

New York Wine & Grape Foundation

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www.newyorkwines.org

DATE: January 28, 2005

FROM: Jim Trezise

TO: Winery Owners, Grower Members, New York Farm Bureau, Other Interested Parties

CC: Board of Directors

RE: Social Responsibility

Dear Friends,

A few years ago, the Foundation undertook a comprehensive strategic plan with significant industry input from all sectors and all regions. The “Big, Hairy Audacious Goal” which resulted is simple but challenging: “To have the New York grape and wine industry recognized as a world leader in quality, productivity, and social responsibility.”

This mailing involves social responsibility in the broadest sense, ranging from environmentally responsible farming to regulatory compliance and the encouragement of responsible consumption. The major reason social responsibility is important is simply because it is right. But our industry’s socially responsible behavior over the years has also given us a legitimate reputation as an industry, which cares about the broader social and economic environment in which we operate. And that reputation is a major plus when it comes to the business environment shaped by policy makers in our federal and state capitols.

I have had the privilege of working with other trade associations in California, Washington (DC), Paris, and elsewhere which have undertaken initiatives that are models for social responsibility. We have also initiated some unique initiatives here in New York, which have been adopted by other states or regions. The list below includes resolutions adopted unanimously by the Board of Directors of the New York Wine & Grape Foundation (with additional comments in parentheses where appropriate). This package also includes extensive background information on these initiatives, which I encourage you to read at your earliest convenience.

“Social Responsibility” Resolutions of the New York Wine & Grape Foundation:

1. **Continue and expand the partnership with the New York State Police on creating awareness of the new .08 BAC level and other appropriate initiatives; and encourage voluntary participation by New York wineries.** (We will be sending out additional supplies of the special brochure produced last year, which we encourage you to offer in your tasting rooms.)
2. **Work with an appropriate agency to provide responsible alcohol service training to employees working in winery tasting rooms.** (We are sponsoring a server training program on Thursday, April 7 in Geneva in conjunction with the Wine Industry Workshop.)

3. **Develop a Designated Driver program involving New York grape juice, identifiable graphics, and possible incentives to encourage visitors to select a person who will not sample wine; and incorporate other appropriate means.** (We are working with New York grape juice producers to try to connect them with wineries interested in both selling the juice in their tasting rooms and using it for designated drivers. Any winery interested should contact Dana Alexander at the office.)
4. **Endorse the Code of Responsible Practices of the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States and the Code of Advertising Standards of Wine Institute, and encourage voluntary adherence by New York wineries.** (These two codes are similar in many respects but have some differences, and both are highly respected by government officials and agencies.)
5. **Endorse the handbook, “Establishing Good Neighbor and Community Relations”, from the California Association of Winegrape Growers; distribute it to New York wineries and growers; and encourage its implementation.** (CAWG is one of the country’s most dynamic trade associations, and this handbook outlines the importance of and techniques for positive community relations.)
6. **Endorse the “Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) program of the New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets, and encourage its use by New York growers and wineries in the various regions.** (Thanks to Commissioner Nathan Rudgers, New York has become a recognized leader in agricultural policies and initiatives, and this program is a prime example.)
7. **Work closely with the New York State Liquor Authority, the federal Tax and Trade Bureau, and other state and federal agencies to develop awareness of and compliance with laws and regulations governing the grape and wine industry.** (On April 6 as part of the Wine Industry Workshop in Geneva, we are sponsoring a full-day seminar conducted by TTB on federal compliance; and we are working closely with the SLA on clarifying various issues affecting New York wineries.
8. **Support appropriate causes with wine tastings and other events.** (In addition to partnering with other organizations to support causes like the Classroom Enrichment Fund of the Capitol District and other charities, we pass on potential opportunities to all wineries in case they are interested in a particular event.)

These are the initiatives, which the Foundation has adopted and recommended to date. However, we are always open to other suggestions for consideration, and invite you to submit them. Meanwhile, we encourage you to join us in implementing these measures and bring the industry closer to the goal of recognition as a world leader.

Sincerely,

Jim

Jim Trezise

Enclosures

P.S. Dana Alexander is primarily responsible for coordinating our Social Responsibility program, so you have any questions or suggestions, please contact her.