

# Next Generation Collaboration

*Helping Build the Atlantic Canadian  
Wine Industry*



## Panel

- **Acadia University** – Leigh Huestis, Director ICE
- **Kings RDA** – Steve Kerr, Executive Director
- **Winery Association of Nova Scotia** – Janice Ruddock, Managing Director



## Why is this a *Next Generation Collaboration?*

*Unique partnership between universities, community colleges, individual companies & industry associations, economic development agencies & government ... all working together to grow an industry in Atlantic Canada.*



## Discussion Points

- Acadia's Office of Industry & Community Engagement (ICE)
- Background – Atlantic Canadian wine industry
- Background – Acadia's involvement in the industry
- The "story"
- Examples of research projects
- Future research directions
- Working with economic development agencies
- What role can we play?

## Office of Industry & Community Engagement (ICE)

- ICE – formerly the *Office of Technology Transfer & Innovation*
  - Initial focus: commercialization & industry liaison
- ICE now key player in Acadia’s renewed strategy to engage in our local community ... leading to economic development for our region



## Background – Atlantic Wine Industry

- First Vines Planted – (1611)
- First NS Winery - 1978
- Huge Economic Impact
  - \$23M by 2020<sup>1</sup>
- **NS** – 15 Wineries/90+ Growers
- **NB** – 11 Wineries/30 + Growers
- **PEI** – 2 Wineries
- **NFLD** – 2 Wineries
- Future – Continued Growth in Wine, “Craft” Beer & Spirits



1. Winery Association of NS (WANS) 2005 figures



## Background – Acadia's Involvement

- Initial meeting – 2.5 yrs ago
- Started with one project (Muir Murray Winery)
- Next - NSERC Engage Grant with WANS/GGANS
- Wine Industry Research Symposium (June 2010)
- Niagara trip (Jan 2011)
- Now 30+ research projects with various partners



## The Beginning – Muir Murray Winery

- Initial meeting & needs analysis (many & varied!!)
- Identified some small initial projects (funding & expertise)
  - IRAP NMA – Chemical Analysis
  - NS P&I Voucher Program – New Sparkling Cider Product
  - Business School – Core Program (80+ students)
  - NSERC Industrial USRA (x2)

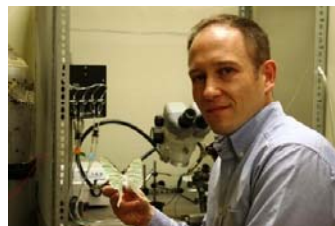


## Next – Industry-wide Project

- Industry-wide project involving grape growers (GGANS) & wineries (WANS)
- IPM (Insect) Survey & Mitigation Strategy (2010)
- NSERC Engage Grant



R. Venette, Univ. of Minn.



## Bringing Everyone Together – The *Atlantic Canadian Wine Industry Partnering Forum*

- *Purpose - opportunity for members from the wine industry to meet and exchange ideas with scientists & experts in the field and to build collaborations to help grow the industry*
  - Partnered with NSAC & NSCC, Kings RDA, GGANS & WANS
  - Variety of sponsors (stakeholders)
  - Invited researchers from institutions across Atlantic Canada
  - GGANS/WANS presented their research needs (representatives there from NS, NB & PEI)
  - Government reps presented research funding opportunities
  - Networking opportunities



## Direct Results of the Forum

- People starting talking ...
- Collaborations developed between NSAC, AAFC, NSCC, CCNB, Holland College & SMU
- Stronger tie with Kings County RDA
- Collaboration with CCOVI (Brock)
- Interest from a variety of sources
- More research projects!
  - First project outside NS
  - Various Academic Departments
  - Genesis for research programs
  - Development of a *Center for Chemical Analysis of Wine*



## Then ... Trip to the Niagara Region

- **Purpose:** to see “research in action”!
- **Theme:** “winter hardiness research”
- **Participants:** Acadia, NSAC, NSCC, Holland College, wineries, Agrapoint, WANS, Industry
- **Sponsors:** Springboard, NSDA, WANS, CCOVI
- **Activities:** Visited CCOVI, Niagara College, wineries



## Research Projects – Some Examples

- **The Wine**

- Chemical Analysis
  - Center for Wine Analysis
- New Product Development(s)
  - Sensory Center (consumer/market testing)
  - Business School (market research/branding)
  - Partnerships



## Research Projects – Some Examples

- **The Vineyard**

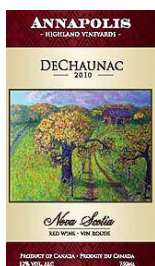
- Insect Survey
- Development of Ampelographic Methods (NS Hybrids)
- Nutrient Management to Improve Yields (lobster/scallop shells)
- New Varieties
- Bird Studies/Netting



photo courtesy of Chris Hawes



## Research Projects – Some Examples



- **The Industry**

- Understanding wine tourists (ongoing study)
- Understanding the role of winery websites (now a national collaboration)
- Branding strategies
- VLE for Sommeliers



## What's Next?

- *Atlantic Canadian Wine & Beverage Research Institute*
  - To address the research, education & outreach needs of the industry
    - Coordination/Dissemination
    - National Voice





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## Future Directions/Industry Needs

- Development of VITIS-NS
- Sparkling wine study
- Winter hardiness project
- Climate change adaptation
- Micro-breweries & micro-distilleries



THE GLOBE AND MAIL  
 Health & Fitness | Food & Wine | Fashion & Beauty | Travel | Technology | Business | Sports | Life  
 Home | Life & Wine | Wine & Spirits | Wine Country

Surprised One of Canada's best wines is from Nova Scotia  
 By [Name] | Columnist | Food & Wine  
 From [Name]'s table and floor  
 National Post, Nov. 16, 2011 2:04PM EST  
 Last updated Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2011 11:55AM EST

It's not at all strange. One of the best Canadian wines I've tasted comes from Nova Scotia. For one, surprised that it didn't come from the Champagne region of France.

