

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
Division of Agricultural Development
Agricultural Development and Diversification Program (ADD)

Grant Project Final Report
Grant Contract Number: 17038

Grant Project Title: Establishing a Commercial Grape Production Industry as an Alternative to Tobacco Production – Year 3

Project Beginning Date: July 2002 Project End Date: October 2003

Amount of Funding Awarded: \$10,500

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Report Submitted on: October 31, 2003

Contractor: Northern Wisconsin Tobacco Exposition

“The growers and project coordinator of the grape growing project would like to dedicate the success of this project to our friend, Elmer Swenson of Polk County, Wisconsin.”

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1) What did you want to accomplish with the grant?

During year 3 of the grant, the main objectives of the grant were to use some of the grapes grown in 2003 to make several grape products and to market wine grapes to a regional winery. Both of these objectives were met.

Products – The 2003 growing season was very dry. This limited the amount of yield for growers who allowed grapes to hang on the vines for the 2003-growing season. Some of the growers did clip all their clusters off the vines in the spring of 2003 in order for the vines to grow and mature without the need to ripen fruit. These growers did not have any yield in 2003 so their first yield will be in the fall of 2004. Some growers clipped all of the crop off and some growers did leave some clusters on for a 10% to 30% crop that was harvested in the fall of 2003. Thirteen of the grant recipients produced a grape product from the harvested grapes in the fall of 2003. Grape products made were: grape syrup, grape “apple” butter, grape jam, grape jelly, grape pies, raisins, grape cider and grape wine. Given the normal reduced yield in 2003, it was not economically feasible to make any of the products in a state certified facility for sale to the public. All of the products were made in grant recipients’ kitchens. Nine of the grant recipients did make wine for themselves out of their grapes. The goal here was to not just make something with alcohol in for drinking. The goal was to have wine grape growers gain an appreciation for the wine making process so they know how it is done by the winery who is going to buy their wine grapes.

Wine grapes – Nine of the grant recipients marketed wine grapes to a regional winery. A majority of the grapes were the Edelweiss grape. Grapes marketed to Northern Vineyard at Stillwater, MN, totaled 2,290 pounds and at a price of \$0.50 per pound (\$1000 per ton rate) yielded \$1145. Grapes marketed to Eagle’s Nest Winery and Bed and Breakfast at Marquette, Iowa totaled 4580 pounds and at a price of \$0.375 per pound (\$750 per ton rate), yielded \$1717.50 for the growers. One of the grant recipients donated their Edelweiss grapes to a project that made grapes available to the Von Stiehl Winery in Algoma, WI. The grapes, along with other grapes, were given to the winery so they could make their very first batch of Edelweiss grape wine from 100% Wisconsin grapes. The winery will keep one-half the wine from the project to cover their expenses. The other one-half will be given back to the growers who may distribute the wine to other group members for tasting.

Fresh Market Grapes – Three of the grant recipients sold some of their grapes on the fresh market. Some were sold at farmer’s markets, some direct to the consumer at places of employment and to family and some were sold already picked at the farm. One grower did try to sell via the “pick-your-own” approach. This did not go very well even though they were on a major state highway. One reason may be the simple fact that this is a totally new crop and season for picking. The grower very quickly shifted into an “already picked” market and sold the grapes from a “self serve” refrigerator located in an open shed next to the vineyard. The grower was very pleased with the outcome. Growers who participated in the farmer’s markets indicated that they were very successful in marketing their grapes.

Overall for years 1, 2 and 3 –

The initial objective of the three-year project was to establish a commercial grape industry as an alternative to tobacco. Given the success of establishment in the spring of 2001 and the marketing in fall of 2003 (albeit small for the first year of marketing), the overall objective has, without a doubt, been met. Of the 21 grant recipients in the project since day one, the project coordinator has determined that 16 vineyards are at a “commercial production” level with the remaining 5 vineyards still needing some time to grow and mature. The project has been so successful that there has been an additional 6 vineyards established by growers outside of the grant program.

Other objectives of the 3-year project were to increase grower’s knowledge of commercial vineyard production, develop a grower network and re-build or add to our local ag economy.

In individual conversations with the growers, they all indicated that they purchased many of their needed inputs such as trellis wire, posts, anchors, fungicides, equipment and fertilizers from local agri-business. This was also recognized when a local business contacted the project coordinator for information on the grape project in order to make inventory purchases for future needs.

