Lake Erie Concord Grape Belt
Heritage Development Project:
A Case Study in Agriculture Cluster Development

Duncan Hilchey
New Leaf Publishing and Consulting
Ithaca, NY
duncan@newleafnet.com
607.342.0259
Commodity Agricultural Region with Interesting Mix of Challenges and Opportunities
Strong Social Capital
A Unique Landscape
History, Culture, and Tradition
CGB Cluster Evolution

- Elija Fay: wine
- Table grapes
- Welch family
- Numerous businesses locate in the CGB
- Other growing areas come on line
- Wineries
- Agritourism study
Concord Grape Belt Challenges

- Fastest shrinking county population in NYS
- Welch’s headquarters closes (2000)
- Grape prices erratic
- Weather has hurt harvests
- Competition from Washington State
- Consumption of Concord may slide…
- Vineyard consolidation (1,000 and shrinking)
Project Objectives

- Work with a community with untapped agricultural heritage.
- Develop strategies, techniques and approaches to food and ag-related heritage and regional identity.
- Conduct extension and outreach.
- Encourage the state or federal government to recognize “Agricultural Heritage Areas” and provide them with resources and incentives which support their integrity and sustainability.
A Place at the Table Nomination Process

Criteria
- Palpable identity
- No previous activities
- Organizational capability

Solicited nominations

Selected two finalist communities

Finalist site visits

Chose Concord Grape Belt
Team (Partners and Stakeholders)

- CCE Chautauqua County
- Lake Erie Regional Grape Program
- Community, Food, and Agricultural Program, Department of Development Sociology and AEM at Cornell University
- Chadwick Bay Regional Development Corporation
- Chautauqua County Agritourism Committee
- Seaway Trail, Inc.
- Westfield Development Corporation
- North East, PA, Chamber of Commerce
- Fredonia Chamber of Commerce
- Silver Creek/Irving Chamber of Commerce
- Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce
- Days Inn, Fredonia
- National Grape Cooperative Growers Cooperative Grape Juice Co., Inc.
- Cliffstar Corporation
- Canandaigua Wine Corporation
- Arrowhead Wine Cellars
- Baran Vineyards
- Westfield Historical Society
- Presque Isle Winery
- Chautauqua County Planning Department
CGB Heritage Area Process

- Core group formed
- Stakeholders identified
- Visioning and strategizing
- Mission statement
- Committee development
- Project implementation
- Formalization (Incorporation)
- Evaluation
- Growth and sustainability

The Community Agriculture Development Process

1. Gather a core group
2. Engage diverse stakeholders
3. Create a Shared Vision
4. Analyze the situation
5. Define desired outcomes
6. Set priorities
7. Define short-term objectives
8. Plan and implement project activities
9. Evaluate results, learn as you go, adjust plans
America’s First Product-Specific Agricultural Heritage Area
MISSION: A dynamic and expanding region built upon its Concord grape heritage and embracing all facets of the region’s grape and tourism industries to collectively improve the opportunities and quality of life for all its citizens.

— Tom Davenport, National Grape Coop
CGB Heritage
Project Committees

- Heritage Committee
- Museum Committee
- Tourism/Promotion Committee
- Culinary Bounty Committee
- Inter-industry Committee
Lake Erie Concord Grape Belt
Heritage Association, Inc

Potential benefits:
- Preservation grants
- Vineyard preservation
- Greater local appreciation
- Industry unity
- Tourism development
Community and Economic Development Projects

- CGB Heritage Center
- Interpretive trail and DVD
- Culinary Bounty program
- Economic impact study
- Certified labeling
- Farm-to-school
- Microenterprise development
CGB Cluster Opportunities

- Packaging
- Agritourism cluster development
- Microenterprise development
- New Vineyard lab
- Heritage area
- Certified heritage products
- Wineries
- Organic grapes
- Empire Zone
- Expand cluster to include non-grape food processing?
Farm Signs

Lake Erie Concord Grape Belt

Heritage Association Member

The Oldest & Largest Concord Grape Region
Heritage Projects

- Photo collections
- “Foxfire” interviews
- Farm implement collections
New Businesses

- Juiceries, stained T-shirts
- Wineries
- Diversification opportunities
- Recreation and entertainment
Cuisine and Value-added Possibilities

- Restaurant agriculture
- Buy-local campaign
- Co-packing
- Shared-use kitchens
- Farm-to-school
- Institutional purchasing

