



Wineries, Craft Brewing and Craft Distilling

Defining the Issue

Wine, craft beer, and craft distilling are growing. Many in the food and beverage industries agree that production should no longer be considered a *hobby* industry; collectively, producers are making an estimated \$10 billion contribution to the economies of the Midwestern states. This growth has been fueled by the development of hardy varieties of grapes, hops and grains, consumer interest and supportive government policies.

How would your community council define agriculture's leadership position within this growing industry?

AFBF Policy

Retail Agriculture - We support programs that promote the marketing and purchase of goods produced or manufactured in the United States of America; and farm wineries, farm breweries, farm cideries and farm distilleries being allowed to use social media.

Table Wine - We support allowing farm wineries to sell wine on premises; sell, deliver and ship wine directly to consumers off premises in any state, subject to a state's minimum legal age requirements; and sell, deliver and ship wine directly to retail stores and restaurants.

Excise Taxes - We support offering a reduced excise tax rate for small distilleries similar to the rate structure for breweries.

OFBF Policy

Wineries, Craft Brewing and Craft Distilling - We support the growth of the Ohio craft brewing, distilling and winemaking industry that supports the purchase of Ohio agricultural products. This includes support in lobbying, marketing, financing, insuring and securing energy supplies and adequate research and development funds.

Discussion Questions

1. Do your council members know any local producers who are involved in these efforts? From producing grapes to growing hops, grain and stewarding finished products, a variety of growers are needed. What types of production facilities would be ideal for your area of the state?

2. What questions do you see neighbors, community stakeholders and potential customers needing to have addressed to see a specialty beverage producer established in your county?
3. What are some other production opportunities that could dovetail with specialty beverage?
4. How should the county Farm Bureau support specialty beverage (and other specialty product) production?