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**Cornell Cooperative Extension Publishes Sustainable Viticulture Workbook**

By Joe Ogrodnick

Geneva, N.Y.: Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) has published a 125-page self-assessment workbook on sustainable agriculture for grape growers. The workbook, *New York Guide To Sustainable Viticulture Practices*, is now available in both print and online versions.

"Increased sustainability has been embraced as a goal for many businesses, from agriculture and industry to retail giants. Everybody knows that they 'want' it, but defining it has been more elusive," said Tim Martinson, a CCE senior extension associate and leader of the Sustainable Viticulture Project. "For growers, sustainability is the result of numerous day-to-day decisions they make about managing their vineyards. We hope this workbook will provide them with practical, nuts-and-bolts ideas that they can apply to reducing environmental impacts while improving or maintaining profitability and protecting health and safety for workers and consumers."

*New York Guide To Sustainable Viticulture Practices* offers grape growers in New York and other regions of the northeastern United States guidance in the evaluation and adoption of best management practices to minimize environmental impacts, reduce economic risks and protect worker health and safety. These practices include: soil management to reduce erosion, runoff and leaching; use of integrated pest management (IPM) practices for insect, disease and weed management; nutrient management, with a particular focus on nitrogen use; pesticide management and spray technology; and cultural practices used in viticulture. The workbook asks growers 134 questions related to these practices.

After answering the questions, growers can develop an action plan based on the results of their self-assessment. The action plan addresses those practices they believe can be effectively modified within the financial and management capacity of their farm.

The workbook has already been used by over 60 grape growers statewide, who manage over 5,000 acres of grapes or 20 percent of the total New York grape acreage, according to Jamie Hawk, outreach coordinator for the Sustainable Viticulture Project. These growers were able to identify an average of nine specific changes that they will implement on their farms over the next few years.

The impetus for developing this workbook came from industry groups across New York state – from juice grape cooperatives and large wineries based in the Finger Lakes and Lake Erie to the small-winery segment in the Finger Lakes and on Long Island. All of these groups were represented on the steering committee (12 from industry and three from CCE), and were looking for a way to promote and document the use of sustainable production practices by growers, processors and wineries. The project was funded through the Northeast Center for Risk Management Education, the New York Farm Viability Institute, and the New York Wine and Grape Foundation.

The workbook is recognized and endorsed by the Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) Program of the New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee and the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets as the official Tier 2 AEM Worksheets for vineyards. Through local soil and water conservation districts, the AEM program helps identify cost-sharing opportunities to help finance conservation practices that reduce environmental impacts of agriculture.

"The development of this workbook was the first totally collaborative project that included all grape-growing regions across New York state and all varieties that are used for juice, wine and table grape production," said Tom Davenport, director of viticulture for the National Grape Cooperative. "Producers, processors and winery representatives across the state worked diligently with Cornell research and Cooperative Extension personnel to develop the workbook. It not only enables producers to evaluate the sustainability of their farms, but contains specific recommendations that will help them continue to adopt new sustainable practices as part of a continuous improvement process."

Copies of *New York Guide To Sustainable Viticulture Practices* can be purchased online for \$30.00 through the NYSAES bookstore at: <https://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/store/catalog/>.

The online version is available at: ([www.vinebalance.com](http://www.vinebalance.com)).



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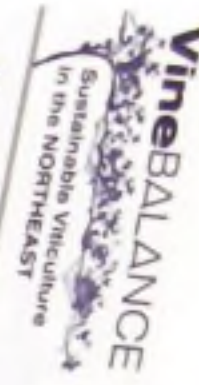
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New York Sustainable Viticulture Practices  
Workbook Scoresheet

[www.vinebalance.com](http://www.vinebalance.com)



# New York Guide to Sustainable Viticulture Practices

## Grower Self-Assessment Workbook

[www.vinebalance.com](http://www.vinebalance.com)



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New York Guide to Sustainable Viticulture Practices

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