



LERGP Crop Update December 4, 2025

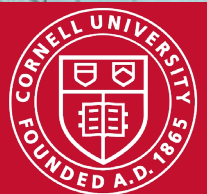
*Photo credit-
Jennifer Phillips Russo*

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Lake Erie Regional Grape Program



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[Click here to watch Podcasts](#)

The Lake Erie Regional Grape Program is a Cornell Cooperative Extension partnership between Cornell University and the Cornell Cooperative Extensions in Chautauqua, Erie and Niagara county NY and in Erie County PA.

Business Management

Andrew Holden, Business Management Educator, Penn State University, LERGP

Survey of Unsold Grapes in PA and NY

Survey Link: https://pennstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9TEV2wdiHGqknEa

With the 2025 grape harvest wrapped up, there are seemingly more grapes left in the vineyards this year than in years past. While this year's quality was reportedly high, the grape market, both for wine and juice grapes, has continued to become more and more saturated. In turn, growers have shared reports of some grapes not having buyers. No or low demand, dropping of past contracts, and allocation of crops have been reported across the industry. To capture this data and to show the economic impact of the current market conditions on grape growers in Pennsylvania and New York, Andrew Holden with the Lake Erie Regional Grape Program has created a survey for growers to complete. Please see the request below:

The Lake Erie Regional Grape Program, along with our collaborating Land Grant Universities (Penn State University Extension & Cornell University Extension) are asking you to contribute to the 2025 Unmarketable Grapes Survey. Growers from both New York and Pennsylvania State are encouraged to complete the following form.

Survey Link: https://pennstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9TEV2wdiHGqknEa

You are asked to answer questions about the grape varieties you grew in 2025 and couldn't sell due to current market conditions. Please share the approximate unsold tonnage and the value per ton of those grapes (This could be what you expected to receive or what you received last year).

The purpose of this survey is to estimate and report on the economic impact that is the result of the current grape market conditions. Results could be used by growers, industry groups, and politicians to make decisions regarding growing, marketing and/or policy change.

We will publish a report of the results from the survey in the Lake Erie Regional Grape Program Crop Update. If you are not a member of the LERGP, you can find information on how to enroll by contacting Kate Robinson at 716-792-2800 or by email at kjr45@cornell.edu. The report will also be published publicly from each respective university and or grape growing region.

Please be assured that your responses are completely confidential. We will only report data regarding tonnage, average prices, and minimum and maximum prices per ton by variety received so that no individual's answers will ever be identified.

If you have any questions about this survey or its outcomes, please contact Andrew Holden, Extension Educator at 716-640-2656 or azh6192@psu.edu.

Andrew Holden
Business Management Extension Educator, Horticulture
716-640-2656 or azh6192@psu.edu

Labor Roadshow IX is this Month!

The Ag Workforce Development Council hits the road this month at four locations across New York State. This year, we will dig deep into pressing issues that every farm employer needs to understand. The Roadshow will feature two webinars and four in-person meetings across the state:

December 1 – Webinar 1

December 9 – Elks Lodge, Greenwich, NY

December 10 – Hilton Garden Inn, Watertown, NY

December 17 – Cornell AgriTech, Geneva, NY

December 18 – Genesee Community College, Batavia, NY

December 22 – Webinar 2

To learn more and register, visit the [Labor Roadshow page here](#).

New York State's Food, Beverage, and Animal Feed Manufacturer Survey Available

In collaboration with the **New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets**, a team from **Cornell University's Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management** has recently rolled out the **2025 New York State Food, Beverage, and Animal Feed Manufacturer Survey**. The industry will benefit from an updated assessment of the industry that informs private and public investments and opportunities to support firm growth and improved profitability. In particular, we are conducting the survey to:

Identify opportunities for business retention and growth that improve firm competitiveness,
Enumerate solutions to feasibly expand NYS food products in institutional markets,
Assess the additive economic impacts of public funds that support capital investments in food, beverage, and animal feed manufacturing, and
Offer policy makers and business managers information that will enhance the future success of the industry.

