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## GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- ❑ There are over 120 wineries in Ohio, attracting, in the aggregate, between 20,000 and 30,000 visitors every weekend from spring through the winter holiday season
- ❑ Ohio ranks among the top ten states in numbers of wineries and in total production.
- ❑ Ohio has 5 designated growing areas [Appellations of Origin], including the Ohio River Valley, Lake Erie, Isle St. George, Grand River Valley as well as the Loramie Creek districts.
- ❑ Ohio Wines have taken home top medals, including several 'best of show' winners at the prestigious San Francisco, Los Angeles, Riverside [California], Dallas Morning News, Orange County [California], Florida International, Indiana International and Wineries International wine competitions.
- ❑ Again, in the aggregate, the Ohio grape and wine industry employs more than 4500 full and part time people.
- ❑ There is a family owned winery within a 45-minute drive of EVERY Ohio resident.
- ❑ Nationally, taken together, grapes and wine are the seventh most valuable commodity within all of American agriculture.
- ❑ Wineries preserve green space, add a 'quality of life' factor to their communities, enhance the image of the state and generally contribute to the 'livability factor' of the regions within which they are located.
- ❑ Wineries are 'valued added' agriculture. They take low value grapes and turn them into high value, very desirable finished products.
- ❑ Wineries are an important 'hook' for the tourism communities in which they operate. When promoting antique shops, restaurants, lodging, museums, festivals and other attractions, tourism offices often add a winery to complete a visitor's package.
- ❑ Nicholas Longworth, considered the Father of the American Wine Industry, grew his grapes and made his wine in the Cincinnati area during the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.
- ❑ Vintage Ohio, the state's premier wine and food festival, is regarded among the most significant events of its kind and has served as a model for over a dozen other festivals, including ones in Lodi, California, the Cascade Mountain region of Washington State, Michigan, Indiana, New York's Finger Lakes.
- ❑ Ohio has six 'Wine Trails' including Nicholas Longworth in southwest Ohio, Wines and Vines in the northeast, Wing Watch and Wine in the north central region, Capital City which is in and around Columbus, Canal Country in Akron-Canton-Youngstown and Appalachian in southeast Ohio.
- ❑ The Ohio Wine Producers was founded in 1975 and is the trade association that represents the needs and interests of Ohio's growers and vintners.
- ❑ Ohio annually hosts the National Wine Marketing Conference, "License to Steal," which is one of the country's most respected wine marketing and promotion programs.