

Final Report
Grant #18-13-125
“Nebraska Amateur Wineclub”

Contact Information:

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\$1060 awarded

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Issue of Interest:

Largely from personel inquiries made by myself and Marc Shoemaker, cofounder of the Amateur Winemakers of Nebraska, with wine makers and grape growers at NWGGA meetings, workshops, and harvest and pruning days, we determined there is great interest in having an amateur wine club here in Nebraska that would promote amateur wine making and provide interaction between amateur winemakers and grape growers throughout the state. These inquires failed to reveal any significant amateur wine making clubs in operation in Nebraska.

There are a large number of grape growers in the state, many of whom make home wine and also sell their grapes to the 25+ wineries here in Nebraska. Wineries depend on growers to supply quality grapes to make high quality wine, and what better way to help assure quality than for the growers to make their own wine and learn what the value of high quality grapes is for wine. It has been said that over 96 % of the quality of wine is from the grapes i.e. that good wine is grown in the vineyard.

Thus, the formation of the Amateur Winemakers of Nebraska became a reality with generous help from the Nebraska Grape Board to initially support the origination the club. The membership envelopes about half the state, from Kearney to Omaha and from Brainard to Crab Orchard. Additionally, there are many winemakers using purchased kits who benefit from networking that the club. Several such individuals have become aware of the opportunity to pick their own grapes at various club members vineyards to expand from using expensive commercial

wine kits and this is a club membership benefit.

Approach to Problem:

Marc Shoemaker, cofounder of the club, and myself contacted many friends and NWGGA members (I run the Amateur Winemaking contest at the annual NWGGA meeting in Kearney) in our initial enlistment of possible clubmembers. At the annual meeting in 2010 we created a display board that was displayed prominently at the trade show alerting attendees to the creation of the club. We got about 15 signups. Our first meeting that was held at Marc's house in Lincoln, NE was very successful, with about 20 people attending. It was decided there that bylaws would be written to guide the club, a newsletter established (see appendix), a website developed, and that monthly meetings will be set to discuss various topics relating to winemaking. Also discussed were specific topics and activities that the club should endeavor to sponsor, such as club-sponsored bus tours to surrounding winerys/vineyards, an Annual Summer Picnic and a Christmas Party each year to keep members enthused. Topics have also included issues in winemaking such as yeasts, grape and juice chemistry, wine evaluation etc. We have had invited speakers and experts to talk to the members on issues such as food pairing, wine evaluation, use of oak, wine faults etc.

Goals/Achievment of Goals:

Our goal of creating a dynamic, active, educational amateur winemaking club that would bring together individuals from all aspects of the wine industry was successfully achieved. A monthly newsletter was established (see appendix) and a web site was created (newwineclub.org). Sponsorships were achieved with Snyder Industries in Lincoln, NE, who donated two 30 gallon fermentaors to the club, and an agreement with Kirk's Brew in Lincoln was made to provide club members a 10% discount on all wine related purches in his store.

We wanted to make the club as inclusive as possible a have members from throughout the state. We likely will seek to develop a satellite club in mid nebraska to achieve this. We have done well , however, with members located from Kearney to Omaha and from Brainard to Crab Orchard.

Results, Conclusions, Lessons Learned:

The club continues with monthly meetings attracting new members interested in wine

making, supported by the \$10/year membership dues and a lot of volunteerism. Our web site and newsletters are professionally done at no cost and members routinely offer their home for meetings.

Membership is now above 25 dues paying members which includes about 8 commercial grape growers, 4 of whom are planning wineries. Numerous members (about half) are NWGGA members and are active in the Nebraska grape industry. The club has had 3 bus tours with ~30 members in each tour. These tours offer a view to the members of large scale fermentation operations while supporting the wineries with all members partaking in tasting and wine buying. We have also had club meetings at wineries enlisting their winemakers (e.g., Jim Shaw of Soaring Wings, Jim Ballard of James Arthur, Jenn Reader of Deer Springs) to give presentations to members on various aspects of winemaking. We also held a meeting at Meyer's Cork and Bottle, a wine store in Lincoln, NE, where owner Ken Meyers discussed wine/food pairing. At our first Annual Picnic, Dr. Paul Read, of the viticulture Department of UNL, discussed issues involved with wine evaluation.

