

Hello,

My name is Jeff Peterson and my family owns and operates Souris Valley Vineyard and Pointe of View Winery in Burlington.

In 2002 Pointe of View Winery opened, and Souris Valley Vineyard planted the only grape variety that would grow in our climate. That variety was named Valiant and was developed by the University of South Dakota as a juice grape.

In the years leading up to 2008 more wineries opened. It was determined among winery owners then that grape varieties were needed that could: tolerate North Dakota's cold climate and short growing season, produce a quality wine, and provide a measure of disease protection.

An industry decision was made to pursue funding from the state in the 2009-10 legislative session with hopes of starting a program aimed at developing new wine grape varieties specifically suited for all of North Dakota's regions. The 61st legislative assembly passed a one-time bill funding research and included a four year oversight committee, a panel that would be responsible for formulating an accelerated strategic plan utilizing the North Central Research Extension Center and North Dakota State University main campus. The NCREC was deemed essential in meeting the strategic plan goals of developing statewide compatible varieties.

The NCREC has recently provided years of extensive sensory and field data which resulted in the release of two white grape varieties for general release. Minot's continued comprehensive efforts working towards future releases is vital.

Minot's collaborative approach, and total transparency with the wineries made the recent varietal releases possible, and that continued relationship will most likely result in the release of future varieties.

The importance of the Minot location cannot be over emphasized. Without the continuation of the work from Minot and it's major role within the strategic plan, the program as a whole cannot meet the goals. As a stakeholder, it is my hope that you will consider recommending funding this project at the NCREC in the next legislative session.

Thank you for your time,

Jeff Peterson

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