



**Mendocino WineGrowers, Inc.**

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Mendocino WineGrowers, Inc. Scores USDA Grant in First Year

Oct. 11, 2013 – Ukiah, Calif. -- On September 5, 2012, a meeting was held at 890 Bush St. - open to all grape growers and wineries interested in the formation of a new organization, the newly-named Mendocino WineGrowers, Inc. (MWI) Everyone in attendance was asked for their input and perspective, and this collaborative endeavor at the inception of MWI resulted in the following objectives:

- 1) Partner with other organizations
- 2) Support existing programs
- 3) Engage media groups to enhance marketing
- 4) Develop external funding (grants)
- 5) Establish formal governance

Shortly into its first year of operations with the inaugural board and staff, items 1, 2, 3, and 5 were accomplished. Of course, they continue to be significant goals.

Now, MWI is pleased to be the recipient of a Risk Management Education grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The grant in the amount of \$80,452.00 will be used to support the 2014 Grower Initiative Education Series. This will provide essential resources for MWI as it continues to promote the reputation of Mendocino County grapes and wines.

"This is a big win for MWI, and proof of our commitment to finding resources outside of our membership," according to George Lee, MD, MWI's Board Secretary and grape grower based in Yorkville, CA. "We've got the means now to better support the growers in Mendocino County, with all their ambitions for growth and improvement."

The 2014 Grower Initiative Education Series includes programs that are already woven into MWI's plans, plus a handful of new workshops and seminars that could only be executed with the help of Mendocino County organizations like Visit Mendocino County (VMC), the Yorkville Highlands Growers and Vintners Association (YHGVA), the Anderson Valley Winegrowers Association (AVWA), as well as partners from other areas like the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) and the Lake County Winegrape Commission.

An early portion of MWI's grant application reads: "Our program will put producers in a better position to manage risk...The result of these actions would be improved quality, improved farm operations, and simplified access to buyers helping winegrape growers be competitive and improve their economic viability in a tough economy."

Information on the 2014 Grower Initiative Education Series will be available soon on the MWI Website, [www.mendowine.com](http://www.mendowine.com); for more questions about MWI, please contact Aubrey M. Rawlins at 707-901-7629 or info@mendowine.com.