

VALUE ADDED PRODUCER GRANT SUCCESS



SOUTHERN
EXTENSION
RISK
MANAGEMENT
EDUCATION

LITTLE VINE VINEYARDS & WINERY | VILLA RICA, GA

In an area once known for producing the finest of wines, the craft has once again returned to the region of west central Georgia. Before the prohibition of the early 20th century, this part of the U.S. experienced years of prosperity in the wine business. However, that success diminished with the outlaw of alcohol in 1920 and was never resurrected. Today, Jerry and Sherrie Culver of Little Vine Vineyards and Winery in Carroll County are restoring the reputation of the areas long lost wine production. The couple began rebuilding in 2011 with the planting of 1,400 grape vines, consisting of the Norton and LeNoir varieties. The winery has since expanded to produce several tons of wine and grapes during each year's harvest.

In 2016, Little Vine Vineyards and Winery were awarded a \$160,000 Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG) by the USDA. This grant went to the support of grape processing and product marketing. Without the presence of neighborly vineyards, one might call the Culver's pioneers of the west Georgia wine industry. With the assistance of the grant, Jerry and Sherrie were able to match the funds and continue towards achieving their goals. Currently, the Culver's profit from monthly tours, taste tastings, weddings, and a mixture of entertainment events to supplement their wine products.

"The grant was a godsend for us. We are a new winery in our area, and we couldn't have done it without the grant."

- Jerry Culver, Little Vine Vineyards



Source: Little Vine Vineyards.

The Southern Risk Management Education Center ([SRMEC](http://srmec.uaex.edu/)) seeks to empower producers to manage marketing and price risks which includes promoting the Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program. The VAPG program helps farmers and ranchers understand, develop and implement diversification strategies to enhance their business' products. In partnership with Agricultural Marketing Resource Center ([AgMRC](http://agmrc.org/)), SRMEC promotes successful value added ventures across the Southern region. To learn more about farmer and rancher VAPG successful stories visit <https://srmec.uaex.edu/News/vapg-success-stories.aspx>.



Understanding “Value-Added”



The USDA defines “value-added” as any agricultural commodity or product whose value has been increased by:

- Undergoing a change in physical state (e.g., turning fruit into jam);
- Being produced, marketed, or segregated for its special character or identity (e.g., GMO-free, organic, grass-fed);
- Transforming natural resources into energy on the farmstead (e.g., biodiesel);
- Being aggregated and marketed as a locally-produced food (e.g., as part of a Buy Local campaign, state-produced branding or labeling effort); or
- Linking farmers with local and regional supply networks in which they are equal partners (e.g., farm to school or other mid-tier value chains)

Visit srmec.uaex.edu/News/vapg-success-stories.aspx to read value-added success stories!