

Sample cover letter



Ohio Grape Industries Committee
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www.findohiowines.com

June 21, 2017

Dear Ohio Vineyards and Wineries:

Please find enclosed a survey developed by the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Great Lakes Regional Field Office, in conjunction with the Ohio Grape Industries Committee and the Michigan Grape and Wine Industry Council. This survey will allow us to collect important information about the Ohio juice and wine grape growing industry.

The most recent study of commercial growers was conducted in 2008 to determine acreage and production by variety. The study found that Concord was the predominant variety grown in Ohio accounting for nearly 59% of the acreage and 73% of the total production. It also revealed that Ashtabula County accounted for half of the total acreage and 61% of the total production, followed by Lake County with 16% of the total acreage and 18% of the total production. Lorain County ranked third in both total acreage and production. The study also showed that 14% of the respondents produced Ice Wine.

Recently, Ohio dropped out of the top 10 ranking of states for total acreage of grapes, including both juice and wine grapes. Collecting data for both juice grape and wine grape acreage will allow us to obtain valuable information about the importance and growth/decline of both of these sectors to Ohio's agricultural base, which will guide our program in the future.

Also, we often refer to these key data points when speaking with the media, as well as Ohio's legislators about the significance Ohio's grape and wine industry has on the state's economy. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to respond to the enclosed survey. Your response is sent directly to USDA NASS and is completely confidential.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the USDA NASS Office at (517) 324-5300 or nassrfoglr@nass.usda.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christy Eckstein".

Christy Eckstein
Executive Director
Ohio Grape Industries Committee

Encl.

Tim Derickson
Assistant Director,
Ohio Department of Agriculture
Director's Designee Chairman,
Ohio Grape Industries Committee

Jim Arbaczewski
Ferrante Winery & Ristorante

Bill Bakan
Maize Valley Winery

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