The grape growers have increased their knowledge on viticulture (growing grapes) and enology (wine making). Again, in conversations with the growers, virtually all of them indicated that at the beginning of the project they knew very little about both topics. They now understand variety selection, establishment, vine management and marketing.

The grape growers have a very strong bond in grape production. Many growers have attended the vineyard walks and educational meetings held over the past 3 years. The success for this objective is found in the fact that the group will officially organize as a “grower association” this winter. The growers have learned to help each other and work through problems. For example, one of the grant recipients is helping and guiding one of the “additional vineyard growers” in managing their vineyard.

2) What steps did you take to reach your goal?

In the third year of the project, the emphasis had to shift from vineyard establishment to vineyard management and marketing. To address the vineyard management issues, several pruning demonstrations were held. At one of the pruning sessions, two agri-businesses with sprayer equipment were asked to bring equipment for growers to see and ask questions about. This fit well with the discussions on disease management. The group wants to look at the possibility of having some of their grapes “custom fermented and bottled” and then returned to the grower for sale. A proposal was drafted by the project coordinator, and members of the wine sub-group presented the proposal at the annual meeting of the Minnesota Grape Growers Cooperative (Northern Vineyards).

The marketing discussions were divided into two separate meetings. The first meeting was only on wine grape production. The group discussed potential marketing options for the fall of 2003 and beyond. The second meeting was on the marketing of fresh “table” grapes. The group also discussed marketing options available to them and the pros and cons of each.

In late summer of 2003, the project coordinator contacted all the growers to discuss final marketing options. This was a critical step given the fact that, based on a lead from one of the growers, a new wine grape buyer was found just across the river in Iowa. Given this new information, the project coordinator assisted growers with wine grapes to sell, schedule harvest and delivery. The grapes that went to Northern Vineyard had to be delivered so harvest and hauling schedules were developed. The grapes that went to Eagles Landing Winery and Bed and Breakfast at Marquette Iowa, were picked up by the winery (that’s why the lower pay price).

One of the fresh grape growers had for his goal to market fresh pressed grape cider. The short-term plans were to work with Indian Hollow Farms (an apple orchard) at pressing, pasteurizing and bottling the grape cider for sale in the fall of 2003. The long-term plan is for the group to purchase or build a grape cider pasteurizer. In late summer, the manager of Indian Hollow Farms called the project coordinator to notify the group that because of labor reductions, they would not be able to work with the group on the grape cider project. Basically, the fresh table grape growers and the project coordinator had to sit down and re-think the whole process. With harvest only a month or so away, it was decided to not try to market any grape cider to the public for this year. The growers would produce grape cider at their vineyard for their own personal use with the 2003 crop. It was also decided to continue with the planning and building of the grape cider pasteurizer for use in the fall of 2004.

2a) What worked? – The group meetings worked well for general discussions and topics. The sub-group meetings worked well for specific topic of wine grapes versus table grapes. The pruning discussion can only take place with a hands-on, make the cut here, in the vineyard field day. The individual conversations worked best on marketing decisions.

2b) What did not work? – At times it was difficult for growers to share their individual marketing plans with the group. There are possibly two reasons for this. One is time. The group decided to stick to a set time for meetings. When it was time to end, the meeting ended. There were always many topics to be covered so time was always short. Second was simply not really wishing to share that “personal” information with the group. For some of the members, just saying “I want to sell my grapes to a regional winery” was enough and they did not wish to share any more information.

2c) What would you do different?

Several small group meetings just on marketing could have been held. Again time schedule permitting. Because many of the growers had careers/jobs and some worked the evening shifts, all the meetings were held on Saturdays and there are only so many Saturdays available.

Overall years 1, 2 and 3

2) What steps did you take to reach your goal? –

The first step of the project was to meet with the steering committee, which was made up of representatives from the Northern Wisconsin Tobacco Exposition Board. This steering committee was critical to the entire project in giving guidance and discussing strategy and ideas. The steering committee helped determine criteria for selecting individuals to participate in the project. This process initiated the start of the project in August of 2000.

The second step of the project was to develop an application form for people who might be interested in the project to fill out and apply for participation in the grant program.

The third step was to notify the target clientele in the northern Wisconsin tobacco growing region which consisted of Crawford, Richland, Vernon, Monroe and La Crosse Counties. Post cards to tobacco allotment holders were mailed out with the help of the U.S.D.A . Farm Service Agency. The project coordinator wishes to acknowledge their help and thank them for it.