The **Qualtrics Survey** will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. To assist firms in completing the survey, publicly available Word and pdf versions are available [HERE](#) and will be useful in understanding what types of information we are asking for in advance. If they prefer, firms may also complete the survey with the pdf version instead and return it to us in hard copy or email. If firms have (or contract with) multiple processing facilities, they only need to complete one survey.



Andy Campell

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Viticulture

Jennifer Russo, Viticulture Extension Specialist, LERGP

In the Vineyard

2026 Pest Management Spray Schedule – What’s Your Plan?

On December 3, 2025, the Lake Erie Regional Grape Program held their annual virtual spray program meeting. It is the goal of this meeting to bring experts in pathology (disease) and entomology (insects) together with grower stakeholders to discuss their current research and help to inform grower management strategies in the upcoming season. There were 78 registrations for this event across the United States. We worked together with Michigan State University’s viticulture extension specialist, Esmail Nasrollahiazar, to award credits to Michigan attendees.

The event featured presentations on pest management strategies, with Flor Acevedo discussing Grape Berry Moth biology and control, followed by Katie Gold’s presentation on disease management in grapevines and Dave Combs’ fungicide efficacy trials. The final portion of the meeting Tim Miles from Michigan State covered fungicide resistance issues, IR4, and proper pesticide application techniques, with Megan Luke emphasizing the importance of calibration and water quality testing.

Dave and Katie: Continue tank mix study analysis and provide more detailed results

Grape Berry Moth Pest Management

Flor presented findings from her research on Grape Berry Moth (GBM) in vineyards, revealing that larvae were present at different stages from early July to mid-September, indicating overlapping generations throughout the season. She noted that early season spray applications at 810 growing degree days were often too late and suggested using products with longer residual activity. Flor also discussed her study of natural enemies, identifying six parasitoid species in the Northeast, which could be valuable for controlling GBM populations. She recommended further research into the use of these natural enemies and the exploration of integrated pest management strategies to improve control of GBM in vineyards.

Advancing Grape Disease Management Strategies

Katie Gold, an assistant professor of Grape Pathology at Cornell AgriTech, presented on the future of disease management in grapevines, emphasizing the importance of understanding the disease triangle and the fundamentals of grape disease biology. She discussed the challenges posed by downy mildew, a significant grape disease, and highlighted the varying susceptibility of different grape varieties. Katie also addressed the need to evaluate new tools, techniques, and systems, such as fungicides, biologicals, and AI-based decision support, within the context of these fundamental principles. She concluded by emphasizing the critical timing of sprays for downy mildew control and the increasing problem of resistance to commonly used fungicides. Katie presented on a trial aimed at matching the price point of a grower standard program using fungicides at risk of regulatory loss, focusing on downy mildew control in Concord grapes.

Fungicide Resistance and Management Strategies

Dave presented results from fungicide trials on powdery and downy mildew, noting that copper-based products showed good suppression but limited control of powdery mildew, while sulfur enhanced control when tank-mixed. Biopesticides generally performed better against downy mildew than powdery mildew, with the grower standard being under 2% damage for foliage and under

9% for clusters. Tim Miles discussed fungicide resistance issues, particularly in powdery mildew, highlighting qualitative and quantitative resistance mechanisms and emphasizing the importance of rotating fungicides to mitigate resistance. His presentation highlighted widespread resistance to powdery mildew, emerging resistance to downy mildew, and significant resistance issues in Botrytis. He discussed the importance of cultural practices for Botrytis management and explained that new fungicide development is expensive and unlikely, making Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies crucial. Both speakers stressed the value of biological and conventional rotations for managing grape diseases effectively.

