

## Community Vitality Center Pilot Demonstration Project Proposal

Name of Proposed Project: *Basic Skills for Commercial Winemakers*

Local Fiscal Agent/Applicant Organization: *Applicant - Western Iowa Grape Growers Association; Fiscal Agent - Golden Hills Resource Conservation & Development*

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What is the concept and approach that you propose to implement?

*Our concept relies upon making needed information available to interested parties. This project seeks to produce 6 focused seminars in 2004 and 2005 designed to improve the skills of beginning and aspiring commercial winemakers. Instruction will be provided by nationally respected enologists. As the level of winemaking expertise in the State is presently low, seminars such as these are needed to make high quality enology education available to interested Iowans.*

How will your project improve the vitality of your community or rural area?

*The success of a regional wine industry is bound tightly with tourism. Attracting tourists and relying upon their discretionary dollars have been keys to success for the Finger Lakes region of New York and the Hermann, Missouri area. As the vast majority of aspiring winery owners in Iowa seek to develop their operations in rural areas, a successful wine industry holds great promise for non-urban areas in the state through increased tourist activity and the movement of local urban dollars into rural regions. Locally, close proximity to the Loess Hills National Scenic Byway offers excellent potential for the development of an agri-tourism industry, in which wineries can play a key role. Such benefits can only be derived from an industry producing high quality wines, however – this project will assist aspiring winemakers in delivering high wine quality to market early in the life of the industry.*

Do you have specific objectives for your project?

*The key objective of this project is to equip interested entrepreneurs with the technical knowledge and skills necessary to begin production of commercially acceptable, high quality wines.*

Do you have specific outcomes that you are hoping to achieve or measurable indicators that you will be using to evaluate the success of your project?

*There are three key methods we will use to determine the success of this endeavor. First, each seminar will feature an evaluation form to be completed by attendees. Second, as each seminar will feature independent registration, increases or decreases in the number of attendees at each successive event will gauge attendee satisfaction. And third, a survey will be distributed to attendees operating wineries one year after the completion of the seminars, asking them to evaluate the seminars' usefulness and applicability to their operations.*

What important factors were considered in determining the approach to use?

*The primary concern was easing interested parties' access to needed information. Delivering the maximum amount of information possible per dollar of attendee expenditure, and to the largest possible audience, was considered vital. Additionally, attendee evaluations from two Winery Development Seminars held in November of 2003 to address the business and regulatory aspects of winery ownership and operation were also taken into consideration.*

Are there unique community characteristics, unique features, or key factors regarding the approach planned that led you to conclude the approach selected is most appropriate for your community?

*A number of community attributes validate the use of this format. First, the financial resources of most interested parties are limited, and little financial assistance is available to those persons studying this skilled trade. Second, the winemaking skill level of most potential attendees is similar, but sub-standard for commercial production. And third, most interested parties remain open to cooperative learning and operating concepts – group education will offer a means to strengthen the relationships between producers that will create additional opportunities, e.g. cooperative marketing, further benefiting the industry.*

What led you to believe this concept is needed or doable in your community or region?

*Responses to a recently conducted State-led survey of the Iowa wine industry project a large growth in the number of small wineries between 2004 and 2006. The survey indicated most of these operations will be inadequately sized to support the hire of a professional winemaker. Similar growth is occurring in a number of Iowa's neighboring states, increasing potential attendance. Evaluations received from the November 15 and 22, 2003 Winery Development Seminars validate this perceived need for focused winemaking education. The successful production of the November seminars referenced above, attended by 50 and 62 persons, respectively, demonstrates the potential success of this project.*

Where did you get the idea for your project and have you visited or found information about other communities in Iowa or other states that have used similar concepts? If so, please list them.

*The University of California periodically offers a series of one-day seminars which focus upon improving winemaker and grape grower skills. Several Midwestern universities and independent producer groups offer annual seminars addressing similar topics; however, none to our knowledge presently offer them in such a condensed format. In 2001, the Iowa Grape Growers Association and Iowa Resource Conservation and Development offices produced a two-day Winemaking 101 course which was well attended; the current project seeks to address similar subjects in much greater detail.*

Are there specific steps & procedures that are planned for implementation?

*A full plan of work for this project has been constructed and is ready for implementation upon receipt of award notification. A copy of this plan is available upon request.*

Who will be involved in making the decisions and implementing the steps?

*Primary decision making and implementation operations will be performed by the Western Iowa Grape Growers Association Education Committee, the Viticulture Technician, and staff of Golden Hills Resource Conservation & Development.*

How many existing and potential collaborators, local affiliates, or entrepreneurial enterprises or service providers do you anticipate being involved?

*We anticipate an attendance of 30 individuals at each seminar, each representing one individual winery business. Key partnerships for the project have been formed between the Western Iowa Grape Growers Association, Golden Hills RC&D, Iowa State University Extension personnel, Iowa Western Community College, and the Loess Hills Alliance Economic Development Committee. In addition, the Applicant anticipates collaboration with the Iowa Grape and Wine Development Commission, the Iowa Grape Growers Association, the Nebraska Winery and Grape Growers Association, and other regional producer groups. The Applicant is presently consulting with industry leaders to enhance seminar content and format.*

Describe the Source, Type (\$ or In-Kind), and Amount of any Local Matching Resources.