- Grape chutney
- Grape catsup
- Jams, jellies
- Grape pies
- Pork loin in grape sauce
Coordinated Grape Festivals
Vineyard Tours
Public Education Campaign
Tourism Projects

- Roadside info kiosks
- Maps
- Brochures
- Signage
- Trails
- Vineyard and processing plant tours
- Pull-over vistas

Lake Erie Concord Grape Belt

Lake Erie Concord Grape Belt Association
By Antoni Magri and Duncan Hilchey

Legend
- Inter/State (90)
- RT 20
- RT 5
- Vineyards
- Cities
- Townships

Elevation
- High: 527 M
- Low: 172 M
**Label of Controlled Origin (LCO) (proposed)**

- **Agricultural Heritage Area** owns the license.
  - Lake Erie Concord Grape Belt Heritage Area Label of Controlled Origin. This label certifies that the producer of this product has met all heritage area qualifications and standards, and that 100% of the key ingredients were produced in the heritage area.

- **Producer** must be a member in good standing of the AHA; producer applies to use the label and pays an annual fee.

- **AHA** designates how the label is used.

- **AHA** can revoke the license if abuse is discovered.
CGB
Farm-to-School Program
Increased Sales and Profit?
How Are We Doing?

Figure 1. Concentration on process versus Concentration on results
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Keys to Success

- Shared sense of fate
- Shared vision
- Strong local organizations and leaders
- Passionate belief that they can affect their future
- Checked egos at the door
- Strong sense of inclusiveness
  - Stakeholders included competitors
  - Pennsylvania
- Industrial cluster approach (growers and processors, tourism)
- Infectious enthusiasm
New York State
“Heritage Area” Designation

- Formerly called “Urban Parks.”
- Certified local government may make a nomination.
- Legislation must be passed.
- A management plan must be produced.
- Finally, the heritage area may apply for certain preservation-related grants.
Agricultural Heritage Areas…

… recognize a *place-based* product.

… are geographically bounded.

… celebrate the communities that have evolved with the product.

… protect unique agricultural landscapes.

… reward traditional production practices.

… encourage stewardship of local resources.
Potential Benefits of an Agricultural Heritage Area

Here’s What We Hope For…

- Tax incentives and grants from state and federal government
- New dollars coming in from outside the community
- Plugging of economic leakages
- Greater sense of community pride
- Protection of natural and cultural resources
Cluster Development Strategies
Conventional Industrial Cluster Development Approach

- Business Gap Analysis
- Business recruitment/development
- Job training
Cluster Analysis

What cluster(s) *presently* exist in my region?

How big are they?

What cluster(s) are emerging?

What cluster(s) *potentially* exist?

**PROCESS**

- Quantitative (location quotients, shift-share analysis, input-output analysis)

- Qualitative (key-informant interviews, focus groups)
SWOT Analysis

Informs vision, mission, and project planning

ESSENTIALS:

- Representative participation
- Interviews, focus groups or both
- Facilitation is critical
- Some people will complain about how obvious some comments are…that’s OKAY
What Are Some Ways To Help?

- Leadership
  - Hosting meetings
  - Establishing core group
  - Stakeholder analysis and Forcefield analysis
  - Lead visioning session and SWOT analysis
  - Key informant interviews
  - Chairing a committee

- Organizational support
  - Newsletter, mailings, meeting space
  - Serve as a funding “pass-through” agency

- Project Development and Implementation
  - Grant writing
  - Report writing
  - Evaluation
Annual Evaluation

Quantitative
- Annual survey of cluster stakeholders
- Cluster sustainability indicators
  - E.g., # of farm foreclosures, loan defaults, changes in processing employment, ag parcel counts, CAFO violations

Qualitative
- Focus groups
- Cluster Panel Technique
Resources

- Industrial cluster literature review:
  www.planning.unc.edu/courses/261/leveen/litrev.htm

- Location Quotients, Shift-Share Analysis:
  www.epa.gov/greenkit/pdfs/howto.pdf

- 2002 Census of Agriculture:
  www.nass.usda.gov/Census_of_Agriculture/index.asp

- County Business Patterns:
  www.census.gov/epcd/cbp/view/cbpview.html
Duncan Hilchey
New Leaf Publishing and Consulting
Ithaca, NY
duncan@newleafnet.com
607.342.0259