

FINGER LAKES GRAPE PROGRAM STRATEGIC PLAN 2001-2006

Adopted by Grower Advisory Committee
AUGUST 21, 2001

Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Role
Tim Martinson	Area Extension Specialist & Team Leader	Finger Lakes Grape Program Co-chair, Cornell Fruit Program Work Team
Jim Bedient	Grower, Branchport	Grape Program Advisory Committee
Dave Stamp	Lakewood Wineries	Grape Program Advisory Committee
Tom Collins	Director, Grower Relations, Canandaigua Wine Company	Grape Program Advisory Committee
Rodger Francis	Farm Credit Specialist	Farm Credit of NY
Bob Pool	Dept. Horticultural Sciences, Cornell University	Advisory committee Chair – Viticulture Working Group Fruit Program Work team
Peter Landre	Executive Director – Yates Co. Cooperative Extension Association	Advisory Committee Chair – Grape Program Administrative Management Group
Dan Harris	Cornell Cooperative Extension Administration	Cornell Extension Representative
Les Malcovich	Malcovitch & Associates Consulting	Facilitator for grower focus groups

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
4 FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

Group Number 1

Hector Fire Hall

Wednesday, March 14, 2001

10:30 AM to Noon

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Joe Ottatti | Burdett | Grape Juice (organic) |
| 2. Richard Figiel | Lodi | Silver Thread Vineyard (organic) |
| 3. Eric Hazlitt | Hector | Sawmill Creek Vineyards |
| 4. John Wagner | Lodi | Wagner Vineyards |
| 5. Cameron Hosmer | Ovid | Hosmer Winery |
| 6. Bill Dalrymple | Ovid | Dalrymple Vineyards |
| 7. Todd Saltsman | Hector | Chateau Lafayette Reneau |
| 8. Allen Davis | Hector | Davis Fruit Farm |
| 9. Mark Wagner | Lodi | Lamoreaux Landing Wine Cellars |
| 10. John Santos | Hector | Hazlitt 1852 Vineyards |
| 11. Jim Doolittle | Trumansburg | Frontenac Point Vineyard |
| 12. Steve Bond | Hector | Bond Vineyard |
| 13. Tom Barbolt | Interlaken | Cayuga Creek Vineyards (new grower) |
| 14. Chris Verrill | Ovid | Falls Farm and Vineyard (new grower) |
| 15. David Wiemann | Ovid | Sheldrake Point Winery |
| 16. Brent Eva | Ovid | Sheldrake Point Winery |
| 17. Tim Martinson | | |
| 18. Bob Pool | | |

Group Number 2

Glenora Wine Cellars Veraison Restaurant

Wednesday, March 15, 2001

3:30 to 5:30 PM

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Jim Ritter | Dundee | Ritter Farms |
| 2. David Stamp | Watkins Glen | Lakewood Vineyards |
| 3. Philip Crooks | Dundee | Springledge Corp. |
| 4. Neil Simmons | Penn Yan | Simmons Vineyards |
| 5. Earl Andrews | Dundee | Glenora Farms Inc. |
| 6. Gene Pierce | Dundee | Glenora Wine Cellars |
| 7. Dan Harris | Cornell | Cornell Extension Representative |
| 8. Peter Landre | Penn Yan | CCE-Yates |
| 9. Bob Pool | Geneva | Cornell University Geneva |
| 10. Sayre Fulkerson | Dundee | Fulkerson Winery |
| 11. Julie Jessup | Dundee | Blueberry Hill farm |
| 12. Tim Martinson | | |

Group Number 3

Branchport Fire Hall

Thursday, March 15, 2001

10:30 AM to Noon

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------|---|
| 1. Bill Culver | Branchport | Farmer |
| 2. Bob Morse | Bluff Point | Vineyardist |
| 3. Daren Simmons | Bluff Point | Vineyardist |
| 4. Harold Tones | Branchport | Vineyards |
| 5. Tim Pinneo | Bluff Point | Vineyard and Agribusiness |
| 6. Bill Erickson | Potter | Vineyard |
| 7. Paul H. Enos | Bluff Point | Vineyardist |
| 8. Ray Emery | Branchport | Vineyardist |
| 9. Scott Osborn | Penn Yan | Fox Run winery/Vineyard |
| 10. Tom Mitchell | Penn Yan | Vineyardist -grapes and juice processor |
| 11. Bob Pool | | |
| 12. Tim Martinson | | |