Progress Achieved According to Outcome Measures:

We had a membership drive in the beginning of our first year to get at least 30 active members. That was achieved by year's end. Additionally, over 70 individuals showed interest in our activities and are on email list for club announcements. All meetings have been well attended with members always ready to help and offer suggestions for future meetings.

It is difficult to estimate the potential economic impact of this project to the Nebraska grape industry. Generating interest in grapes and winemaking through our activities and making known what the club is doing via advertising on the web, at wineries, and through email will certainly stimulate spending in the state.

Financial Report:

Our expenses are pretty much self explanatory. The fermentor was purchased to complement those donated by Snyder Industries to enable at least 30 gallon fermentations. They are shared by all club members. The \$45 fee to Arrow Bus lines was the remaining bill after the \$15/person cost for the trip.

Office supplies (Display board, paper, printer ink)	\$76.92
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Website registration and maintenance	\$377.95
Newsletter layout and design (starting Nov. 2011)	
by Imagine Studios, Lincoln, NE	\$250
Fermentors for club wines (two donated by Snyder Ind.)	\$141.24
Arrow Stage lines	\$45
Consulting (Paul Read)	\$150
Christmas and picnic supplies	\$20

Appendix:

Attached are two of the club's newsletters, one from early in the club's history, December 2010, and a more recent one, that from October 2012.



Amateur Winemakers of Nebraska

October 2012

www.newwineclub.org

Annual Wine Club Picnic!! Saturday, OCTOBER 6, 2012

Herb and Joyce McCalla have offered their home for the annual picnic. Hooray!!!

It will be at their Oak Haven Vineyard in Plattsmouth, NE (oakhavenvineyard.com) Saturday, October 6 starting at 3PM with the grill fired up at 5. **Be sure to check out their website**

Agenda:

- Election of officers.
- Financial report
- Discussion of club wines.
- Ideas for future meetings & activities.
- Fall Wine Tour?
- March wine competition in Kearney
- Membership
- Anything else!!
- Eat and drink!!

Don't forget to present your membership card at Kirk's Brew for a 10% discount.



Directions

We are located at 2115 Inman Dr. Plattsmouth, NE 68048. The best way to find us coming from the North is to take highway 75 south past Offutt AFB towards Plattsmouth. When you cross over the Platte River Bridge you should be in the right hand lane. You will see a sign that says Buccaneer Bay Road next right. When you cross the overpass take a right on Buccaneer Bay road. Go exactly 1 mile and turn left on 18th Street. (it is a gravel road to your left!) Go another mile and you will come to Inman Dr. It is a small gravel road to the right. There are 4 mailboxes next to it! Take a right on Inman drive and go up the hill and follow the road back. You will go left and then right. Our house will be on the left and our street sign will be at the drive entrance. From another direction Google their address. (402-830-6023)

Food: The club will supply hamburgers and hot dogs, so members can bring a dish and wine to share. Bring lawn chairs. The Husker game is at 7 and for those that want to watch Herb indicates a TV will be on.

Please reply to this email if you can make it so we can plan to have enough food.

Winemaking Notes

- 1. Five 750ml wine bottles equals 1 US gallons.** They don't exactly equal a gallon. More like .99 gallons... just 1.2 ounces shy, but close enough for figuring out how many bottles you're going to need. If you have 10 gallons of wine, you're going to need 50 bottles.



- 2. One pound of sugar will raise the potential alcohol of 5 gallons of wine must by 1%.** This is another handy bit of information. If you are getting ready to ferment 5 gallons of wine must, and it has a potential alcohol of 9%, just add 3 pounds of sugar to get it to 12%. Again, this is not exact but very, very close.

- 3. 2 cups of cane sugar equals 1 pound.** If you don't have a scale you can weigh your cane sugar by the cup. This is a little trick that came from cooking class, but is certainly helpful when making wine. It also ties in well with number 2.

- 4. All wine contains sulfites, whether you add it or not.** This is because sulfites are a minor byproduct of the fermentation. A normal wine fermentation will produce sulfites in a wine on the order of 10 to 15 PPM (parts-per-million). When we add sulfites as a home winemaker or as a winery, we are shooting for about 55 to 75 PPM .