The fourth step involved a “general open-to-the-public” informational meeting for interested people to attend and learn more about the grant project. Participants of the meeting were able to pick up applications and return them the following week before the deadline.

The fifth step was reviewing all the applications with the steering committee. The committee made the selections of who would participate and who would be alternates. One of the criteria for selection was the

applicant's involvement in tobacco. First priority was given to tobacco growers and tobacco allotment holders. When slots in the project allowed, the general public was considered. Two individuals were selected to participate from the general public category. Selection was completed by mid November of 2000.

The sixth step was to develop a series of educational seminars to teach the project participants about grape production, management and marketing. The series of meetings was held from December 2000 through spring 2001. The key sessions were the first two on marketing. What they wanted to market and how they were going to market grapes would dictate what type of grape to plant. If more time had been available, a couple more sessions on marketing would have been helpful. A key element to the educational process was to find a printed document for use with the project members. In reviewing the Michigan publications, they were all written with 40 acres of grapes and machine harvesting in mind. The document selected to use with the project was, "Growing Grapes In Minnesota," by the Minnesota Grape Growers Association. It contained the production level of information most suitable for the project. Copies of the document may be purchased from: John Marshall, MGGGA Secretary, 35680 Hwy. 61 Blvd., Lake City MN, 55041-9015.

Another key element of the educational series was the ability to bring in knowledgeable, guest speakers. Personnel from existing vineyards and wineries were asked to present information on various topics.

The seventh step involved ordering the vines for spring 2001 planting. Knowing what the group knows now, all the meetings should have been one month earlier in order to have a little easier time of finding the plants that the folks wanted (time permitting of course). Even in December of 2000 many of the major nurseries were near selling out of vines that the group wished to plant. With a little extra effort and calling by the project coordinator, more sources of vines were found.

The eighth step was to get the vines in the ground and through the first winter. Even though the winter of 2001-02 was cold and somewhat snow-less, the vines survived.

The ninth step occurred over a longer period of time, from the spring of 2002 to the fall of 2003. During this time growers learned how to prune, fertilize, trellis and manage diseases. Many winter sessions and summer vineyard walks were used to accomplish this task of learning.

The ninth and final step of the 3 year project was to market at least some grapes in the fall of 2003 and to make some grape products. The grape products were made with the help of some grape processing equipment that was partially paid for by the grant funds. A small ratchet grape press, a larger bladder grape press and a light commercial duty grape crusher/stemmer were used by six of the project participants in processing their grapes. This step would have been impossible without the equipment. Some of the growers who had very small crops have indicated that they are planning on using the equipment in 2004.

The marketing of the wine grapes went quite well considering it was the first time growers had to make harvesting decisions. They learned that when the winemaker says "PICK", you pick. The project coordinator assisted with picking schedules and hauling schedules where needed.

3) What were you able to accomplish?

Overall years 1, 2, and 3

The main objectives of the program have been accomplished. Grapes were marketed in the fall of 2003. Revenue was generated to replace that of tobacco. The growers increased their knowledge of grape production and marketing. They continue to meet to discuss all the aspects of grapes. They are

purchasing as many of their inputs locally as they can. A commercial grape industry in Wisconsin has been born.

4) What challenges did you face?

Overall years 1, 2, and 3

The main challenge faced was the simple fact that there was virtually no infra-structure for grape production. Almost everything had to be learned and adopted from neighboring states. The project coordinator would like to thank the University of Minnesota Horticulture Department, more specifically Grape Breeder Peter Hemstad and Wine Researcher Anna Katharine Mansfield for the time spent with the project coordinator in learning the industry. In addition to Minnesota, university staff from Michigan, Iowa, Indiana and Ohio were utilized as resources for the project.

In an effort to build the knowledge infra structure in Wisconsin, the project coordinator worked with Richard Wiedmann, Superintendent of the University of Wisconsin Horticulture Research Station at Sturgeon Bay, WI. Given the increase in demand for knowledge of grapes, Richard had expanded the station's grape plantings to include some of the newest grape varieties being planted by the Midwest industry. Richard has been very supportive of the grape project and regularly communicates grape issues to the project coordinator.

Another challenge faced by the project was new government, specifically F.D.A., food regulations. With states having to implement the F.D.A – HACCP program at the same time as members of the group wish to do processing, it has caused set-backs and frustrations. On the positive side, members of the group do understand the need for a safe food supply and know that they will have to meet the requirements. The HACCP program will help them make a safer product, but also a higher quality product as well. HACCP is Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points. It is a step by step written program that food producers need to follow and document to make sure that their product is safe.