*The Western Iowa Grape Growers Association Education Committee and Golden Hills RC&D have pledged a full labor donation for the production of the seminars – an estimated in-kind match of \$40,800.00. In addition, the Loess Hills Alliance Economic Development Committee has agreed to offer \$3,500.00 in scholarship funding to reduce registration fees for qualified attendees, increasing available matching funds to \$44,300.00. Additional funding needed for the production of these seminars will be derived from seminar attendance fees.*

Please provide a brief budget description of plans to spend CVC funds.

Fiscal agent: Golden Hills Resource Conservation and Development

FEIN #: 42-1293893

	Grant <u>Requested</u>
Salary (Itemize)	\$0.00
Benefits (Itemize)	\$0.00
Supplies & materials	\$0.00
Travel	
Speaker travel	\$2,340.00
-Six airline tickets at \$300.00; 6 hotel rooms at \$90.00.	
Other	
Contracted services: Speaker honorariums	\$7,650.00
-Six honorariums at \$1,275.00	
Total Direct Cost	\$9,990.00

Note: The total costs for 6 seminars is estimated at \$28,260, of which \$9,990 is requested from the CVC. The remaining expenses will be covered by seminar registration fees.

## Enology Seminars – Tentative Schedule

1. The complete winemaking process – an overview (July 10, '04?)
  - a. A basic walk-through of the processes involved and the equipment used to facilitate them
  - b. Speakers
    1. Headline: Tim Moore, Grower Relations Mgr., Canandaigua Wine Co., NY
    2. Afternoon: Dave Metz (Prospero) & Criveller Reps. with ideal small winery set-up to show
      1. Vendors from G.W. Kent and P.I. Wine Cellars if possible?
2. Sanitation: procedures, processes, tools and techniques (Sept. 11, '04?)
  - a. The importance of sanitation in a winery, and how to achieve it. Essentially, cleansing/sanitizing options for everything in a winery. How to determine that sanitation has been achieved and maintain it? Includes both wine sanitation (SO<sub>2</sub>) and winery sanitation.
  - b. Speakers
    1. Headline: Murli Dharmadhikari, PhD; Term Research Professor and Enology Advisor; Southwest Missouri State University; MO
    2. Afternoon: Ed Swanson; Owner and Operator, Cuthills Vineyards; Pierce, NE
3. Harvest and Pre-fermentation decisions and operations (Nov. 6, '04?)
  - a. How to determine optimal ripeness, prepare for crush, perform crush, and make wine-style decisions based on observed fruit characteristics. Discussion of equipment used and important features. pH, TA, brix determination, YAN, as well as sensory analysis, yeast selection, etc. Cold soaks; must handling/storage concerns.
  - b. Speakers
    1. Headline: Bruce Zoecklein, PhD; Professor and Enology Extension Specialist; Virginia Tech; VA
    2. Afternoon: Diana Burnett; Scott Laboratories, Petaluma, CA
4. Fermentation management/concerns/operations (Jan. 15, '05?)
  - a. A discussion of the different ways one achieves their enological objectives through carefully controlling primary fermentation: temp., cap management, skin contact time, etc. etc. What to do when to accomplish desired goals, what those goals are, and when to perform those certain procedures. Tools/analysis required. What can go wrong, and why?
  - b. Speakers
    1. Headline: Ellen Harkness, PhD; Analytical Technologist; Purdue University; IN
    2. Afternoon: Paul Tabor, PhD; Owner and Operator; Tabor Home Winery; Baldwin, IA
5. After Primary.... (Mar. 12, '05?)
  - a. Primary's over – now what? A discussion of wine production from the end of primary through immediate pre-bottling. ML fermentation, racking, fining, filtration, oak, aging, blending, etc. etc. Tools/analysis/techniques/processing options. Some emphasis on wines with residual sugar, as that wine style seems to best suit the midwestern palate at the moment.

- b. Speakers
  - 1. Headline: Tom Cottrell, PhD; Owner of the “Small Winery Action Team;” former Associate Professor of Enology at Cornell University; NY
  - 2. Afternoon: Alan Dillard; Winemaker; Limestone Creek Winery; IL
  
- 6. Bottling/Packaging (May 14, '05?)
  - a. How to convert liquid into saleable product. Immediate pre-bottling treatments. Bottling concerns/processes/procedures/equipment. Bottle closures, labels, capsules, etc. and the equipment used to apply/insert them.
  - b. Speakers
    - 1. Headline: Roland Riesen, PhD; Enologist; Youngstown State University; OH
    - 2. Afternoon:
      - 1. ATF Label Approval Agent; probably from Cincinnati
      - 2. Label Designer [Rita Wilmott (NE) &/or Chris Ulatowski (NY)]