Pesticide Application and Water Quality

Megan followed, emphasizing the need for proper pesticide application beyond selecting the right materials, including equipment calibration and rotation of chemistries. She highlighted the importance of calibration for achieving desired coverage and reducing off-target applications. She discussed the importance of calibrating multi-row sprayers and testing water quality to ensure accurate pesticide application. Megan highlighted how a single clogged nozzle can significantly impact spray patterns and emphasized the need for manual collection to verify flow meters' accuracy. Megan also addressed water quality issues, such as pH and debris, which can affect pesticide efficacy and recommended simple solutions like testing water and adjusting pH before mixing pesticides.

The Lake Erie Regional Grape Program understands that not every grower is able to attend every program. This event held research-based information and direct discussion on how growers may use this information in their own operations. If you were unable to make this event and are interested in the content presented, there will be an opportunity to purchase the recording and pdfs of the slide presentations. More information will follow once those are available.

Frost Pocket Investigation

Many of you know that Jennifer Phillips Russo (that's me) has been researching microclimate effects on Concord grape production. A portion of this work is in frost mitigation strategies. One of the goals of the research is to determine if urban areas and large expressways (the NYS Thruway) have a microclimate effect on production. I have had many conversations with grower stakeholders that appear to have frost pockets near the NYS Thruway. We located four vineyards that gave us two paired vineyards with one on the south side of the interstate, and one on the north side. Kim and I deployed temperature and humidity sensors to begin to monitor and collect data this dormant season. We used MyEV to geolocate the sensors in the paired vineyards which allowed us to demonstrate, visually, the interstate transect. See photos 1-4 below.

I shared this work with Dr. Alan Lakso, Emeritus Faculty, School of Integrative Plant Science, Horticulture Section, Cornell AgriTech. Dr. Alan Lakso, received his PhD in Plant Physiology at UC Davis, is an Emeritus Professor of Horticulture with 50 years of research in integrating crop development with environmental factors and cultural practices as they product productivity and quality. His research emphasized experimentation and simulation modeling approaches to understanding water and carbohydrate physiology of apples and grapes. His interests also include understanding crop responses to climate change and adapting and developing a variety of new technologies to help growers optimize their practices. He is a co-founder of a technology start-up, FloraPulse, that is commercializing research on an internal drought stress sensor for woody crops. During a conversation he and I had, he was intrigued with this work because he found similar results in some of his research. Dr. Lakso shared that his team "deployed 100 little iButton temp loggers around Seneca Lake in different elevations, aspects, slopes, in/out of swales near/far from

other trees, etc. One anomaly we found was that one location that was warmer than it should have been compared to others was very near Highway 14 that runs up the lake.” We are interested to be able to help growers define risk mitigation areas that could benefit from different management strategies, and it is a goal of this research to develop tools to do just that.