Group Number 4

Pultney Town Hall

Thursday, March 15, 2001

3:30 - 5:30 PM

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|---|
| 1. Bill Dunn | Vineyard Manager | Canandaigua Wine Co. |
| 2. Don Peek | Pultney | Grower |
| 3. Dale Dickerson | Prattsburg | Grower |
| 4. Fred Frank | Hammondsport | Dr. Konstantin Frank Winery |
| 5. Paul Brahm | Naples | Grower R&S Vineyards |
| 6. Glen Shaw | Canandaigua | Wishing Well Vineyards |
| 7. Rich Jerome | Naples | Jerome's U-Pick |
| 8. Art Hunt | Branchport | Hunt Country Winery |
| 9. Vince D'Ingianni | Keuka Village | Eastside Vineyards |
| 10. Mike Doyle | Hammondsport | Taylor Vineyards/Pleasant Valley Winery |
| 11. Dana Keeler | Hammondsport | Heron Hill Vineyard |
| 12. Jay Hardenburg | Field Representative | National Grape/Welch's |
| 13. Jim Pizura | Pultney | Grower |
| 14. Dorothee Goldman | Hammondsport | Grower |
| 15. John Brahm | Naples | Arbor Hill Grapery |
| 16. Bob Pool | | |
| 17. Tim Martinson | | |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Finger Lakes Grape Program Strategic Plan 2001-2006

The Finger Lakes Area Grape Program provides educational programs supporting short and long range profitability of Finger Lakes grape growers, primarily in Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, and Yates counties. In 2000, the program Grower Advisory Committee agreed to develop a strategic five year plan to identify emerging issues and trends in the industry, and to outline how the program should respond to current and future challenges in planning its activities over the next five years.

A strategic planning committee comprised of advisory committee members, an industry processor representative, a representative of Farm Credit of NY, and Cornell representatives from Horticultural Sciences and Extension Administration was convened to seek input and develop a plan for consideration by the advisory committee. The committee decided to seek input through several small-group meetings moderated by Les Malcovitch, a business consultant from Elmira. From this input the committee identified five priority areas upon which the program should focus over the next five years. The plan was reviewed and approved by the Finger Lakes Grape Program Grower Advisory Committee at their August 21, 2001 meeting.

Focus group meetings, attended by 51 growers and industry representatives were held at 4 locations. At these meetings, growers were asked questions in the following three areas (*complete list in report text*):

- In what direction is the industry moving, and what are major opportunities and threats?
- What do you see ahead for your business in the next 5 years?
- What services do you want from the Finger Lakes Grape Program?

Industry trends. Tourism is driving growth in the premium small winery segment, with sales at some wineries growing at 10-20% a year. Markets for bulk juice and wine grapes have stabilized, and are showing modest growth, but with little prospect of increasing price per ton and grower returns. Growers for these two markets (many grow for both) have divergent goals for their operations. For bulk wine and juice grape growers, goals include increasing production efficiency through higher yields or lower costs, removing less profitable varieties, expanding acreage through purchase or lease of existing vineyards, and diversifying into different varieties and markets. Growers of premium varieties (many of whom are also winery owners) are interested in increasing quality, expanding production, planting more *Vitis vinifera* grapes, having the right varietal mix, and establishing markets and a reputation beyond the local market. Among growers nearing retirement, a major goal is to position their farm to be a saleable entity that will provide them with adequate retirement income.

Challenges. Growers cited large plantings in California (leading to a supply glut), shortage of high-demand grapes, the aging grower population, potential for conflict with non-farming neighbors, too much product diversity, inconsistent quality, overplanting of some varieties, and increased regulation as challenges facing the industry. In their own operations, growers cited as top challenges:

- Locating a reliable labor supply
- Access to capital to finance growth
- Having the right varietal mix
- Increasing quality
- Communicating with non-farming neighbors about environmental impacts of grape production

Finger Lakes Grape Program Strengths and Weaknesses. The mission of the Finger Lakes grape program is to provide education and technical assistance supporting increased profitability and sustainability of grape production in the Finger Lakes. The program does this by providing access to research-based information through newsletters, field meetings, and an annual convention. In addition, the program identifies and communicates research needs to faculty, and initiates applied research and demonstration projects addressing priority questions of the industry. Finally, the program services technical inquiries through field visits, telephone inquiries, and by processing soil and tissue samples through Cornell's nutrient analysis laboratories.