Like Librarian






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## Partnership with Kings RDA

- Strong connection with Acadia but weaker ties to ICE and the Research Office
- Joint meeting with Kings RDA & regional ACOA/Dept of Economic Development officers
- Result:
  - ICE now a member of the Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) Committee
  - Introductions to companies in the region who have research needs or interests (through a referral system) and those interested in moving to the area
  - Other collaborations (i.e. business incubator)




## Working with Economic Development Partners

- Develop working relationships with regional economic development representatives – RDAs, ACOA & provincial counterparts
- Educate about research expertise/funding opportunities that will benefit their clients

## What Role Can Universities Play?

### From a Research Perspective ...

- The wine industry model can be ported to other industries/companies
  - i.e. maple syrup industry
- Research funding landscape has changed in CDA
- Concerted effort to align our expertise (or interests) & facilities with industry/community needs ... build in incentives
- Springboard Network = unique opportunity for Atlantic Canada



# Kings County RDA Perspective

Steve Kerr, Executive Director



# The WANS Perspective

Janice Ruddock, Managing Director



## Discussion Points

- Winery Association of Nova Scotia (WANS)
- A look at the industry
- Early partnerships with educational institutions & economic development agencies
- The university connection
- The evolution of the Acadia University partnership
- Role of universities/colleges in economic development

## WANS Overview

**Mandate:**

*Beautiful wines known and appreciated for their distinctiveness and quality by Nova Scotians and International wine lovers alike.*

## WANS Overview

- **Evolution:**
  - 2003 Industry Association started
  - In 2007, management of the Association came under Taste of Nova Scotia – 7 members
  - Today there are 14 members with 3 more wineries in development
  - Focus has gone from lobbying to marketing NS wines
  - In 2010, Nova Scotia launched a Nova Scotia Appellation White Wine
  - Challenges include:
    - Regulatory (everywhere in the world so we're no different)
    - Supply of Grapes – quality and the right variety
    - Having stakeholders understand the magnitude of the opportunity



## The Wine Industry

- Currently 14 wineries
- 3 in production
- 527 acres in production
- Supply 6% of wine sold at the NSLC– 4th largest country of origin.
- Are embarking on an Economic Impact Study and will have current numbers in six months
- The Economic Impact Study detailed 20 wineries by 2020, a \$23 million industry; Today it is estimated to be close to \$11 million industry (direct) – The spin offs including restaurants, hotel stays has not been quantified



## Early Partnerships

- Kings RDA/ACOA
- Educational projects with NSCC
- Limited research projects with Research Station (individual wineries)
- Brock University and Niagara College

## The University Connection

- Important for WANS and our members to develop a strong relationship with Acadia/other universities;
  - research and education are extremely important drivers for growth in this industry as evidenced by BC & ON examples)
  - Entire province of stakeholders is necessary to make the industry work successfully
  - Wine industry affects so many areas –
    - Tourism
    - Economic Development
    - Standard of Living
- The wine business
  - Passion meets Science meets Art – value is not always clear cut and understood by all members
  - Very competitive in a small market place

## The Acadia Collaboration

- **Evolution of the partnership**
  - Initial meeting over lunch to chat about possibilities
  - Relationship has evolved significantly - Acadia is now our “research partner”
    - Varied expertise (science & business related)
    - Research infrastructure (i.e. Sensory Center for consumer testing)
    - Facilitator/coordinator (through the Springboard Network ICE is able to seek out required expertise)
    - Source-out required funding
- **Value of partnership**
  - WANS has fourteen members and could never sponsor any research on its own
  - We would not be moving ahead
- **Value to individual members**
  - Quickest way to become a millionaire in the wine business



## Evolution of the Collaboration

- **What's next**
  - Atlantic Canadian Wine & Beverage Research Institute (discuss WANS support)
  - Larger, industry-wide projects (i.e. sparkling wine study)
- **Value of the Institute to the wine industry**
  - Coordinate all research/outreach/education activities
  - Strengthen important ties to ON & BC
  - Create a national “voice” re: research priorities
  - Access to expertise & national research funding opp's
- **Future research directions for WANS**
  - Extending and understanding the impact of the Nova Scotia Wine industry to the entire province of Nova Scotia
  - Further development of quality standards



## Role of Universities/Colleges in Economic Development – the WANS Perspective

Our university partnerships have led to ...

- New products (i.e. sparkling apple cider)
- Better products (i.e. now doing consumer testing **before** releasing products in the market, chemical analysis)
- Better marketing (i.e. winery website studies) and a better understanding of our target markets (Donna Sears' work on wine tourists)
- Better production (i.e. soil nutrients & amendments)
- Trained workforce (i.e. students)

**Ultimately = business growth & revenue generation for our region**