- 5. Home winemaking was illegal until 1978.** When prohibition was repealed in 1933 all was still not right in the world. It was still illegal to make your own wine or beer at home. It wasn't until 45 years later, in 1978, when California Senator, Alan Cranston introduced a bill that was passed and later signed by President Jimmy Carter, that it was legal for U.S. citizens to make their own wine or beer at home.

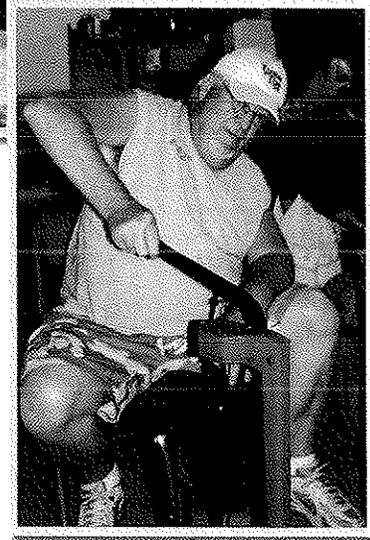
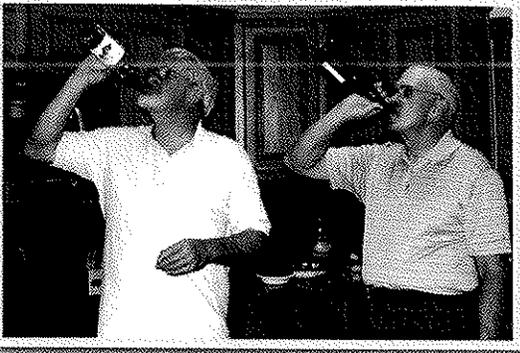
- 6. About half the sugar in a wine must is turned to CO2 gas, the other half to alcohol.** That is to say that if you add a pound of sugar to a wine must and it ferments completely, you will have added 1/2 pound of alcohol to the resulting wine. The other half floats away as CO2 gas. This division can vary a little depending on the wine yeast and fermenting conditions, etc. but almost always between 47% and 53%.

- 7. Use Honey In Place Of Sugar:** If you're into a little experimentation, you can try using different honeys in place of any sugar called for in a wine recipe. Once the sweetness of the honey is fermented away, you are left with its herbal qualities. For every pound of sugar called for in a wine recipe, you will want to use 1-1/4 pound of honey in its place.

Picture Page



April 2012
Club Wine Bottling
Party & Pot Luck



August 2012

A few photos from the meeting to pick Brianna grapes, crush and de-stem them and make 4 carboys of 6 gal. Teams of club members are creating their best Brianna wine, all from the same batch, as a contest as to who can do it best!



UPCOMING EVENTS AND EXTRAS

A NOTE FROM CLUB MEMBER PAUL PAYTON

My book is finally complete !!!!!!!

Right now it can be ordered on: www.createspace.com/3875653

In a week or so it will be available on Amazon and in three weeks Kindle.

Please, pretty please order a copy and then forward this link to all your friends.

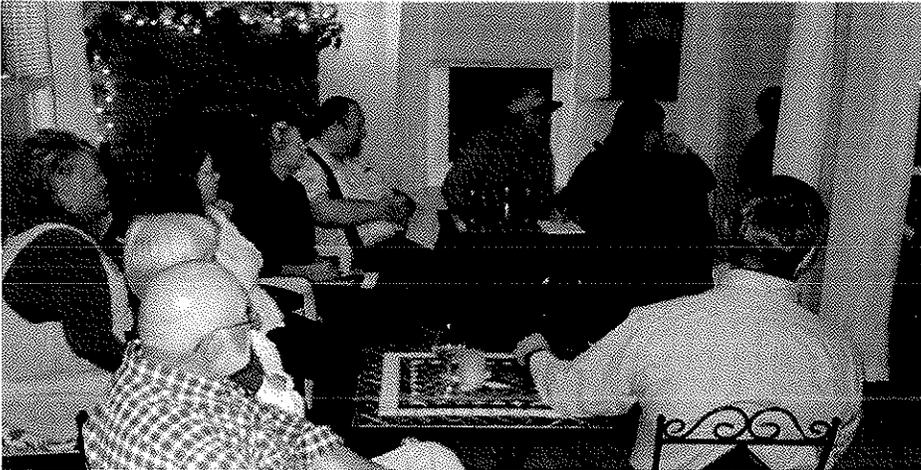
I am sure you will enjoy the book. Perhaps while having a glass of the club wine!