Participants rated the program positively overall. In subject matter, they cited production technology (Integrated Pest Management, fertility management, vineyard establishment, training systems and canopy management and spray technology) as the program's strength. Labor and farm business management, both mentioned as key issues to growers, were identified as areas in which the program should be strengthened.

Impact areas. Five general areas were identified as priorities by the committee for the next five years:

- Continue core program activities
- Production technology
- Business and financial management
- Labor
- Public issues awareness

Program Goals: Five goals were identified. Specific action steps are detailed in the plan.

Goal 1: Continue and strengthen core program activities identified through this review.

Goal 2: The program's major focus will be production technology

Goal 3: Strengthen the Finger Lakes Grape Program's capacity to deliver financial and business management education to the Finger Lakes grape industry.

Goal 4: Provide programs supporting development of a stable and productive permanent and seasonal labor force.

Goal 5: Increase public awareness of positive environmental and economic impacts of grape production.

FINGER LAKES GRAPE PROGRAM

Strategic Plan 2001-2006

Introduction

The Finger Lakes grape industry is changing. The small winery segment is continuing its growth, and new growers are entering the industry. While the bulk wine and juice markets remain strong, the demand for traditional wine varieties is changing. The next five years will be critical for the industry, as a significant number of growers near retirement, as others position their farms to be viable and profitable in the future, and as new growers and wineries enter the industry.

Cornell Cooperative Extension's Finger Lakes Grape Program provides informal education supporting short and long range profitability of Finger Lakes grape growers. Since its inception in the 1960's it has provided growers in the 5 county region served by the program with information on cultural practices, pest management, production economics, and vineyard establishment through newsletters, field meetings, applied research projects and the annual *Finger Lakes Grape Grower's Convention and Trade Show*. Given the changing face of the Finger Lakes industry, how should the Finger Lakes grape program position itself to serve the future needs of the industry?

In 2000, the Finger Lakes Grape Program grower advisory committee agreed to develop a strategic plan to identify emerging issues and trends in the industry, and outline how the program should respond to current and future challenges in planning its activities over the next several years. A strategic planning committee comprised of advisory committee members, an extension association director, a Cornell researcher, a farm credit representative, and a representative from Extension Administration was convened to seek input and develop a plan for the consideration of the advisory committee. The committee decided to seek input from growers through several small meetings on future trends in the industry, in their farm operations, and their future needs for extension programs supporting their operations. Les Malcovitch, a consultant from Elmira, served as facilitator for these four meetings. From this grower input, the committee identified several priority areas upon which to focus efforts over the next five years.

Industry Input

Meetings were held in Hector, Glenora, Branchport and Pulteney. At these meetings, the 51 persons in attendance were asked the following questions:

Industry trends:

- In what direction do you see the industry moving?
- What are the major opportunities for the industry?
- What are the major threats to the industry?

Your business (farm, winery, or combination).

- What will your business look like in 5 years?
- What are your top priorities over the next 5 years?
- What are the greatest challenges facing your business?
- What would your ideal business look like?
- What changes in ownership do you see?

Finger Lakes Grape Program

- Where do you go for information?
- Are your information needs met? What are the gaps?
- What has the FLG program done for you?
- What should it be doing?
- What should it not be doing?
- What educational topics are most important to your operation?

Final comments?

- What additional comments or observations do you have?

The Finger Lakes Industry

Current situation. The Finger Lakes grape industry is diverse. Over 30 varieties of grapes are grown on 10,000 acres. This acreage is divided among Native *Vitis labruscana* types (65%), interspecific hybrids ('French hybrids', 25%) and *Vitis vinifera* (10%) cultivars. Grapes are sold to large processors (Canandaigua, Royal, National Grape Cooperative, Bully Hill) and about 50 small farm wineries. Small wineries use 11-15% of the tonnage produced. Prices received for grapes vary from \$230-300/ton for Natives, \$260-500 for Hybrids, and \$1,000-\$1,700/ton for *V. vinifera* varieties. Demographically, many growers are over 50 years old. Many farms are in the 50-100 acre range, with around 25 producing more than 100 acres of grapes.

