

PA VinES Program (Vested in Environmental Sustainability) Phase II

Growing Greener Grant # C90000762

Sponsor: Erie County Conservation District

PROJECT DESCRIPTION The PA VinES Program promotes sustainable viticulture practices for Concord and Niagara grape production in the Lake Erie Watershed. Through a self-assessment workbook, growers evaluate management objectives and, with guidance from the Erie County Conservation District, develop action plans in order to improve sustainability. Then, participants can apply for cost-share funds to install best management practices to improve soil and water quality. The program was created in 2015, and is in continual operation thanks to funding from growing greener and the great lakes restoration initiative.

PROJECT GOALS Perform outreach and education to local producers related to water quality and take measures to improve water quality by reducing agricultural non-point source pollution throughout the Lake Erie Watershed by the installation of a variety of sustainable best management practices on local vineyards.

PROJECT RESULTS The grant assisted in reattaining a PA VinES technician and expanding a list of potential projects. The District, through grower's meetings, agency outreach, and targeted mailings, had over 600 direct contacts to individuals concerning the PA VinES program. To date, 59 PA VinES workbooks have been distributed to local vineyard owners, in addition to 22 completed scoresheets, 16 completed action plans, 16 PA VinES contracts. Practices Installed during this grant period: One growing greener designed stream stabilization projects, 1,286 acres of cover crops, five drop boxes/inlets, one stream crossing, 6,258' of stabilized access road, 1,290' of underground outlets, .11 acres of grassed waterway, 825' of infiltration trench, 903' rock-lined diversion, and 16 conveyer belt water bars.



Mid-construction of grassed waterway



Post construction of access road and diversions

PROJECT COSTS \$244,522 Growing Greener Grant

LESSONS LEARNED There is a large need for stabilized access roads, streambank stabilization and natural stream channel design projects in the Lake Erie Watershed.

PARTNERS USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, the Pennsylvania/Erie County Farm Bureau, and the Lake Erie Regional Grape Program, featuring Penn State University and Cornell Extensions

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