Stafne, E.T. E. Hellman, R.K. Striegler, J. Wolpert, T. Martinson, B. Reisch, and J.-M. Peltier.  *A collaborative research and extension model: the Grape Community of Practice*.  Annual meeting of the American Society for Horticultural Science, July 2012.

In 2009, the grape community of practice (GCoP) was formed within the eXtension system. eXtension is an internet-based collaborative environment where Land-grant university content providers exchange objective, research-based knowledge to solve real challenges in real time. The GCoP leadership team consisted of members of the Extension and Outreach Education Committee of the National Grape and Wine Initiative (NGWI). This committee addressed an overall priority of NGWI to enhance outreach education for grape producers by targeting development of a GCoP for the eXtension system. The GCoP launched www.eXtension.org/grapes in 2010 and a companion site in 2011 called www.eViticulture.org. To date, the GCoP has 77 members from cooperative extension, research, and industry in 31 states and Canada, who interact through a variety of online methods to collaboratively create content. All content is reviewed by experts within our community of practice. More than 100 articles have been translated into Spanish as well to reach a broader audience. Data collected from Google Analytics show that content from the eXtension grape site was viewed more than 135,000 times during 2011. After successful establishment of the GCoP, NGWI strongly encouraged other proposals to become linked to the GCoP for part of their outreach component. Through this process, two funded projects in 2011 included the GCoP as part of their outreach component: “Accelerating grape cultivar improvement via phenotyping centers and next generation markers” (Reisch) and “Northern grapes: Integrating viticulture, winemaking, and marketing of new cold-hardy cultivars supporting new and growing rural wineries” (Martinson). Expected outcomes for these projects and the GCoP are to create comprehensive online resources for research-based information by providing viticulturists access to content addressing all aspects of grape production, linking to all state-based sites, integrating projects to increase networking and collaboration, and reducing information redundancy across the country.

Acknowledgement of funding source: USDA-NIFA-SCRI