Trends. Tourism is driving growth in the small winery segment of the industry. The fifty + wineries in the area form a critical mass that draws more tourists into the region and provides economic spinoffs for associated businesses. Compared to other wine growing regions, land in the Finger Lakes is relatively inexpensive, so many in the industry expect an influx of new growers and wineries investing in the region. Growth in sales at existing wineries and startup operations is creating demand for new plantings, particularly of *vinifera* grapes. Over the next several years, supply is expected to be tight, and there is uncertainty about whether the supply of what's in the ground will meet the demand. Some see the potential for marketing 'signature' wines in a broader area, or creating a market and reputation for 'ultra premium' (>\$15/bottle) varieties such as Riesling, Pinot Noir, and Cabernet Franc.

Demand for bulk juice and wine varieties has stabilized since the early 90's, and prices of natives hybrids (particularly reds) have stabilized or recovered. Continued demand from major processors for the bulk wine and juice grape markets, and growth in specialty products such as kosher wines have increased grower optimism about this sector of the industry. Some see markets for natives and bulk hybrid varieties growing modestly, but with little room for increases in price per ton. A strong flavor profile for Concord and Niagara juice grapes was seen as an 'eastern' advantage over competing grapes from Washington state.

For both bulk and premium wine grape growers, increasing quality, controlling costs, and having the right mix of varieties and markets was seen as the key to the future of the Finger Lakes industry.

Challenges. Several challenges to the industry's future growth and profitability were identified:

- Large plantings of varietal wine grapes in California and other parts of the world may lead to a worldwide glut of high quality wine grapes, making grapes produced in New York uncompetitive in the national market. Inexpensive but high quality wines are expected to be widely available nationally and internationally.
- Local grape shortages in the Finger Lakes may stall growth of the small winery segment.

- Growth will increase demand for labor (vineyard, winery, retail). No one is sure where the labor supply will be coming from.
- A core group of grape growers is aging, and there is a perceived lack of a 'next generation' of industry leaders and growers.
- The potential for conflicts with non-farming neighbors (and winery customers) over spraying, environmental issues is increasing.
- Too much diversity of production in the Finger Lakes could impede development of a perceived 'regional identity' for the industry.
- Inconsistent quality due to variable weather conditions and inconsistent vineyard management could adversely affect the industry's reputation.
- Some varieties could be overplanted, lowering returns to growers.
- Increased regulation and taxation by governments could lower profitability.

Individual farms and businesses

Priorities. When asked about priorities, goals, and challenges for their individual businesses, growers expressed different opinions, depending upon their age, geographic location within the Finger Lakes, their varietal mix and markets. Some identified an increasing divide in the industry among those that grow for the bulk juice and wine market and those that grow for the premium wine grape market.

Among those who grow primarily bulk varieties, maximizing profitability by increasing productivity while reducing costs was a major management goal. Among the goals cited for the next five years were: removing less profitable varieties, expanding by purchasing or leasing other vineyards, keeping current vineyards productive, and (for some) diversifying into different varieties and markets. For those nearing retirement, a major goal was to position their farm to be a saleable entity that will provide them with adequate retirement income.

For those with wineries or growing for the premium winery markets, expanding production, planting more *vinifera*, having the right varietal mix, increasing quality, and establishing good working relationships among growers and small wineries were cited as top priorities. These growers also tended to talk about creating 'brand awareness' or regional identity for the Finger Lakes as producer of top quality wines, or increasing their reputation as growers for producing quality grapes that wineries want.

Top challenges. Several challenges were identified:

- **Labor.** Locating a reliable labor supply was cited by all groups as a top challenge. Over the past 10 years, the industry has become dependent upon migrant labor for much of the pruning, tying, and suckering that used to be done by local people. The adoption of new canopy management techniques, thinning, and hand harvest for some premium varieties has increased year-round demand for labor, while local labor pools shrink. Expansion of wineries and new businesses has also created a demand for 'middle management' employees, such as vineyard managers, tasting room managers, and cellar masters. Personnel management and Human Resources (e.g. devising benefit, insurance and retirement plans for employees) were mentioned by winery owners as a challenge.
- **Capital.** Financing growth and finding operating capital for establishing vineyards is a challenge for many. Some who would like to expand or diversify their operations are hampered by a lack of access to capital.
- **Varietal Mix.** Knowing what varieties will be in demand in the future, and improving communication with processors is a challenge.
- **Neighbor relations.** Farming in the midst of lake cottages and among a significant suburban population unfamiliar with farming practices was cited as a concern.