5) What do you plan to do in the future as a result of this project?

Overall years 1, 2, and 3

As a result of this project, the grape growers will be officially forming a grower association during the fall of 2003. Once legally formed, they will be able to write for more grants to move the industry forward. The grower association will be able to develop educational programs to meet their specific needs.

Following the formation of the grower association will be the formation of a wine grape marketing cooperative or limited liability company to be responsible for the marketing of the wine grapes.

Following the formation of the cooperative or L.L.C., there will be a need to generate cash and build capital.

A major component in the future of the cooperative or L.L.C. decision will be the discussion of opening a local winery. The question is not "if" to do it, but "when" and "under what structure" to do it. This is not to say this is the only way to do a winery. It may very well end up to be a cooperative or L.L.C. winery along with 2 or 3 small individually owned wineries in the region also. This actually would be beneficial and not harmful based on the experience of the "wine trail" concept used in other states.

For the future of table fresh grapes, the project coordinator has already secured space in an older, unused, county owned, laundry building that will be converted into a state inspected food-processing facility. Growers will be able to bring their grapes into the facility and process them into the products they wish to produce. This is where the grape processing equipment will be kept. This decision to use one local site was made based upon the recommendations of the growers who utilized the grape processing equipment at their farms this fall. They would rather haul the grapes to a site, process them and have the ability to clean the equipment more easily and properly. The facility is planned to be remodeled, and inspected by the fall crop of 2004.

The wine sub-group also sees a use for the facility. The group is looking into the option of pressing the grapes locally and then shipping the grape must to the wineries. This would greatly reduce transportation costs. The final decision to do this will be based on the type of grape and the willingness of the winemaker to guide the process.

6) How should the agriculture industry or State of Wisconsin use the results from your grant project?

Overall years 1, 2, and 3

First and foremost is the need to continue and expand the funding for the Agricultural Development and Diversification Grant Program. The project coordinator surveyed the growers a number of times about the importance of the grant program in helping them participate in the project. Every participant has indicated that without the funding, they most likely would not have participated in the project. The funds helped take some of the “out of pocket cash” risk out of the project. This was important when establishment costs were discussed.

The State of Wisconsin should use the results to prove that wine grapes can be grown in Wisconsin. Given this fact, legislation should be drafted to regulate the labeling of wine in Wisconsin. The labeling would determine the minimum percentage of Wisconsin grapes to be used in a wine labeled a “Wisconsin product”. At this point in time, wineries in Wisconsin can import 100% of their wine in bulk and label it a “Vernon County Wine” with no questions asked. A standard needs to be set.

A second piece of legislation would be included when the state would decide to change the level of taxation on beer and wine. The growers in the project would support a large enough tax increase that would allow for a small portion of the tax revenue to be used for a state wide grape grower program. This program is in place in states like Ohio where it is working very well at supporting the grape industry and also the tourism industry.

Implications

Overall years 1, 2, and 3

The results of this project are already being used for the future. Information on the project is being shared with people from around the state of Wisconsin who have an interest in growing grapes. The grape industry will grow in Wisconsin. This is proven by the fact that since the start of this project, 6 individuals, in addition to the project participants, have planted and established a vineyard.

Many times the question has been asked, “What are you going to do with all those concord grapes.” This statement indicates just how antiquated the knowledge of grapes really is. People are very surprised to learn that only two growers planted a few concord vines and the balance of the vines are other table grapes and wine grapes. This leads to the next question of, “You mean we can grow wine grapes in Wisconsin?” The answer to this 25 years ago would have been, “no.” But because of the work of an 89 year old retired, self-taught grape plant breeder up in Polk County, Wisconsin, the answer is, “Yes we can grow winter hardy wine grapes in Wisconsin.” The gentleman’s name is Elmer Swenson. Because of Elmer and his plant breeding work, the project was able to succeed. High quality wine grapes are being produced in Wisconsin. It is understood that the Wisconsin grapes can not match the vinifera grapes of the west coast. But this is not the west coast. We can grow a very good quality wine grape and we can develop a wine industry in the state to benefit both agriculture and the tourism industry both. Regional wineries will grow in number in Wisconsin.

