
Program Aide II – Project Research – Job Number 30203  
Extension Aide I – Web Maintenance – Job Number 30205

The application process can be completed on-line at the above link.

## LERGP MEMBERSHIP 2016:

Important changes, please take note!

Enrollment is shifting back to being managed by the CCE office of Chautauqua County. You will have received or, soon will receive, the combined enrollment form in the mail. The form has been reorganized and is very easy to understand and utilize. There are just 2 lines to mark for LERGP members. You will see that the base fee is already pre-filled, then you can opt for LERGP membership and if you want hard copy mailings, you will opt to pay the extra \$35.00 fee. Total the columns, make the check out to CCE-Chautauqua County and mail it to them (not the LERGP Office) at 3542 Turner Rd, Jamestown NY 14701.

You will still have the opportunity to order Guidelines for Grapes through CCE- Chautauqua County as well. As indicated on the enrollment form, they will send out an order form once the guideline booklets are available. (look for this in January) This will be conducted completely through the Chautauqua county office as well.

If you have any questions, please feel to contact me by phone at 716-792-2800 ext. 202, or e-mail me at [kjr45@cornell.edu](mailto:kjr45@cornell.edu).



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December 2015

## **Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Training for Agricultural Producers and Employees**

**3-Day classroom training (20 hours) followed by  
individual scheduled drive-time (20 hours for Class B or 25 hours for Class A)**

**Monday, February 15, Tuesday, February 16, and Wednesday, February 17, 2016  
8:00 AM to 4:00 PM each of the three days &  
the morning of Thursday, February 18 (for permit)**

**Training location: Lake Erie Regional Grape Program Office, 6592 West Main Road  
Portland, NY 14769**

This CDL training (Class A or B License) is being organized by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chautauqua County and will be taught by CDL instructors from Erie 2-CC BOCES, Ashville, NY.

The cost of the training is \$1125.00 per person for Class B or \$1250.00 for Class A, which includes the classroom training and the individual drive-time (scheduled individually following the classroom training and after obtaining the CDL permit). The cost of the CDL permit, road test and DOT physical will be an additional cost paid by each participant. Each person should also bring a bag lunch, beverages, and snacks each day. To register for this CDL Training, please complete the registration form, make check payable to Cornell Cooperative Extension, and send full payment to or deliver to:

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chautauqua County, 3542 Turner Road, Jamestown, NY 14701.

**Please Note: Registration will be accepted on a first-come first serve basis (maximum of 12 participants) by date payment is received. Full payment must be received at the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chautauqua County office by January 20<sup>th</sup> to participate in this CDL training program. Once payment is received, additional details will be provided regarding the DOT physical which is required before the first class on February 15th.**

If you have specific questions about the CDL training program and license, please contact Steve Hayes, CDL Instructor at Erie 2-CC BOCES at 716-763-9457 X 3028. If you have questions about registering for the training, please contact Lisa Kempisty, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chautauqua County at 716-664-9502 Ext. 203.

*Lisa H. Kempisty*

Lisa H. Kempisty  
Extension Community Educator  
Dairy/Livestock

*Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities*

Cornell Cooperative Extension in Chautauqua County provides equal program and employment opportunities.

**Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Training for  
Agricultural Producers and Employees  
Registration**

February 15, 16 and 17 & the morning of February 18, 2016 at the  
Lake Erie Regional Grape Program Office, 6592 West Main Road, Portland, NY 14769

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Farm or Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one: \_\_\_\_\_ Class B License      \_\_\_\_\_ Class A License

Please include payment of \$1125.00 (Class B) or \$1250.00 (Class A) per person made payable to "Cornell Cooperative Extension".

Fee must be paid by check or cash in full by January 20<sup>th</sup> on a first come–first serve basis to participate in this CDL training. Please mail or deliver to Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chautauqua County, 3542 Turner Road, Jamestown, NY 14701.





## **LERGP Website Links of Interest:**

Check out our new Facebook page!!

Cornell Lake Erie Research & Extension Laboratory Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Cornell-Lake-Erie-Research-Extension-Laboratory/146971918664867>

Table for: Insecticides for use in NY and PA:

<http://lergp.cce.cornell.edu/submission.php?id=69&crumb=ipm|ipm>

Crop Estimation and Thinning Table:

[http://nygpadmin.cce.cornell.edu/pdf/submission/pdf65\\_pdf.pdf](http://nygpadmin.cce.cornell.edu/pdf/submission/pdf65_pdf.pdf)

Appellation Cornell Newsletter Index:

<http://grapesandwine.cals.cornell.edu/cals/grapesandwine/appellation-cornell/>

Veraison to Harvest newsletters:

<http://grapesandwine.cals.cornell.edu/cals/grapesandwine/veraison-to-harvest/index.cfm>

Go to <http://lergp.cce.cornell.edu/> for a detailed calendar of events, registration, membership, and to view past and current Crop Updates and Newsletters.





**Lake Erie Regional Grape Program Team Members:**

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This publication may contain pesticide recommendations. Changes in pesticide regulations occur constantly, and human errors are still possible. Some materials mentioned may not be registered in all states, may no longer be available, and some uses may no longer be legal. Questions concerning the legality and/or registration status for pesticide use should be directed to the appropriate extension agent or state regulatory agency. Read the label before applying any pesticide. Cornell and Penn State Cooperative Extensions, and their employees, assume no liability for the effectiveness or results of any chemicals for pesticide usage. No endorsements of products are made or implied.

Cornell University Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities.

Contact the Lake Erie Regional Grape Program if you have any special needs such as visual, hearing or mobility impairments.

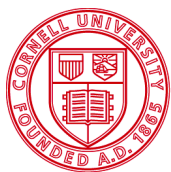
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THE LAKE ERIE REGIONAL GRAPE PROGRAM at CLEREL

6592 West Main Road

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