Thanks a bunch and best regards,
(I bought mine today, Bart)

Paul

A Special Thank You to... Jennifer & Jon Reeder at Deer Springs Winery

**November 2010
Meeting**



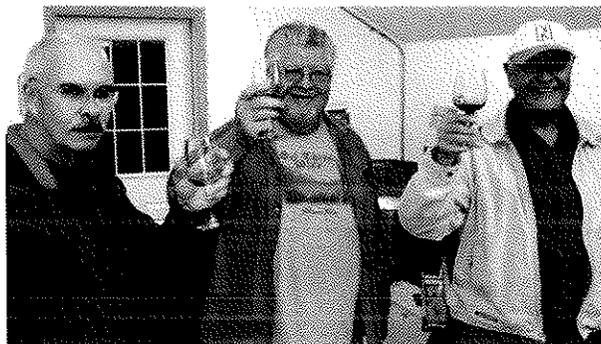
On a dark, cool November night our wine club meeting was held at Deer Springs Winery hosted by Jennifer and Jon Reeder. With 22 people in attendance, including some new members, we had fun sampling Jennifer's wine and learning about the use of oak in wine.

We even got barrel samples of her St. Croix at the conclusion.

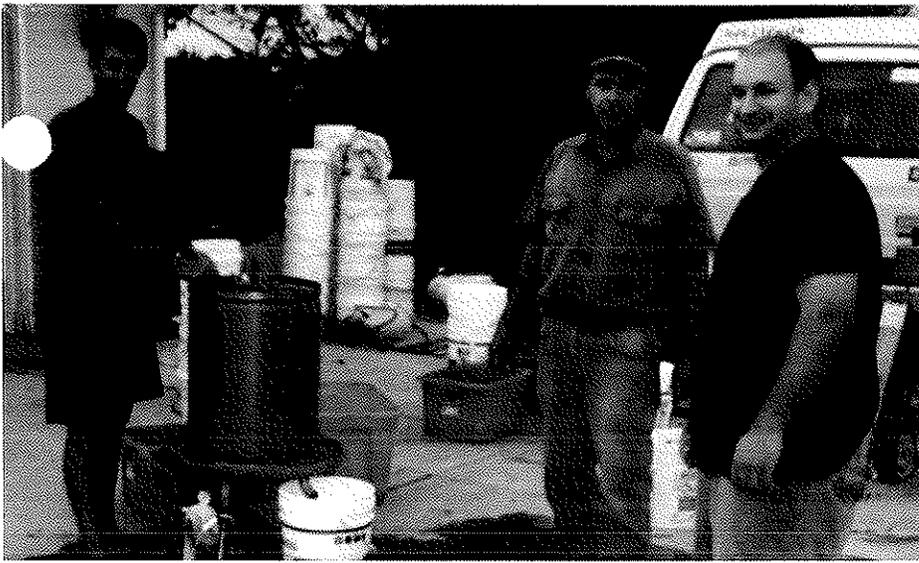
The meeting started with updates about future events and topics we are planning. Jennifer put on a presentation about oak concerning the use, types and application for wine making. Some choices for the wine maker are oak powder, chips, spirals and oak barrels as small as 5 gallons. There are varied selections of oak to use depending on your desired outcome. With French, American and Hungarian oak, and different levels of toasting, the possibilities are endless. We crossed the parking lot to the winery for some bench samples of wine with and without oak. Jennifer had a table full of sample products and bench test wine for us to sample.



It was interesting to see how oak affected the wines Jennifer makes. Each member had a favorite but more importantly they could see how oak affected the final taste.



It was a fun and informative meeting and we thank Jennifer, Jon and Deer Springs for taking their time to provide us with valuable information about the use of oak in winemaking.



