



Viticulture, enology and marketing for cold-hardy grapes



Policy Analysis for the Wine Industry in the US and in the Northern Grape Project States Specifically

*William C. Gartner, Canhui Hong, Bolormaa Jamiyanserun, Won Lee
University of Minnesota*

Background and Rationale: The emergence of cold hardy wine grape cultivars (primarily *vitis riparia*) in the 1990s created a new and rapidly expanding industry of small vineyard and winery enterprises in states across New England, northern New York, and the Upper Midwest. While the North American ancestry of these cultivars confers exceptional climatic adaptation and disease resistance, other challenges to production, processing, and marketing have slowed their successful commercialization in regional and national markets. Marketing tools are required to educate consumers unfamiliar with the grapes and the wine styles they produce. Consequently, the long-term viability of these new businesses requires coordinated research and extension to optimize viticulture, enological (winemaking), business management, and marketing practices including an assessment of the state of the industries. This study is intended to uncover policy differences affecting wineries in different states and to research any positive or negative influences of a specific policy.

Methods: Policies affecting wineries in all 50 states were analyzed by Canhui Hong, a graduate student at the University of Minnesota. Follow up work is being done by graduate students Bolormaa Jamiyanserun and Won Lee to create a easy to read policy comparison tool which will be web based and also to measure any economic impact, both positive and negative, related to a specific policy. The baseline survey that has been conducted provides data for the analysis.

Results: It is too early to report results from the policy work but preliminary analysis reveals that some policies are having an effect on winery sales and operations. The work is expected to be completed by July 2014. What the results mean: Expected results can be used by industry groups to lobby for policy implementation of policy change. Additionally there will be a source to compare existing policies in all 50 states. In this way the work of the Northern Grapes project will have information for wineries in all states.