Changes in ownership. Many existing vineyard operators see themselves retiring within the next five years. Some will hand down farms to the next generation, but others will be seeking to sell their farms. New growers are entering the industry, many with little background in farming, but with money to invest. Some expect to see expansion through smaller acreage new farms with high-value grapes, or through a major investment by wealthy investors in the Finger Lakes. Land values on the warmer sites along Seneca and Cayuga lakes are expected to rise.

The Finger Lakes Grape Program

Mission. The Finger Lakes Grape Program exists to provide education and technical assistance supporting increased profitability and sustainability of grape production in the Finger Lakes by:

- Providing access to research based information from Cornell University and other sources
- Identifying and communicating research needs to faculty and staff with grape-related responsibilities
- Distributing timely information to the industry on production, pest management and related topics
- Initiating applied research and demonstration projects addressing questions related to the industry
- Facilitating communication with research programs at Cornell University
- Interacting with the wine extension program

Staffing and funding. The program staff consists of a Viticulture extension educator and team leader (Tim Martinson), and a half-time secretary, both of whom are housed at the Yates County Cooperative Extension Association offices in Penn Yan. The program also has input from the grape IPM specialist, Tim Weigle, housed in Fredonia. Funding for the program comes from 5 county extension associations (Ontario, Seneca, Schuyler, Steuben and Yates, 72%), program generated income (8%) and Cornell University (20%). Administrative oversight is provided by Cornell Cooperative Extension Administration in Ithaca. The 2000 budget was \$73,998. Program direction is provided through a Grower Advisory Committee, with two representatives from each of the participating counties.

Enrollment/Activities. The program has 168 enrollees from the 5 county area, and 75 newsletter subscribers from outside of the 5-county area, 30 of whom are in NY, and 40 from outside of New York. Program activities include:

- **Information:** The program produces a monthly newsletter, *Finger Lakes Vineyard Notes*, which goes out to a mailing list of 350, a weekly e-mail message that goes out to 220 e-mail addresses, several field meetings during the growing season, and an annual Convention and Trade Show.
- **Applied research and demonstration projects.** The program collaborates with Cornell researchers to set up on-farm research and demonstration projects on pest management, production issues, soil fertility, and agricultural environmental management.
- **Services:** Farm visits are made to enrollees in the 5 county area for consultation on site selection, vineyard establishment, production practices, and diagnosis of pest and fertility problems. The program receives approximately 250 soil and petiole samples, processes them through the Cornell tissue and soil analysis laboratories and writes letters explaining results and recommendations. The program services telephone inquiries from growers within and outside of the Finger Lakes.
- **Collaboration:** The program works with research programs in viticulture, enology, plant pathology, entomology and production economics, and maintains contact with similar programs in Western NY, Long Island, the Hudson Valley, southeast Pennsylvania, and Virginia. It also has worked extensively with local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and with the New York Wine and Grape Foundation.

Comments from Focus Groups on Program Strengths and Weaknesses

Information Sources. Growers get their information from a variety of sources. The Finger Lakes Grape Program was cited as a major source, and the conferences, newsletters, weekly e-mail, 'meetings like this' organized by the program were all mentioned. Other sources included processor representatives, trade publications, neighbors/peers, 'coffee shop', suppliers, agrichemical dealers, and 'Wineries Unlimited' (a trade show sponsored by Vineyard and Winery Management).

Strengths. The program was viewed positively as an impartial source of information ('Extension is best-third party - no financial gain from advice they provide', 'extension is not just reactive - they are proactive'), that provides access to research information and fosters communication throughout the industry. Growers specifically cited *Finger Lakes Vineyard Notes* newsletter, the e-mail *Vineyard Updates*, the grape harvest listing, equipment demonstrations and the annual pest management field meeting as valuable. Several mentioned the information they receive from outside speakers and areas through the program as being valuable. In terms of subject area, growers thought the program's strength to be in production areas such as pest management, fertility management, pruning, training and canopy management, and spray technology.

Weaknesses. Labor management and farm business management were cited as major issues in all of the focus groups. The program's activities in these areas are limited to collecting grape prices from area processors, working with Dr. Gerald White's program to develop estimates of production and vineyard establishment costs, and providing basic summaries of production trends in NY and nationally. There was the sense that many of the issues facing growers - keeping costs down for bulk grape production, adopting more intensive management (and more hand labor) to increase quality of premium wine grapes, financing new plantings, marketing to several processors, attracting and keeping migrant and 'middle management' labor, and developing retirement strategies - have an economic focus. The program's access to business management expertise and programming is limited.