Marc Shoemaker, Al Vybrini, & Anthony Ferrara pressing Brianna at the Club's August meeting

Anthony Ferrara grew up in Southern California on and around his family's winery. The Ferrara Winery, is in Escondido CA. The winery itself was established in 1932 by Anthony's great grandfather, and is one of the oldest wineries still owned and operated by the original family in California. Anthony and his brother represent the 4th generation of Ferrara winemakers, but several years back Anthony decided that although he was passionate about wine making it would never be his profession. Anthony was eager to see the rest of the country and says he has been privileged to call Montana, Hawaii and now Nebraska his home. Anthony received a degree in Forestry from the University of Montana, but as luck would have it met his beautiful wife, Erikka, at the same time and playing in the forest for months on end was not in the cards.

Anthony says he got back into wine making two years ago when a friend complained about having too many apples. Armed with a homemade press, a sand tamper, a 2x4 as a crusher, a lot of naïveté, he had just enough knowledge and tools to get him in trouble. His first batch of wine in Nebraska consisted of 5 gallons of apple wine and 5 gallons of sparkling apple cider. Anthony's second year, 2010, brought forth the creation of 53 gallons of various wines, now in different stages of the process. Anthony says it has been an exciting couple of years and the thing he loves most about Nebraska wine making is that it's in its infancy. Instead of trying to duplicate or enhance wines that generations before us created we get to be the generation that defines the industry. Anthony also loves the fact that grape varieties are still being interpreted, and that there are many wineries taking chances trying to create quality wines that haven't previously been on the market. CHEERS, ANTHONY!

December 2010 Featured Club Member

ANTHONY FERRARA

"...the thing I love most about Nebraska wine making is that it's in its infancy..."

Anthony's current wines are:

- 3 gal. Edelweiss
- 5 gal. Apple Wine
- 3 gal. Chardonnai (put the ML & oaked)
- 5 gal. Apple Cider
- 3 gal. Pumpkin wine
- 5 gal. Brianna (Slightly Oaked)
- 5 gal. Apple/Almond Sparkling wine
- 6 gal. Cayuga White (fermented on oak)
- 5 gal. Apple Spice Wine
- 5 gal. Apple Braggot (between a cider, mead, & beer)
- 6 gal. Blend of Frontenac & Syrah (very fruit forward, will most likely carbonate this and server chilled)



ADVANCED HOME WINEMAKING WORKSHOP – MOUNTAIN GROVE, MO

- What:** Advanced Home Winemaking - Topics to include laboratory determination of residual sugar (dextro-check), pH, titratable acidity, sulfite and alcohol. Basic laboratory methods as well as more accessible, use friendly methods of analysis will be featured and compared.
- When:** Wednesday, December 8, 2010
- Where:** Missouri State University Mountain Grove Cellars, 9740 Red Spring Road, Mountain Grove, MO 65711
- Cost:** \$100 each, includes course handouts, wine analysis kit and lunch. You must be 21 years of age to attend this workshop. Due to the hands-on nature of this workshop, the class is limited to 12 participants.
- Instructors:** Dr. Karl Wilker Associate Professor of Enology and MSU Winery/Distillery Manager, Mountain Grove, Missouri , Todd Frye, The Home Brewery, Ozark, Missouri C. J. Odneal Jr., Cellar Technician, Mountain Grove, Missouri Marilyn Odneal, Horticulture and Enology Outreach Mountain Grove, Missouri
- Contact:** Mayer, Pam, Workshop Facilitator at PMayer@missouristate.edu or 417-547-7533.
- Details & registration:** <http://mtngrv.missouristate.edu/mtngrvcellars/AdvHomeWinemaking.htm>

REMINDERS:

- 1) Paul Read will be giving his full Wine Evaluation 101 class Friday Nov. 19 at 6:30 to 9 PM at the Downtown Holliday Inn in Lincoln. For more info go to <http://go.unl.edu/wine>.
- 2) Also at <http://vificulture.unl.edu> find information for the **2010 Fall Nebraska Winery & Grape Workshop: Great Cultivars, Old, New, & More** occurring on Saturday Nov. 20.
- 3) The website is operational, providing all club information, and club members discussions on the forum section at <http://newwineclub.org>

GIFT EXCHANGE GUIDELINES: Participants draw numbers to determine their gift choice order. Each person takes a turn choosing a gift. The first person picks a gift, opens it and shows it to the rest of the participants. The next participant chooses either the already unwrapped gift or a new gift. If a person has their gift taken from them they get to choose another gift to unwrap, and then the turn passes, and so on, and so on. When all the gifts have been opened, the game is over.
