



More Information:
Carol Doolittle
607-387-9619

The New York Wine Industry Association celebrates 10 years of advocating for wineries and vineyards

Geneva, NY – The 10th Annual Meeting of the New York Wine Industry Association (NYWIA) was held in April at Three Brothers Wineries and Estates. Winery owners, grape growers, legislators and members of farm and consumer organizations attended the dinner meeting.

Kevin King, deputy commissioner of the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets gave an overview of the New York wine industry.

Sam Filler, executive director of the New York Wine & Grape Foundation discussed the upcoming vineyard survey. Jim Trezise, president of Wine America updated attendees on federal legislation affecting wineries. Stefan Fleming, director of industry development with the Empire State Development Corporation, reminded industry members that his position is to help industry members work efficiently and effectively.

Scott Osborn, Fox Run Vineyards provided an update on the situation of wineries being sued for ADA non-compliant websites. Since there are no legal guidelines for what makes a website 'compliant' wineries are unable to defend their sites.

NYWIA President Suzy Hayes, Miles Wine Cellars, provided an overview of liability for wineries and what standards are needed to avoid or defend lawsuits including TIPS training and measured pours.

She also noted that "Ten years ago, when NYWIA was organized we never knew how much we could accomplish working together to make an impact on legislative, research and educational issues."

One of the NYWIA successes that help New York wineries thrive is the on-going “Sip & Sample” annual event. Started in 2011 by NYWIA this has turned into one of the favorite afternoons of legislators, staff, government officials and media. Sponsored by the Senate and Assembly Agriculture Committees Chairs and other members of the New York State legislature, wineries and local restaurants from all over New York spend a few hours in the Legislative Office Building in Albany providing Sips of their wines and Samples of local foods. Over these Sips and Samples connections with legislators are made and the conversations open doors to future meetings with the legislators who often determine the course of our businesses.

NYWIA is invited to participate in legislators’ Roundtables of topics affecting wineries.

NYWIA works with the State Liquor Authority to streamline regulations and licensing processes.

NYWIA has successfully opposed the expansion of trash disposal in the Finger Lakes Wine Country.

NYWIA continually works with WineAmerica, the national organization of wineries, to clarify and simplify the music licensing process for tasting rooms.

The officers for 2019-2020 elected are: President Erica Paolicelli, Three Brothers Wineries and Estates, Vice-President Ted Marks, Atwater Estate Vineyards, Secretary Kim Aliperti, Billsboro Winery and Tina Hazlitt, Saw Mill Creek Vineyards.

For information about joining the New York Wine Industry Association contact Tina Hazlitt, membership chair at smcvineyard@htva.net

###