Impact Areas:

#1. Continue and strengthen core program activities. The mix of educational activities, including the newsletter, e-mail updates, field meetings, grape harvest listing, collaboration with growers and researchers on demonstration projects, and troubleshooting/farm visits is valued by program clientele and should be continued.

Specific activities suggested, and ranking by committee:

Priority	Range	Action
1	Continuing	Continue producing monthly newsletter
2	Continuing	Continue vineyard updates e-mail messages
3	Intermediate	Help organize a large winter conference like 'Viticulture 2000' every 3 to 5 years.
4	Continuing	Continue harvest listing of 'grapes available',
5	Intermediate	Explore adding content on market trends and production statistics in other areas, web sites to e-mail updates, Establish 'Kiplinger-type' news digests about industry trends, market trends for wine and juice grapes
6	Long	Expand listing to include bulk wine, classified ads
7	Continuing	Continue recorded Code-a-Phone messages
-	Continuing	Provide exposure to growing practices in other regions of the US and world through outside speakers, travel to other production areas, and tours

#2. Production technology. Overall goals of growers are to increase quality, learn production techniques for new varieties, maintain production efficiency on existing acreage, and do so with an emphasis on sustainability and environmentally friendly production practices. Finger Lakes growers recognize the need to adopt technology that will be globally competitive and environmentally sustainable. Providing research-based information on pest management, fertility management, vineyard establishment, and cultural practices is a major function of the program. Three major themes are:

- Focus programming on production efficiency for native and bulk hybrid varieties.
- Educate growers on converting to different or new (hybrid or vinifera) varieties.
- For premium wine grapes, focus programming on cultural practices that increase quality.

Specific activities suggested, and ranking by committee:

Priority	Term	Action
1	Short	Continue to emphasize IPM
2	Intermediate	Thinning and crop estimation for premium grape varieties
3	Intermediate	Balancing yield and quality for premium wine varieties
4	Intermediate/Long	For bulk varieties, need better ways to mechanize pruning, thinning.
5	Short	Continue emphasizing spray technology (machinery, technology, materials)
6	Intermediate	Demonstration trials for foliar fertilizers, information on foliar fertilizers
7	Intermediate	Tiling and site preparation for vineyard establishment
8	Intermediate	Programs on Bird and Mammal control
9	Long	Education on organic growing practices

#3. Business and Financial Management. New and existing growers are making substantial investments in new plantings, using different training systems, cultural practices and varieties than those used with traditional varieties. Bulk juice and wine producers continue to need information on economic consequences of production practices to maintain competitiveness with other producers, while growers nearing retirement are looking for ways to maximize value of their farm assets for transfer to a younger generation or sale. With many growers also owning wineries or selling grapes to a variety of markets, financial management is becoming more complex and important to maintaining viability of the vineyard enterprise. There is a need to strengthen the programs capacity to deliver farm and business management related education beyond periodic updates on production costs. Pursuing some of the programming initiatives detailed below will require access to additional staff or expertise.

Specific activities suggested, and ranking by committee:

Priority	Term	Action
(unranked)	Continuing	Establish alliances with other institutions for programming
1	Intermediate	Explore possibility of securing additional staff to develop business management related programming for wine grapes.
2	Short	Economics of production practices (that raise quality)
3	Intermediate	More 'cost of production' studies
4	Short	Establish retirement planning seminars.
5	Intermediate	Provide growers with more marketplace information
6	Intermediate	Human resources- how to be competitive in labor market place
7	Intermediate	How to finance new plantings
8	Long	Annual update on wine grape industry for financial institutions
9	Long	Develop or adapt PC program for vineyard/financial management and record keeping

#4. Labor. Potential shortages of seasonal and permanent vineyard labor are considered to be a major obstacle to continued growth and development of the industry. Growers are faced with the need to recruit, train and retain a quality seasonal and permanent labor force. Over the past 5 years, Spanish-speaking laborers have increasingly been used for seasonal tasks such as pruning, tying, suckering and hand harvest of some varieties. Intensive canopy management of premium wine grapes is increasing the demand for hand labor. Growth of small wineries is increasing the demand for skilled workers that can manage vineyards and equipment.