**“Establishing a Commercial Grape Production Industry as an Alternative to Tobacco
Production – Year 3”**

Summary of Grape Vines Planted By Grant Recipients

Spring 2001 through Fall 2003

Compiled by Tim Rehbein, Project Coordinator
Vernon County UW-Extension Office

Grower

<u>Year</u>	<u>Vine Planted</u>	<u>Number Planted</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Marketing</u>
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Eric Aranetta, Chaseburg, WI

2001	Foch	31	Red Wine	Regional winery
	Frontenac	21	Red Wine	Regional winery
	Edelweiss	18	White Wine	Self use
	Blue Bell	15	Blue Table	Fresh Market
2002	None planted			
2003	Foch	50	Red Wine	Regional Winery
	St. Croix	30	Red Wine	Regional Winery
	Sabrevois	10	Red Wine	Experimental
	Alpen Glow	60	White Wine	Regional Winery
	Frontenac	60	Red Wine	Regional Winery

Additional comments:

The first planting of the Araneta vineyard was in a valley setting. This is the only vineyard in the project to be planted on the valley floor. There was not time to clear brush and trees from the south-facing hillside that would later be planted to grapes. As to be expected, there was a late frost in the spring of 2003 that killed many of the primary buds. The secondary buds did grow but produced a much-reduced yield. Eric plans on planting more grape vines in the future to expand his hillside planting.

Roberta Dolezal, Soldiers Grove, WI

2001	Traumamet	20	White Wine	Experimental
	Edelweiss	150	White Wine	Regional Winery
	Foch	50	Red Wine	Regional Winery
	Blue Bell	25	Blue Table	Fresh Market

2002 None planted

2003 None planted

No crop harvested in 2003

Vernadine Doll, Soldiers Grove, WI

2001	Edelweiss	350	White Wine	Regional Winery
	Blue Bell	180	Blue Table	Fresh Market
	SwensonRed	90	Red Table	Fresh Market

2002 None planted

2003 None planted

Additional comments:

Vernadine has established her vineyard under certified organic production practices. She is also planning on expanding her vineyard. No crop was harvested in 2003.

Mark and Kersten Drake, Sparta, WI

2001	Edelweiss	200	White Wine	Regional Winery
	Blue Bell	10	Blue Table	Fresh Market
	Frontenac	10	Red Wine	Home wine maker
2002	None planted			
2003	None planted			

Additional comments:

The Drake vineyard is one of the highest elevation vineyards. They did experience some damage from deer feeding during the establishment phase. The small crop of Edelweiss was given to family, friends and neighbors for them to use and develop market awareness for next year's crop. To save on costs, they used locally cut Black Locust trees for trellis posts.

James Geise, Soldiers Grove, WI

2001	Frontenac	150	Red Wine	Regional Winery
	Edelweiss	150	White Wine	Regional Winery
	Seyval	50	White Wine	Regional Winery
	Foch	200	Red Wine	Regional Winery
2002	Seyval	25	White Wine	Regional Winery
	Chancellor	15	Red Wine	Regional Winery
2003	Leon Millot	15	Red Wine	Regional Winery

Additional comments:

The Geise vineyard was established under certified organic practices. They have had some deer feeding damage during establishment. They are developing a very unique and decorative trellis system. No crop was harvested in 2003.

Ronald and Karen Haakenson, Viroqua, WI

2001	Blue Bell	65	Blue Table	Fresh Market
	Edelweiss	296	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	Valiant	5	Blue Juice	Fresh Market
2002	La Crosse	336	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	Edelweiss	63	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	Swenson Red	5	White Wine	Personal use
2003	St. Croix	318	Red Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	Praire Star	307	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	La Crescent	71	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards

Additional comments:

The Haakenson vineyard is expanding every year. They harvested 500 pounds of Edelweiss grapes in 2003. They have contracted with Northern Vineyards for their production and have also become a cooperative member. They plan on expanding their vineyard in the near future. They used Black Locust posts for their trellis system.

Ben Hansen, Viroqua, WI

2001	Edelweiss	200	White Wine	Regional Winery
	Blue Bell	25	Blue Table	Fresh Market

Additional comments:

All the clusters were clipped off in the spring of 2003 to allow the vines to grow and mature one more year. The Hansens plan on making grape products and selling to a regional winery. They are investigating plant varieties with very good disease resistance for their next planting.

