
Kansas
Viticulture
and Farm
Winery
Association

March 19, 2019
SB 53 Testimony in support from Philip Bradley
House Federal and State Affairs Committee

Chairman Barker and Members of the Committee,

The members of KVFWA would like to voice their enthusiastic support of SB 53.

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 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.

Our current membership consists of farm wineries and many vineyards. A list of current wineries is provided.

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

This bill passed the Senate 40-0 on February 27th

We ask you pass the bill favorably and due to the non-controversial nature place it on the consent calendar.

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 (785) 766-7492

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 Kansas Viticulture and Farm Winery Association 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 Northeastern Kansas 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!

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.

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