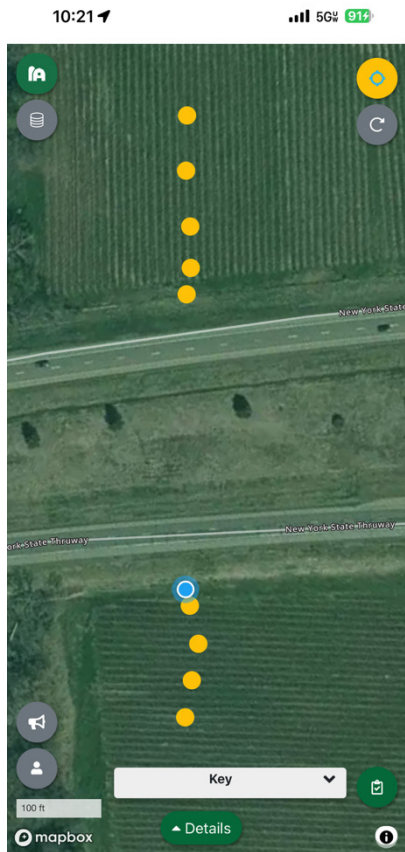


Photo 3. Westfield pair vineyards with NYS Thruway transect

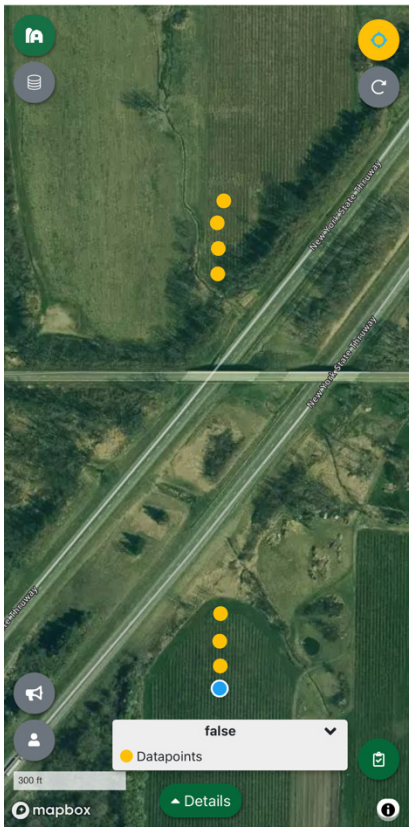


Photo 4. Fredonia paired vineyards with NYS Thruway transect

Online spotted lanternfly update for grape growers

Thursday, January 8 from 9 a.m to 10:10 a.m.

Cornell Integrated Pest Management and the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets invite grape growers and producers to an online update on the statewide response to spotted lanternfly (SLF) spread into New York vineyards.

Kyle Bekelja, grape IPM coordinator for Cornell IPM, will offer an overview of the ongoing research and extension efforts being conducted by Cornell University to fill critical knowledge gaps in SLF management, and Chris Logue, director, Division of Plant Industry, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, will provide an update on efforts by state officials to track SLF populations and slow their spread to vineyards.

Participants can pre-submit questions through a survey link provided following registrations. Questions submitted prior to December 31 will receive priority. Questions may be submitted during the session; however, priority will be given to pre-submitted queries, due to time constraints. Unanswered questions will be address via email following the session.

[Register via Zoom](#). For more information, contact Kyle Bekelja at kmb399@cornell.edu.



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Vineyard Management After Drought Conditions



In-Person and Virtual Event

16 December 2025 2:00PM – 4:00PM

Jordan Hall, Cornell Agri-Tech, Geneva NY

GALLO

What's Next for Vineyards after Drought-Like Conditions

Join Cornell Cooperative Extension, Finger Lakes Grape Program and Gallo Canandaigua Winery for a presentation and panel to discuss the impacts that drought-like conditions can have on grapevines.

Guest Speaker

Dr. Jaclyn Fiola – Delaware Valley University

Moderator

Dr. Terry Bates – Cornell University (LERGP)

Expert Panel

Dr. Marcus Keller – Washington State University
Dr. Michelle Moyer – Washington State University
Dr. Patricia Skinkis – Oregon State University
Dr. Charles Obiero – Washington State University
Michael Cook M.S. – Texas A&M University



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In-Person Registration



Webinar Registration

Please use the QR codes for registration or visit the Finger Lakes Grape Program Events Page.

In-person attendance is encouraged, zoom link for distance attendance or inclement weather.

Questions?

Hans Walter-Peterson | hcw5@cornell.edu

Bernadette Gagnier | bernadette.gagnier@ejgallo.com

PA Update

Megan Luke, Penn State Extension Viticulture and Tree Fruit Educator

PA Update

As AI tools roll out in chats and take an increasingly larger role in customer service, the Penn State Marketing team has developed an AI tool designed to quickly compile Extension resources and connect customers with the correct articles, videos, agricultural researchers, faculty, and Extension personnel within the PSU Extension ecosystem.

The newest tool is essentially a chatbot designed to answer simple questions and compile clickable resources for standard inquiries. It is currently in the soft-launch stage and open to public review, where your input is extremely valuable in ensuring that the information provided is accurate and relevant. If you have a few minutes, follow the link and ask the chatbot a few questions. Please provide feedback, whether positive or negative, so that the development team can address issues before this tool becomes the standard.