Lloyd and Amy Hardy, Viroqua, WI

2001	Edelweiss	250	White Wine	Regional Winery
	Valiant	10	Blue Table	Experimental
	Fredonia	10	Blue Table	Experimental
	Blue Bell	20	Blue Table	Fresh Market
	Foch	20	Red Wine	Home Wine Makers
	Reliance	25	Red Table	Fresh Market
	Interlaken	17	White Table	Fresh Market
	Canadice	10	Red Table	Fresh Market
	Frontenac	10	Red Wine	Home Wine Makers
	Petite Jewel	10	Red Table	Fresh Market
	Trubador	5	Table	Experimental
2002	La Crosse	220	White Wine	Regional Winery
	Frontenac	12	Red Wine	Home Wine Makers
	Mars	3	Blue Table	Fresh Market
	Numbered	12	Wine and Table	Experimental

2003 None planted

Additional comments:

The Hardy Family planted many different types of grapes to experiment with. They did market their Edelweiss to Northern Vineyards via the open cash market and not a production contract. The Hardys have developed and opened a state inspected nursery business to supply potted grape vines to growers in the area.

Warren and Marcy Haugen, Viroqua, WI 54665

2001	Blue Bell	60	Blue Table/Juice	Fresh Market
	Valiant	60	Blue Juice	Fresh Market
	Steuben	60	Blue Table	Fresh Market
	Foch	60	Red Wine	Regional Winery
	Edelweiss	60	White Wine	Regional Winery
2002	St. Pepin	60	White Wine	Regional Winery
	Blue Bell	60	Blue Table/Juice	Fresh Market
	Frontenac	60	Red Wine	Regional Winery

2003 None planted

Additional comments:

Warren and Marcy marketed close to 2000 pounds of grapes to the Eagles Landing Winery and Bed and Breakfast at Marquette, Iowa. They also planted varieties for use in making grape cider. Given the fact that the deal with the local apple orchard did not work, they went ahead and pressed the grapes into cider, bottled it and have many ½ gallon jugs of cider in their freezer and their friends' freezers. They just can't wait for next year. The ½ gallon milk jugs were purchased from N.E.W. Plastics from Luxemburg, WI.

Peter and Nina Holte, Coon Valley, WI 54623

2001	Edelweiss	125	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	Blue Bell	125	Blue Table	Fresh Market
	Frontenac	10	Red Wine	Regional Winery

Additional comments:

The Holtes established their vineyard on a steep hillside that had not been cropped for 30+ years. They have signed a production contract with Northern Vineyards. They will be reviewing their yield data for the next couple of years before they make a decision on what variety to plant next.

Julian Holen Jr., Westby, WI

2001	Edelweiss	110	White Wine	Regional Winery
	Blue Bell	110	Blue Table	Fresh Market

2002 None planted

2003 None planted

Additional comments:

No crop was harvested in 2003.

Ken and Shirley Hooverson, Viroqua, WI

2001	Foch	212	White Wine	Regional winery
	Canadice	21	Red Table	Fresh Market

2002 None planted

2003 None planted

Additional comments:

The Hooversons harvested 180 pounds of Foch and sold them to Eagles Landing Winery. They have made some grape jelly for personal use.

Chuck and Arnold Manske, Viroqua, WI

2001	Canadice	75	Red Table	Fresh Market
	Edelweiss	175	White Wine	Regional Winery
2002	La Crosse	200	White Wine	Regional Winery
2003	La Crosse	150	White Wine	Regional Winery
	Canadice	25	Red Table	Fresh Market

Additional comments:

Chuck and his father Arnold marketed 1900 pounds of Edelweiss grapes to Eagles Landing Winery. Chuck also sells the table grapes they raise at his job in La Crosse. They plan on planting 50 La Cresent vines in spring of 2004.

Larry and Donna Mikshowsky, Bangor, WI

2001	Blue Bell	225	Blue Table	Fresh Market
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2002 None planted

2003 None planed

Additional comments:

The Mikshowskys are producing table grapes under certified organic production practices. They direct marketed 900 pounds of table grapes from their vineyard in 2003. They did not have much success with the pick your own system. They decided to pick them and sell them from a refrigerator located in a shed alongside the state highway. They believe that now the public knows about them so next year will be even better.

Rick and Barb Mikshowsky, Coon Valley, WI

2001	Edelweiss	193	White Wine	Regional Winery
	Blue Bell	50	Blue Table	Fresh Market

2002 None Planted

2003 None planted

Additional comments:

The Mikshowsky vineyard produced 800 pounds of Edelweiss that was marketed to Northern Vineyards in the open cash market. The table grapes were used for personal use. They plan on waiting before they expand the vineyard.

