Poster Presentation
Challenges and Strategies of Emerging Wine Regions in Illinois, Missouri, Michigan, New York, and Vermont
Stephani Mulch
Faculty Mentor: Jason Franken
Agriculture

Wineries are growing contributors to local, rural economies through tourism, as wine trails track across several states. Numerous approaches exist for securing supplies of grapes and marketing wines, and wineries vary in the degree that they collaborate with other wineries and local businesses. The purpose of this study is to better understand current strategies and common challenges faced by wineries in emerging wine regions in Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, New York, and Vermont. A questionnaire, based partly on earlier industry surveys, was sent to wineries in these regions via email and mail. Factors that influence procurement of grapes via arms-length transactions, contracts, and wineries’ estate vineyards and the sale of wine through winery tasting rooms, distributors, retailers, and festivals are identified, as well as relationships between collaborative efforts and overall performance. If certain factors lead to better performance, such information is of interest to industry participants and government agencies designing regulation and support programs to promote efficient industry growth. Preliminary results suggest that larger wineries rely more on outside grape production, as they require more grapes than can be raised on their own vineyards, and smaller wineries utilize opportunities to sell direct to retailers. Further research will investigate how collaborative efforts influence various aspects of winery performance.