It is essential to note that this tool is not intended to replace me or any of my colleagues as Extension Educators, but rather to efficiently put articles and resources in the hands of clients who are seeking information and do not require a consultation.*

From the Penn State Extension Marketing Division:

“Meet Penn State Extension’s New AI Assistant

We’re inviting a select group of ag professionals to test-drive Penn State Extension’s new AI assistant. We value your feedback, which will help us refine the tool before we introduce it to the public.

This innovative tool combines the expertise of our own researchers and educators with the power of AI to deliver vetted, science-based information when you need it. Find fast answers to your questions on soil health, crop management, livestock nutrition, pest control, and more.

You can even upload photos to quickly identify pests, diseases, and plants. Real-time weather and soil data deliver localized results.

By trying out this pilot version, you gain early access to this 24/7 digital adviser, and your input will help shape a critical new resource for producers and agricultural businesses across Pennsylvania.

Ask questions such as:

How can I improve soil health on my grain farm?

What are the latest recommendations for dairy herd nutrition?

How do I manage fire blight in high-density apple systems?

Explore the results, give a quick thumbs-up or thumbs-down to each answer, and leave a

comment if it's a thumbs-down. You'll help us shape the future of agriculture.”

Try out the new tool and provide critical feedback [here](#)

*At present, the LERGP does not guarantee the accuracy nor endorse the use of this AI tool, and is providing this information to growers so that they can be a part of the development process.

Sprayer Best Practices and Calibration

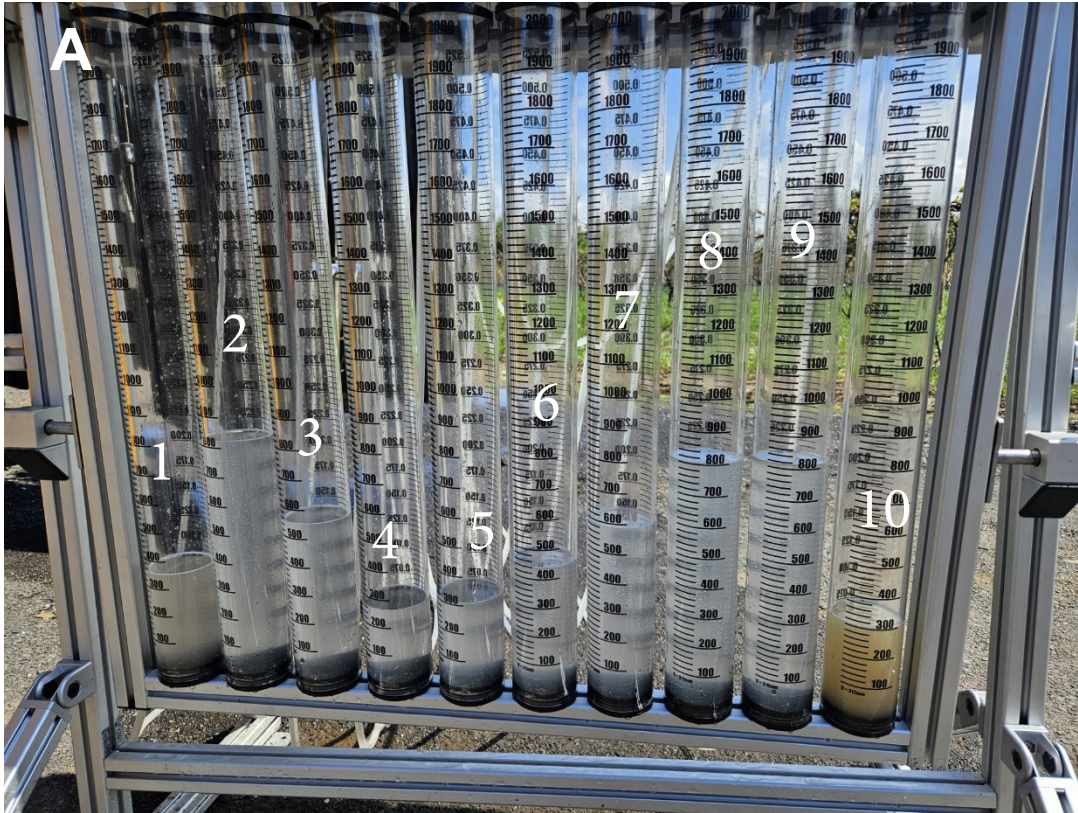
This is a re-print of information that I shared earlier in the season, but it bears repeating. I covered this in more depth in the “What’s Your Plan?” webinar yesterday. If you would like to watch the presentation recording and did not register for the live event, it is available on the LERGP website for a nominal fee. If you are interested in being placed on the waitlist for on-site sprayer calibration in April 2026, please contact me to confirm availability or schedule through the LERGP website.