Mary Olsen, Ontario, WI

2001	Blue Bell	110	Blue Table	Fresh Market
	Edelweiss	110	White Table/Wine	Home Wine Makers

2002 Due to beef cows getting in the vineyard, the entire vineyard had to be re-planted in 2002.

2003 None planted

Additional comments:

A broken fence and hungry beef cows proved that livestock like to eat grape vines in addition to deer. The beef cows grazed all the grape vines down to virtually nothing in August of 2001, the planting year. They replanted the vineyard all at their expense. They are also certified organic.

JoAnne and Freddie Shird, La Farge, WI

2001	Foch	125	Red Wine	Regional Winery
	Edelweiss	100	White Wine	Regional Winery
2002	Foch	70	Red Wine	Regional Winery
2003	Foch	70	Red Wine	Regional Winery

Additional comments:

The Shird Vineyard is nestled into the hills of the Kickapoo Valley near Rockton. The vineyard site was selected for its southwest exposure. The soil is a bit sandy, but with springs coming out of the ground all around the farmstead, the vines did extremely well even under dry conditions. It is located up from the valley floor. However, they have determined that the entire valley is a very cold valley. They also were hurt by the late spring frost in 2003, even with the vineyard up off the valley floor. Future planting in 2004 will take place on the upper portion of the vineyard in hopes of avoiding frost damage. They are producing under the "natural" system, which means as organic as possible but not certified. They contributed 100 pounds of Edelweiss to the wine project at Von Stiehl Winery.

Solverson Family - Phil, Maribeth, Tim, Peter, Patrick, Viroqua, WI

2001	Blue Bell	42	Blue Table	Fresh Market
	Frontenac	42	Red Wine	Regional Winery
	King of the North	15	Blue Table/Juice	Fresh Market
	Foch	42	Red Wine	Regional Winery
	Edelweiss	84	White Wine	Regional Winery

2002 None planted

2003 None planted

Additional comments:

The Solverson Vineyard is a family vineyard. They all have taken part in the process since the start. They marketed 188 pounds of Edelweiss to Northern Vineyards under the open cash market. With some of their other varieties they made grape butter, grape syrup, grape jelly and wine.

Robert Starks, Viroqua, WI

2001	Edelweiss	250	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	Foch	225	Red Wine	Regional Winery
	Gerwurztraminer	103	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
2002	Gerwurztraminer	139	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	Pinot Gris	114	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	Pinot Noir	277	Red Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	Seyval Blanc	200	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	La Crosse	400	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	Laura's Laughter	150	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
2003	Gerwurztraminer	25	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	Pinot Gris	90	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	Pinot Noir	110	Red Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	Foch	200	Red Wine	Regional Winery
	La Crosse	1000	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	La Crescent	10	White Wine	Experimental
	Apen Glow	75	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards
	Shannon	75	White Wine	Contracted with Northern Vineyards

Additional comments:

The Stark Vineyard is the largest of the project. Bob sold his Edelweiss to Northern Vineyards under a production contract. Bob is also a member of the cooperative and serves on the board of directors. More vines will be planted in 2004. Bob has had to deal with deer damage in his younger plants.

Shirley and Duane Stephenson, Viroqua, WI

2001	Blue Bell	72	Blue Table	Fresh Market
	Kandiyohi	31	Blue Table	Fresh Market
	Concord	77	Blue Table	Fresh Market
	Swenson Red	36	Red Table	Fresh Market
	Swenson White	25	White Table	Fresh Market
	Edelweiss	11	White Wine	Fresh Market
	Petite Jewel	36	Red Table	Fresh Market
	Frontenac	36	Red Wine	Fresh Market
	Valiant	36	Blue Table	Fresh Market
2002	Concord	72	Blue Table	Fresh Market
	Niagra	36	White Wine/Juice	Fresh Market
2003	Catawba	72	Red Wine/Juice	Fresh Market
	La Crescent	72	White Wine	Fresh Market
	Louis Swenson	36	White Wine	Fresh Market

Additional comments:

The Stephenson Vineyard is being produced under organic practices. Weeding has taken a lot of her time during establishment. She sold some of her 2003 crop at the local farmer's market and at her stand that she set up at the local convenience store parking lot. She has also made syrup, jam, jelly, raisins and wine with her grapes. She plans on planting more grapes in 2004.

