

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Grant Abstract 2017 – not awarded

“Harvesting Hope and Opportunity (H₂O) – High School Students Studying Viticulture as an Entry into Family Owned Vineyards.”

Objectives and Outcomes

The goal of the Harvesting Hope and Opportunity (H₂O) project is to inspire high school students and Latino farm worker families in acquiring the knowledge, skills and resources to begin their own small acreage vineyards.

Objectives begin with educating youth. Youth will measure progress in their knowledge by earning digital badges attached to artifacts of learning, built on state CTE standards for viticulture and verified by state viticulture extension specialists at the university level and displayed in e-portfolios. Students will share their achievements with their peers through a closed e-portfolio group designed for social media use. The ability to network digitally will support student motivation, establish a network of peers, and help students develop communication skills that will enhance their ability to act as information mediaries for Latino farmers. Furthermore, students will gain job shadowing experience on area vineyards where they will be mentored by Hispanic owners, growers and managers.

Approximately 12 students from 4 different high schools with High Hispanic populations will be recruited from agricultural CTE classes, and FFA after school clubs (48 students). The anticipate outcome is that 70% of students will complete the seven digital badges necessary to complete the viticulture achievement over the first two years. At least 50% will participate in out of school time mentoring activities. 50% of students will assist their families in writing a business plan that will outline a trajectory for acquiring a small acreage vineyard.

Objectives for beginning Latino farmers include exposure to viticulture education through area beginning farmer resources. Potential farmers will be recruited through students in the program with an anticipated 50% of students recruiting at least one family member to the program (a minimum of 6 beginning farmers at each of 4 schools or 24 adults). Approximately 70% of recruited farmers will work

with students to demonstrate proficiency in science and business practices important to the viticulture industry, earning paper certificates of achievement. With the help of students, 100% of recruited farmers will write a business and marketing plan and identify resources for acquiring financial support, and specific areas for purchasing small acreage for vineyards in their chosen area of grape production (table grapes, gourmet raisin grapes, juice or wine grapes).

Outcomes include 25% of recruited adults (at least 6) taking steps to purchase their own land for vineyards.