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**Report of the Kansas Grape and Wine Industry Advisory Council
to
The Standing Agriculture Committees of the Kansas Legislature**

February 2011

The Kansas Legislature created the Kansas Grape and Wine Industry Advisory Council in 1988 with the enactment of K.S.A. 74-551- 74-553. This board reports annually to the Senate and House Agriculture Committees.

The council is a nine-member body that is appointed by the Kansas secretary of agriculture. Council members are appointed to two-year terms and can be reappointed. Membership on the council includes representatives from Kansas State University, the commercial grape growing industry, licensed farm winery industry, wine distributors industry, retail liquor store industry, tourism industry and one member representing the public having experience in marketing.

The current board members are Chairman Dennis Reynolds, of Somerset Ridge Vineyard and Winery in Paola; Vice-Chairman Norm Jennings, of Smoky Hill Vineyard and Winery in Salina; James Pat Murphy, of Kansas State University; Steven Berger, owner of The Wine Cellar in Lawrence; R.E. "Tuck" Duncan, who represents Kansas Wine and Spirits Wholesalers; Susie Pryor, Ph.D., of Washburn University; Dr. John Brewer, of Wyldewood Cellars in Mulvane; Jo Ann Kuhlmann, of Eagle Creek Vineyards in Olpe; and Michelle Meyer, of Holy-Field Vineyard and Winery in Basehor.

The Kansas grape and wine industry

The grape and wine industry continues to grow in Kansas. In 2010, 24 wineries were licensed across the state. Many of these wineries were featured in the Bluestem building at the Kansas State Fair in September. The Kansas Department of Commerce hosted "Meet the Winemaker" events where Fair patrons could meet the producers and purchase their wine.

In 2011, Kansas Agricultural Statistics and the National Agricultural Statistics Service will conduct a survey of the impact of the Kansas grape and wine industry on the Kansas economy. The survey, funded by a USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant awarded to the Kansas Department of Agriculture in 2009, will gather valuable data about the different grape varieties grown in the state, the different fruits used to make wine, the type and amount of wine produced, the level of tourism tied to grape and wine production, and other economic data.

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Legislative initiatives

The council has in the past recommended legislative changes for the industry. In recent years, including 2011, council members have not recommended changes to Kansas laws on behalf of the grape and wine industry.

Staff changes

The Kansas Department of Agriculture provides administrative assistance in coordinating meetings and the council's other affairs. However, because of budget reductions and open staff positions, the council has not submitted an annual report since at least 2009. Agency restructuring in mid-2010 opened a portion of a position to resume coordination of the council.