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NEWS RELEASE

Indiana Wines Continue to Climb the Vine of Success

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. – Indiana wineries and grape growers continue to prosper from the fruits of their labor with a sales increase of over 26 percent for 1998. Total gallons sold reached 156,308, up from 123,300 gallons sold in 1997. Sales of Indiana wine have increased over 125 percent in the past five years.

Indiana vintners are pleased with the growing success of the wine industry. "The continued rise in sales figures shows the increasing importance of the Indiana wineries," said Steve Thomas, owner of Thomas Family Winery in Madison, Ind. "The growth in the Indiana wine industry is a tribute to the Hoosier spirit. Not only in the wine producers, but also in the visitors who take time to learn what is in their backyard and enjoy Indiana wine with family at home."

According to Bruce Bordelon, a viticulturist (grape scientist) at Purdue University's horticulture department, Indiana agriculture has seen a 300 percent increase in winegrape acreage since 1991. Over 60 acres of winegrapes were established in 1997-98, bringing total acreage to 165 acres. Eight new growers joined the vineyard industry in 1997-98, planting 24 acres.

Several potential new commercial wineries are in various development stages for southern, central and northeast Indiana. Richard Vine, enologist (wine scientist) and food science professor at Purdue, estimates that two to five more Indiana wineries will open within the next few years. Indiana's newest winery, Dune Ridge in Porter, Ind., opened in June 1998 bringing the total number of Indiana wineries to 19.

For an *Indiana Wineries* brochure containing maps and contact information, call the Indiana Wine Grape Council at 800-832-WINE.

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