A few observations as I have the opportunity to work on various sprayers throughout the grape belt and beyond:

- Having a flow meter or being accurate in “field calibration” does NOT mean that you have good coverage
- All sprayers, but especially multi-row sprayers, are sensitive to pressure. Issues in a single nozzle can result in incorrect output in multiple nozzles
- Water quality issues can contribute to BOTH material failures and coverage issues
- Every calibration appointment I have completed has resulted in at least one issue being uncovered, meaning everyone has room to improve!

Before calibration:



In this photo (A), nozzles 1 through 5 are connected to one side of the panel on a multi-row sprayer, and nozzles 6 through 10 are connected to the other side. These sets of nozzles would be spraying in opposite directions. Nozzle 1 and nozzle 10 are the bottom-most nozzles on the panel; nozzles 5 and 6 are the top-most nozzles.

In photo A, nozzles 1, 5, 6, and 10 should be passing the same amount of fluid. Nozzles 2,3,4,7,8, and 9 should also pass the same amount as each other, higher than the top and bottom nozzles.



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Sprayer during calibration:

The lowest nozzles on the panels, 1 and 10, passed liquid that was dark and contaminated. Due to the way that material settles within the panels, it is a good idea to remove the lowest nozzles when not in use, so the system discharges any material. Be sure to flush out the machine frequently. It was also observed that the only blockages that were found with nozzle removal were in nozzles 4 and 7. After those nozzles were cleaned, the system was regulated, and no further adjustments were needed.

Post calibration:



In photo C, you can see that the nozzles are in alignment with the expected output based on the nozzle orifice size and the whirl plate. Sediment is still present in the lowest nozzles, but running water through the system should flush out any remnants.

Takeaways:

- The flow meter for the system was accurate in terms of output, but the nozzles were not within calibration specifications, which is within 5% of expected output based on manufacturer specs and system pressure.
- The issues observed were enough to lead to poor coverage and, therefore, material failures.
- The level of blockage observed was enough to put the sprayer out of calibration, BUT NOT BAD ENOUGH TO BE OBSERVABLE FROM THE CAB.
- The issue of small bits of debris blocking nozzles may continue and should be regularly checked. To avoid this issue, install a simple sediment filter in your water system pre-mixing tank. Keep filters within the sprayer clean and change them as required by the manufacturer. Check nozzles for clogs and blockages often.
- Without a full calibration, these issues would have been nearly impossible to detect visually or with the whole system flow meter. When in doubt, calibrate!

Contact information:

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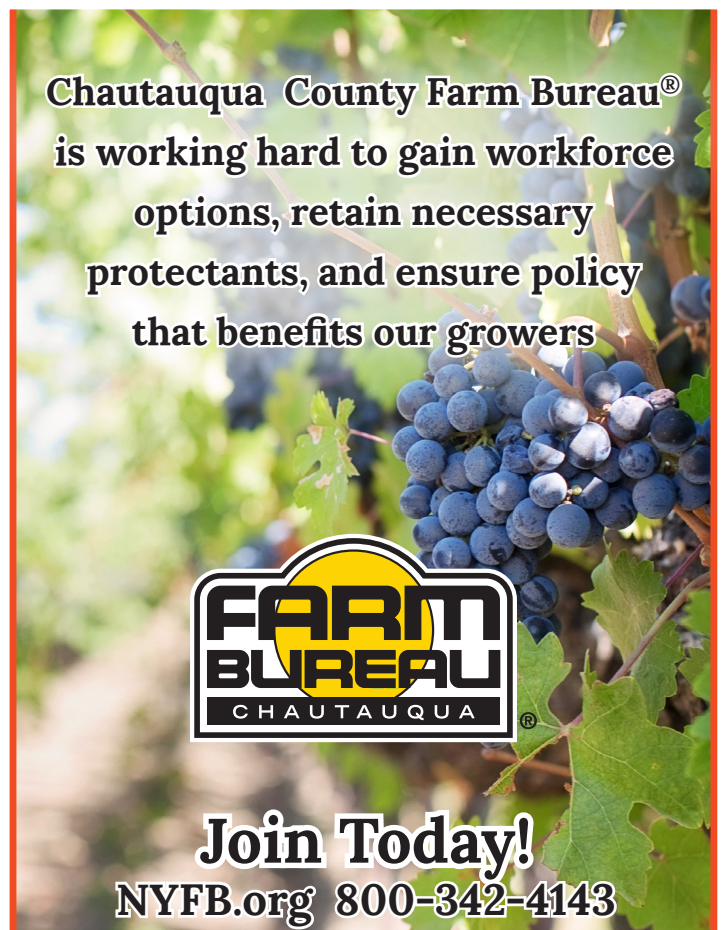
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Updates and Information

Kimberly Knappenberger, Viticulture & IPM Extension Support Specialist, LERGP

NEWA

If you are interested in finding an app or website that offers weather data updated by the minute or every 15 minutes (depending on the station settings), we have one that is connected to many of our stations in the region. Ambient Weather Network offers a free standard platform that shows a dashboard for the weather data, basic graphing of data, 3 day forecast, historical data for 1 year, and can be set up to deliver email and push alerts. You can get an upgraded account for \$49.99/year with a few more perks if you are interested in that.

To see what it is all about, you can visit the website at <https://ambientweather.net/> or download the app. You will see that stations will appear on the map that you can click on and see all of the data being collected. If you zoom in more stations will appear and you can see that there are quite a few stations on this network in our region. Not all of them report to NEWA because there are specific requirements for a station to have the data reported there, however these can be a great help if you need to check in an area that is not on NEWA.

To find our Rainwise and KestrelMet stations are on this network look for:

Lake City (Mason Farms), Avonia
Lake City, Lake City
Newfane (Chateau Niagara), Newfane
East Ripley, Forsyth
Versailles, Perrysburg
PortlandCLEREL, Portland
Harborcreek, 9152 Buffalo Road
NorthEastEscarment, North East Escarpment
Brocton, Brocton, NY
EastWestfield, Mobilia
NorthEastStateLine, 8401 Gulf Rd
RipleyEscarment, Ripley Escarpment
RipleyRt20, 10646 W. Main Road
NorthEastSidehill, 9510 Sidehill Rd
Haonver, Hanover
Forestville, Forestville
HarborcreekEscarment, Harborcreek Escarpment
Westfield, Side Yard
Ransomville, Ransomville
EastFredonia, Fredonia, NY
Westfield Spring St, Westfield



Figure 1 Ambient Weather App

Upcoming Events and Mark Your Calendar Days

Thursday, March 19, 2026-Winter Grape Grower Conference

Links of Interest:



Cornell Cooperative Extension:

<https://cals.cornell.edu/cornell-cooperative-extension>

Efficient Vineyard:

<https://www.efficientvineyard.com/>

LERGP:

<https://lergp.cce.cornell.edu/>

<https://lergp.com/>

NYSIPM:

<https://cals.cornell.edu/new-york-state-integrated-pest-management>

Veraison to Harvest:

<https://cals.cornell.edu/viticulture-enology/research-extension/veraison-harvest>

Spotted Lanternfly Pocket Guide:

<https://lergp.com/spotted-lanternfly>