Bonnie Sterling, Viroqua, WI

2001	Edelweiss	220	White Wine	Regional Winery
2002	Foch	240	Red Wine	Regional Winery
2003	Foch	260	Red Wine	Regional Winery

Additional comments:

Butch and Bonnie Sterling, along with their daughter and husband, have planted grapes every year since the start of the project. They have noted much more time spent together as a family, which has been very rewarding. They marketed 500 pounds of Edelweiss to Eagles Landing Winery in Marquette, Iowa. They plan to continue marketing their grapes to a regional winery and hope one in the area opens up soon.

Non-Grant Vineyards

Additional vineyards established by individuals who were NOT initial recipients of grant funds. The establishment of these vineyards, where in direct response to the grape project.

Gary Blashaski, Norwalk, WI

2003	Edelweiss	225	White Wine	Personal- develop wine making skills
	La Crosse	225	White Wine	Personal -develop wine making skills

Additional comments:

Gary has just established his vineyard. He has had some problem with 2,4-D residues in an old sprayer. Growers should use new sprayers when they start into grape production.

Loren and Margaret Cade, Viroqua, WI

2001	Edelweiss	100	White Wine	Contract with Northern Vineyards
	Blue Bell	40	Blue Table	Fresh Market
	Frontenac	3	Red Wine	Personal use
	Petite Jewel	3	Red Table	Fresh Market
	Foch	7	Red Wine	Personal use
2002	La Crosse	248	White Wine	Contract with Northern Vineyards
	Frontenac	12	Red Wine	Personal use
	Foch	12	Red Wine	Personal use
2003	St. Pepin	100	White Wine	Contract with Northern Vineyards
	Pinot Gris	10	White Wine	Personal use
	Foch	2	Red Wine	Personal use
	Frontenac Gris	4	White Wine	Personal use
	Prairie Star	3	White Wine	Personal use
	Himrod	6	White Table	Fresh Market

Additional comments:

Loren and Margaret have been making home-made wine for many years. They were very excited to plant their own vineyard. They sold their Edelweiss crop to Northern Vineyards under a production contract. In the near future, they intend to plant St. Croix and La Cresent varieties.

Kris and Roberta Erlandson, Westby, WI

2002	Leon Millot	250	Red Wine	Regional Winery
2003	Leon Millot	230	Red Wine	Regional Winery

Additional comments:

Kris and Roberta planted vines in 2002 and 2003. They will wait until their vines come into production before making a decision on future plantings. A member of the grape grant is guiding them through the process of planting and managing the vines.

Hiram Lund, Viroqua, WI

2001	Valiant	48	Red Wine	Personal use
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Additional comments:

The Lund Vineyard was planted with family in mind. Every so many years, the Lunds have a big family reunion. This occurred in August 2003. During the family reunion, the grapes were harvested and pressed into wine. During non-family reunion years, he intends to market the grapes on the open cash market.

Gil Pizarro, Rockland, WI

2002	Edelweiss	460	White Wine	Personal-develop wine making skills
	Blue Bell	36	Blue Table	Fresh Market
	Niagra	33	White Wine	Personal-develop wine making skills
	Swenson Red	27	White Wine	Personal-develop wine making skills
2003	Catawba	175	Red Wine	Personal-develop wine making skills
	Cabernet Sauvignon	114	Red Wine	Personal-develop wine making skills
	Cabernet Franc	57	Red Wine	Personal-develop wine making skills
	Aurore	175	White Wine	Personal-develop wine making skills
	Frontenac	228	Red Wine	Personal-develop wine making skills
	Niagra	228	White Wine	Personal-develop wine making skills

Additional comments:

The Pizarros have a long-term goal of opening a winery. They are currently fermenting a small batch of wine made from the 2003 harvest. In 2004, they will also make some wine, with most of the grape being sold on the open cash market.

Tim and Judy Rehbein, Viroqua, WI

2001	Blue Bell	15	Blue Table/Juice	Fresh Market
	Mars	15	Blue Table/Juice	Fresh Market
	Steuben	15	Red Wine	Experimental
	Foch	15	Red Wine	Experimental
	Edelweiss	45	White Wine	Regional Winery
	Petite Jewel	15	Red Table	Fresh Market
2002	La Crosse	45	White Wine	Regional Winery
2003	Petite Jewel	15	Red Table	Fresh Market
	Trollhaugen	12	Blue Table	Fresh Market

Additional comments:

The majority of the vineyard is experimental. Some of the table grapes were sold at the farmer's market in August of 2003. The Edelweiss crop was part of the shipment of grapes to the Von Stiehl Winery in Algoma.