



**Connecticut Farm Wine Development Council
PASSPORT SUBCOMMITTEE**

Meeting Minutes for December 3, 2014

Subcommittee Members

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| Chairman Reviczky (Jaime Smith, Designee), ctdeptag@ct.gov | Connecticut Department of Agriculture | P |
| Blaze Faillaci blaze.dew@gmail.com | Dalice Elizabeth Winery | P |
| Hilary Criollo hcriollo@hopkinsvineyard.com | Hopkins Vineyard | P |
| Michelle Niedermeyer michelle108_us@yahoo.com | Lost Acres Vineyard | P |
| Cara Sawyer cara@prestonridgevineyard.com | Preston Ridge Vineyard | P |
| Jim Frey frey65@sbcglobal.net | Walker Road Vineyards | P |

Department of Agriculture Attendees

None

Guests

None

1. Call to order and introductions

- 1.1 The meeting was called to order at 10:15am by Mrs. Jaime Smith from room G8A at the Connecticut Department of Agriculture.

2. Review of Subcommittee Goals

- 2.1 Mrs. Smith reviewed the subcommittee goals with the new members.

3. 2014 Passport Review

- 3.1 Mrs. Smith distributed the compiled comments that were emailed to her over the course of the year. They were reviewed and discussed in more detail during the respective agenda item.
- 3.1 The final numbers and economic impact since 2007 were shared with all members. The general consensus was the results were very positive and the results should be shared with other state agencies, local chambers of commerce, etc. To further develop the economic impact of the program, the survey from 2013 should be revised to include questions on visits to other farms, restaurants, etc when visiting wineries and sent via email to everyone who submitted a Passport for the drawing this year.

- 3.3 Donna Zakewicz was introduced as the temp compiling the submitted Passports. Current number of entries were at 505. To ensure a fully complete Passport was not overlooked and therefore not included in the drawing, Mrs. Zakewicz will review all Passports that are in the drawing for Passports with 16-32 stamps. This will ensure the Passports were checked three times: once by the winery, once by agency staff, and once by a third party.

4. 2015 Passport Program

- 4.1 Mrs. Smith reported that the RFP for the 2015 program was issued to three companies by the purchasing department earlier in the week. Proposals are due by 12/8/14 and will be reviewed at that Farm Wine Development Council (FWDC) meeting on 12/11/14.
- 4.2 There was conversation regarding the number of stamps required. It will be recommended to the FWDC to reduce the number of required stamps from 33 to 32 which would address the complaints related to the requirement of the Wine Festival and obtaining stamps from wineries with very limited hours.
- 4.3 The prizes from 2014 were reviewed and discussed. Given the number of fully complete Passports that will be given a free ticket to the 2015 Wine Festival, it was determined the FWDC should only pay for those tickets that are redeemed. Mrs. Smith will create a certificate, with the winners name included, which will allow winners to redeem the certificate for one free ticket to the 2015 Wine Festival.

Rather than offer a ticket to each person who fully completes their Passport in 2015, a second prize be drawn out of the pool of fully completed Passport. The prize could be a free limo ride to and from one of the festivals and it includes up to eight tickets to the chosen festival. It was determined this should be a recommendation to the FWDC.

- 4.4 The subcommittee reviewed the 2014 Guidelines for Participation in the Passport Program. They were discussed and it was determined the program year should remain the same (May to November), and a new winery participating needs to be open a minimum of 12 days in the program year. The new requirement of being open a minimum of 12 days will be recommended to the FWDC.
- 4.5 The mobile application was discussed. Given the timeframe, the subcommittee will recommend to the FWDC to create a mobile app for the 2015 Passport Program year that at a minimum, is informational only and we continue to explore the e-stamping option for 2016.
- 4.6 The Designated Connecticut Grown Farm Winery program was discussed. The subcommittee will be recommending a continuation of the program in 2015 to the FWDC.
- 4.7 The rules of the program, which users must abide by, were reviewed. It will be recommended to the FWDC to make the following changes to the program rules:
1. Change the requirement of getting stamps from 16 *wineries* to just obtaining 16 *stamps* to qualify for the drawing.
 2. Add that Passports cannot be altered or embellished in anyway (eg: no stickers, charms, etc) can be added.

- 4.8 The sustainability of the Passport Program was discussed with the subcommittee. A brief conversation over the wineries willingness to pay a nominal fee to be in and run the program was discussed. There was concern over the potential change in budget availability and potential staff resources. No recommendation was made and it was requested this be discussed in more detail with the FWDC.
- 4.9 A motion was made by Mr. Frey, seconded by Ms. Criolo, to make the following recommendations to the FWDC on December 11, 2014:
1. Reduce the number of required stamps from 33 to 32 to be considered a fully completed Passport;
 2. FWDC should only pay for those tickets to the 2015 Wine Festival that are redeemed/used;
 3. In 2015, a second prize be drawn out of the pool of fully completed Passport and would be a free limo ride to and from one of the festivals and include up to eight tickets to the chosen festival;
 4. A new winery participating in the program needs to be open a minimum of 12 days in the program year;
 5. A mobile app should be created for the 2015 Passport Program that, at a minimum, be informational only and the e-stamping option be explored for 2016;
 6. There should be a continuation of the Designated Connecticut Grown Farm Winery Program in 2015;
 7. The following changes be made to the program rules users must abide by:
 - a) Change the requirement of getting stamps from 16 *wineries* to just obtaining 16 *stamps* to qualify for the drawing.
 - b) Add that Passports cannot be altered or embellished in anyway (eg: no stickers, charms, etc) can be added.

The motion passed unanimously.

5. Meeting Adjourn

- 5.1 A motion was made by Mr. Frey, seconded by Mr. Faillaci to adjourn the meeting at 11:47am.

Respectfully Submitted,


Jaime Smith