Specific activities suggested, and ranking by committee:

Priority	Range	Action
(unranked)	Continuing	Establish alliances with other institutions for programming
1	Short	Train growers in communicating with Spanish-speaking workers
2	Intermediate	Explore partnerships to establish training programs for vineyard managers and cellar workers with area vocational training centers.
3	Intermediate	Explore how to recruit young people to enter the industry.
4	Long	Set up 4 year Enology/Viticulture program at Cornell
5	Short	Produce Spanish-language video on pruning and canopy management
6	Intermediate	Train migrants for seasonal tasks

#5. Public Issues Awareness. Most Finger Lakes vineyards are on slopes surrounding Canandaigua, Keuka, Seneca, and Cayuga lakes. They share this environment and the lake resource with tourists, lake residents, and summer cottage owners, many of whom are concerned about environmental impacts of production practices on their property and water quality. Watershed-based environmental planning is increasingly focused on preventing non point source pollution, and pressures on growers to adopt practices that minimize water quality impacts will increase. Two specific actions that can be taken are:

- Ensure wide distribution of ‘Conservation Practices for Vineyards’ video and publication to area schools and organizations.
- Serve as a resource for presenting factual information on environmental impacts to media, community groups, and secondary schools.

Specific activities suggested, and ranking by committee:

Priority	Term	Action
1	Continuing	Increase public awareness of low environmental impact of grape production practices.
2	Short	Distribute video ‘Conservation Practices for Vineyards’ to schools, environment/agriculture teachers.
3	Continuing	Serve as a resource for programs put on by area organizations (e.g. Seneca Lake Pure Waters, KLA)
(unranked)	Continuing	Establish alliances with other institutions for programming

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
Finger Lakes Grape Program
 2001-2006 strategic Plan

Goal 1: The program will continue and strengthen core program activities identified through this review.

Action Step	Responsible	Time Frame	Support
1. Continue monthly <i>Finger Lakes Vineyard Notes</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In depth articles on production practices, markets, and news of interest to growers • Expanded <i>Harvest Issue</i> in October 	Martinson	Continuing	Tim Weigle, grape IPM specialist, Cornell Faculty, other extension programs
2. Continue e-mail <i>Finger Lakes Vineyard Updates</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short, timely updates on ‘current situation’, including pest management, canopy management, fertility, crop weather, upcoming meetings • Twice weekly April-July; weekly, July – Sept, as needed through winter. 	Martinson	Continuing	NEWA weather data, share material with Lake Erie Program, support from Cornell faculty
3. Continue e-mail <i>Finger Lakes Grape Listing</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service listing of ‘grapes for sale’ and ‘grapes wanted’ • July – end of harvest 	Martinson	Continuing	Grape Program secretary
4. Plan and organize annual <i>Finger Lakes Grape Grower Convention and Trade Show</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include ‘new grower’ component every 2nd year 	Martinson, Advisory Committee	Annually	Faculty, outside speakers, Vendors, and Program Secretary
5. Organize with other organizations an expanded winter meeting like <i>Viticulture 2000</i> one year in the next 5	Martinson	2003 or 2004	NY Wine and Grape Foundation, Lake Erie Regional Grape Extension program, Viticulture working group, Enology program, grower advisory committee
6. Continue organizing field meetings and twilight meetings during growing season. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring Pest Management meeting • Monthly, 3-4 total 	Martinson	Annually	Speakers, advisory committee
7. Participate or lead on-farm research and demonstration projects on questions of interest to industry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 projects per year 	Martinson	Annually	Cooperators
8. Establish and continue cooperative exchanges and linkages with grape programs in New York (Lake Erie, Hudson Valley, Long Island), the Northeast (Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and Ohio) and California.	Martinson	Continuing	Colleagues in Northeast and elsewhere

Goal 2: The program's major focus will be production technology.

Program Focus	Responsible	Time Frame	Support
<p>1. Programming for bulk native and hybrid varieties will focus on production efficiency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient and environmentally sustainable use of inputs (Integrated Pest Management, soil fertility) • Spray technology • Use of mechanization for pruning, crop control • Maximizing production while meeting quality standards 	Martinson	Continuing	Tim Weigle, grape IPM specialist, Cornell Faculty, other extension programs
<p>2. Programming for premium wine varieties will focus on cultural practices that increase quality, while maintaining profitable production levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canopy management and training systems • Balancing yield and quality • Crop estimation, thinning 	Martinson	Continuing	
<p>3. Educate new and established growers on converting to different or new varieties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site and variety selection • Vineyard establishment and training 	Martinson	Continuing	
<p>4. Increase collaboration and programming done in cooperation with the Enology program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effect of production practices on wine quality 	Martinson, New Extension Enologist	Continuing	A new Extension Enologist associated with Thomas Henick-Kling's enology program is currently being hired.

