Blogpost – Project Goals - October 2015 – Cam Brown

Through a USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant, the [Michigan Grape and Wine Industry Council](http://www.michiganwines.com/)(MGWIC) has undertaken the Michigan Sustainable Wine Feasibility study, which is a significant step toward understand the long term social, environmental, and economic vitality of Michigan’s wineries and vineyards. The project will develop a deeper understanding of the wine industry’s relationship with local communities and ecosystems, and it will identify opportunities to develop resources and educational tools to support the continued and responsible growth of wine production in the state.

As a project partner, 5 Lakes Energy is excited to foster a greater understanding of where Michigan wineries and vineyards are currently regarding the implementation of sustainable practices, what resources currently exist within the state, and how the industry could collectively design, develop and implement a comprehensive sustainability program and certification for wineries and vineyards.

Around the world, the wine industry has established significant sustainability programs and certifications for wineries and vineyards. Given range of existing resources, research and information from Chile to South Africa and California to Virginia, Michigan is uniquely positioned to learn from its counterparts across the globe to better understand what type of programs, and standards would best fit the needs of a growing industry in Michigan.

As a part of our research of existing programs, 5LE will lead a group of Michigan wine industry stakeholders through a series of meetings with the organizations, wineries, and vineyards that have been instrumental in the development and continued success of California’s numerous sustainability programs that adhere to the highest environmental, social, and economic standards. Over the next few days, we will ask questions essential to understanding the potential for developing and implementing a sustainability program and certification in Michigan. We will review our questions, and new insights each day through this blog.