

## **2006 Kentucky Agriculture Advisory Council Horticulture/Diversification Report**

The focus group for Horticulture and Diversification met on Wednesday morning Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> to list the items for the council to present as issues. Dr. Ingram and Dr. Hartman gave a summary of both the Plant Pathology and Horticulture Departments accomplishments for the past year. These were printed on a handout that was presented to the group. The following issues were presented by the focus group.

With the growth of the grape industry, many wineries are exceeding their local marketing abilities such as taste rooms at their facilities. They will need to expand into wholesale distribution and this is where many feel that they need guidance and suggestions. A set of suggested guidelines that need to be followed when making sale arrangements would be very helpful.

Again for grapes, we now have the specialist to help evaluate the site and tell producers what grapes will grow there, but what is the market demanding? Are there certain varieties that are in higher demand if we could grow them?

A few instances of slow response on grapes disease cases submitted to the Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab occurred this past year. With the high value of a vineyard, a quick turn around time is vital to limit losses.

Will plant tissue analysis for nutrients be available through UK in the future? With higher value crops like grapes, these diagnostic tools will be helpful to determining plant needs.

There is a concern that some county councils and even some extension agents are not receptive to offering the Ag Diversification Program in their counties. This is eliminating the chance for individuals that are interested in the program to get assistance. It is suggested that the Horticulture Council look at encouraging these counties to open the ag diversification program if they have interested producers.

There is still a disconnect in the flow of information from UK. Many individuals do not have internet access and rely on the local paper as their means of information. We have outstanding resources such as the New Crop Opportunities Center and GardenData.org but unless a producer is informed about these services, they will not be able to help him. More releases or articles are needed to promote these and market extension.

If possible, add some of the odd items to the price reports for the farmers markets like eggs, meat, or anything else that is sold in various markets across the state.

More on farm demonstrations are needed in areas that have not been served. The Buffalo Trace area now has the Auction Facility and a few demonstrations would help to encourage more growers to participate.

Respectfully submitted,  
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