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Kansas  
Viticulture  
and Farm  
Winery  
Association

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February 18, 2019  
HB 2223 Producer Permits  
Testimony in support  
House Commerce and Economic Development Committee

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

The members of KVFWA would like to voice their enthusiastic support of the concept of the underlying statute on Vineyard Permits. We believe in the benefits of Agritourism. And the practice of Farm to Table.

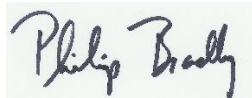
Our position as farm wineries currently provides us with the privilege of growing, crafting, serving and selling our wine to Kansans. We feel privileged to live and work here and hope to share the rich history of Wine and Grapes in our fair state. There is a very brief accounting on the back of this page.

We ask you to be mindful and cautious that we balance the need to help real agricultural producers with the protection from unregulated and less controlled sales by the drink. We must be fair in our approach and aware of the extra responsibilities when serving alcohol by the glass. The state has protections required for on-premise service that should be considered.

Our current membership consists of farm wineries and many vineyards. A list of current wineries is provided. We invite you to visit our vineyards and wineries to experience, share and be very proud of another, lessor known side, of the wonderful Kansas agriculture.

Thank you for considering our position as part of both the Kansas agricultural and business community. I am available for your questions.

Respectfully submitted,



*"The difficulty in life is the choice", The Bending of the Bough,*



**KVFWA -- Kansas Viticulture and Farm Winery Association:**

We began our journey in 2004. Our mission is the promotion of the production of wine from Kansas grapes, the science and practice of viticulture in the State of Kansas, and the development of fine wines from Kansas Farm Wineries.

Represented by **Philip Bradley** [pbb@PhilKs.com](mailto:pbb@PhilKs.com) (785) 766-7492

## **A VERY BRIEF HISTORY**

Is there a history of wine making in Kansas? The answer is a resounding, YES! In fact, if it were not for the hardiness of midwestern rootstock, the blight ridden vineyards of Europe in the mid 1800's would not have survived. That's right, it was rootstock from midwestern grapes that were used as a graft for European grape varieties, because of their resistance to the bacterial infection that plagued European vineyards at the time.

At one point in its history, Kansas produced a sizeable amount of grapes and has a long history of grape growing and wine making. A timeline produced by the Kansas Department of Commerce shows that in 1901, despite Prohibition, over 5,000 acres of Kansas vineyards were still producing grapes. By 1933, although Prohibition ended, Kansas retained strict laws prohibiting the sale of alcohol and vineyards fell into neglect and eventual decline. In 1985, Kansas passed the Farm Winery Act establishing guidelines for wineries and by 2005, 13 licensed farm wineries in Kansas produced 50,000 gallons of wine from only 170 total acres of grapes. In January 2010, the number of licensed farm wineries had grown to 23 located in 21 counties from central to northeastern Kansas. Kansas vineyards produce wines from American native, American hybrid and French Hybrid grapes. These wines have won awards not only in the Midwest, but also on a National level, and the wine community is coming to recognize the value and unique quality of Kansas wines.

**The Kansas Viticulture and Farm Winery Association (KVFWA) is a not-for-profit organization whose main purpose is to nurture the expansion and growth of the grape industry in Kansas, particularly for farm wineries.** Through participation in Kansas agritourism, members offer local communities the opportunity to visit their vineyards and experience the process of harvest and wine making, right through to the tasting of the finished wines, many of which have won both local and national awards. The Association is also dedicated to the principle that the wines produced by the State's farm wineries should be made from a minimum of 85% of grape juice from grapes grown in Kansas.

Although Kansas is not usually thought of as a wine producing State, it has a long history of grape growing with almost 5,000 acres of vineyards in the State prior to Prohibition. The KVFWA is committed to bringing back those vineyards and contributing to the rich agricultural heritage that is the tradition in Kansas.

We invite you to explore our farms, and we welcome your suggestions for how we can better serve the growing wine-loving community both locally and statewide. Explore the Kaw Valley Wine Trail and visit our member farm winery vineyards! You can taste their wines and take a tour of their vineyards. Some of our members even offer the opportunity to help at harvest. Great for a family or group outing! New vineyards and wineries are popping up all over Kansas... and visitors are welcome!

***Cheers!***

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