

Wine Grape Market Development Program Council Meeting

Chateau de Pique Winery – Seymour, Indiana

April 8, 2008

Present:

Jim Butler, Bill Oliver, Larry Satek, Tia Agnew, Dave Schrodt, Kim Doty, Mark Easley, Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy, Dr. Suzanne Nielsen, Dr. Bob Joly, Dr. Bruce Bordelon, Jeanette Merritt, Jill Blume, John Baugh, Jerry Fankhauser; Industry – Brian Higginbotham, Sheila Kavanaugh

The spring meeting of the Wine Grape Market Development Program was called to order at 10:00 am by Council President, Jim Butler. Minutes of the November 15, 2007 Council meeting and financial information were handed out and reviewed. Both were approved as presented. The Vintage Fund gift account balance was also reported to the Council. The current balance of this unrestricted gift fund is \$9,336.39.

Old Business

The purpose and value of the Vintage Fund was discussed and Jeanette Merritt volunteered to update the brochure for this important fund. An LCD projector was purchased in 2007 with these funds which benefits educational and outreach efforts for all three programs.

Council membership was discussed as it relates to the by-laws and there was general agreement to acknowledge members by their business efforts. Thus, members will now be identified by their principal industry affiliation – “winery” or “grape grower.”

Program Updates

Updates were then given by all three program specialists. Dr. Bruce Bordelon reviewed the early season freeze injury and noted that grapes in the northern on-half of Indiana were not as affected by the cold weather this past spring. Tia Agnew asked if the state was in need of more grape growers. Discussion followed with Dr. Bordelon stating that more value is needed to make a grape vineyard profitable in Indiana. Dr. Bordelon also talked about the strained funding situation at the federal level and the potential for more vineyard damage from the future use of growth regulator-type weed control products on herbicide resistant soybeans.

Jill Blume gave an update on behalf of Dr. Christian Butzke. The Indy Wine Competition will be held on June 26-28, 2008, and will have up to 75 judges and 3,300 wine entries. It was noted that Purdue and the Indiana State Fair now have an agreement which provides one-half of Jill Blume's salary which allows her to continue her efforts to plan and organize the annual Wine Competition event. Jill mentioned that the one-half time enology research assistant position is still open at present and that 332 students are enrolled in Food Science 470 (i.e. wine appreciation course).

Jeanette Merritt gave her marketing update which included a review of new wineries. She also touched on other topics including the Indiana Ag Resource Council and the Indy Wine Competition. Jeanette explained that there is a need for more funding for winery promotion and that an impact study may be needed to document the economic benefits of the Wine Grape Program in general.

New Business

The Council discussed the need for an economic impact study and a motion was made and passed to fund up to \$50,000 for such a study. Dr. Ramaswamy will look to expertise within the College of Agriculture to submit proposals.

The Fiscal Year 2008-09 budget requests were discussed by the program specialists and Council members. Travel costs have risen substantially in the last year or so but the increases provided to the programs last fiscal year seem to be appropriate at this time. Jeanette Merritt made a special request for \$7,650 for a marketing video. A motion was made and seconded to fund this request – the motion

passed. After more discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the Fiscal Year 2008-09 Program budget as presented with the addition of the marketing special request and the approval to move forward with funding an economic impact study.

Jim Butler talked about the request from the Indiana State Department of Agriculture for stakeholder feedback. Jim and others will look into providing such feedback from the wine industry point of view. Possible locations and dates for a fall Council meeting were discussed and there is interest in having this meeting on the campus at Purdue University in mid-November.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:36 pm and was followed by a tour of *Chateau de Pique Winery*.