Goal 3: Strengthen the Finger Lakes Grape Program's capacity to deliver financial and business management education to the Finger Lakes grape industry.

1: Explore the possibility of securing additional staff to develop business management-related programming for vineyard and winery businesses.

Action Step	Responsible	Time Frame	Support/ Comments
1. Identify industry needs with program stakeholders	Martinson, Advisory committee, Viticulture working group (Cornell), Dan Harris	March, 2000	Focus group meetings with 51 industry participants held in spring, 2000; results detailed in this plan.
2. Incorporate request for new staff into statewide staffing plan of Cornell's Fruit Program Work Team.	Martinson Bob Pool (chair, Viticulture work group) Terence Robinson, (Chair, Fruit Program Work Team)	Spring 2001	Request for a business management/marketing Educator covering wine grapes and a wide geographic area (including Hudson Valley) incorporated into State Fruit Staffing Plan for Agricultural Initiative.
3. Share industry input with administrators and decision-makers	Martinson, CER Dan Harris	Fall 2001	Distribute this plan and supporting documentation to Extension Administration, Fruit program work team, industry leaders.
4. Work with industry representatives, advisory committee, and Cornell administration to develop position description	Martinson Fruit Program Work Team, Viticulture working group Dan Harris (or CER), Dr. Jerry White of Applied Economics and Management Dept.	2002	If Agriculture Initiative funded, and support for a position of this type is secured.

2. Establish alliances with other programs for programming.

Action Step	Responsible	Time Frame	Support/ Comments
1. Work with other Cornell programs to develop joint programs.	Martinson Jerry White	Annually	Potential Cornell collaborators include: Barry Shaffer, Lake Erie Regional Grape Program Tom Maloney, Labor/ Workforce Management Wen Fei Uva, Horticultural Marketing Discuss, plan with Jerry White
2. Identify opportunities to organize and sponsor programs with outside agencies	Martinson	Annually	Rodger Francis, Farm Credit Financial planners
3. Work with other universities on multi-state projects	Martinson	As appropriate	

3. Develop programs in the following priority areas

Program Area
1. Economics of vineyard and winery startup operations
2. Retirement planning
3. Transfer of Assets to family, farm sales
3. Human resources and labor
4. Financing business expansion, new plantings
5. World market conditions for wine and grape varieties

Goal 4. Provide programs supporting development of a stable and productive permanent and seasonal labor force.

1. Improve communication with and competency of Spanish-speaking seasonal labor.

Action Step	Responsible	Time Frame	Support/ Comments
1. Produce Spanish-language video on pruning and tying techniques	Martinson	Winter 2001 – Spring 2002	Project funded through NY Wine and Grape Foundation. Martinson will enlist video filming company, area labor contractors, and native speaker with background in horticulture (e.g. Cornell Student) to assist with project. Completion in time for 2002-2003 pruning season.
2. Compile basic Spanish/English vocabulary of grape related words used by Mexican and Central American workers	Martinson	Winter 2001- Spring 2002	Will do in conjunction with above project.
3. Educate growers about cultural aspects of working and communicating with Spanish-speaking labor		Intermediate	

2. Explore possibility of establishing training programs for year-round vineyard managers/laborers and cellar workers

Action Step	Responsible	Time Frame	Support/ Comments
1. Contact Finger Lakes Community College to gauge interest in exploring establishing program	Martinson	Summer 2001	FLCC has expressed interest and contacted Cornell personnel and myself; interest expressed in meeting with industry group to gauge feasibility.
2. Collect information on existing vocational programs.	Martinson	Fall 2001	
3. Facilitate discussions with industry, community college, and Cornell personnel about potential programs	Martinson	When appropriate	

Goal #5. Increase public awareness of positive environmental and economic impacts of grape production.

Action Step	Responsible	Time Frame	Support/ Comments
1. Distribute 'Conservation Practices for Vineyards' to area schools for use in agriculture and environmental education	Martinson	Fall, Winter 2001	Copies of video made for this purpose are available.
2. Serve as resource for programs put on by area and national environmental/ water quality organizations	Martinson	Continuing	Potential organizations are Keuka Lake Association, Seneca Pure Waters Association, Cayuga Watershed Network.