



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara and Palmesano: NYWIA's annual 'Sip and Sample' continues to grow as part of Legislature's work to promote New York-made products ~ Read and watch more

THOMAS F. O'MARA May 17, 2017

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Albany, N.Y., May 17—Over the past several years the New York Wine Industry Association's (NYWIA) annual "Sip and Sample" tasting event in Albany -- hosted by State Senator Tom

O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) and Assemblyman Phil Palmesano (R,C,I-Corning) along with several of their legislative colleagues – has continued to grow into one of the Legislature's top efforts to showcase New York State-made wines, cheeses and other food products.

This year's event on Tuesday, May 16, was the largest yet. It featured wineries, cheese producers and other food manufacturers from the Finger Lakes, Long Island, the Hudson Valley, and Central and Western New York.

In a joint statement, O'Mara and Palmesano said, "The New York Wine Industry Association's annual 'Sip and Sample' keeps getting bigger and better and, most importantly, more noticed throughout New York State government. We are proud to help support our winemakers, cheese producers and other food manufacturers by promoting the excellence and quality of their products. It remains an amazing story of New York State's cultural and economic success. These industries are economic engines for a great number of local communities statewide and provide good, sustainable livelihoods for thousands of New Yorkers. We look forward to this annual opportunity to show off these locally produced wines, cheeses and other products, and we're grateful to the association for its outstanding support of this showcase event at the Capitol."

[Watch Senator O'Mara and Assemblyman Palmesano address the attendees and participants at yesterday's "Sip and Sample"]

NYWIA's 4th Annual "Sip and Sample" took place in The Well of the Legislative Office Building.

Together with O'Mara and Palmesano, the event is sponsored by the respective chairs of the Senate and Assembly Agriculture Committees, Senator Patty Ritchie (R,C,IP-Watertown) and Assemblyman Bill Magee (D-Nelson), Assembly Minority Leader Brian Kolb (R,C-Canandaigua), Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I-Olean), Senator Rich Funke (R,C,I-Fairport),

Senator Pamela Helming (R,C,I-Canandaigua), Assemblyman Chris Friend (R,C,I-Big Flats), and Assemblyman Gary Finch (R,C,I-Springport).

The lawmakers said Tuesday's "Sip and Sample" complements the state's overall strategies to promote and support products grown and made in New York.

NYWIA President Suzy Hayes said, "'Sip and Sample' has become one of the favorite events for legislators and their staff because they get the chance to try wonderful New York products while meeting the producers themselves in a festive, informal setting. It is a showcase of New York's finest....the products and the people that make New York a 'grape' place to be."

Julie Suarez, Associate Dean for Governmental & Community Relations at the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, said, "Changing consumer patterns that now support regional farm and food entrepreneurs has helped all New Yorkers recognize what those of us involved in agriculture have long known – New York's wines are simply unequaled in coupling innovation and quality with the localvore movement. Cornell's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and our Extension System is pleased to be a strong partner with our state's grape growers and wine makers, releasing new varieties of grapes like Cayuga White, Traminette, and Aromella, and providing technical services through the New York Wine and Analytics Lab at the Geneva Agricultural Experiment Station. It's our College's privilege to put research based knowledge directly to work improving the agricultural economy and encouraging tasty, quality local wine production. The 'Sip and Sample' is an excellent way to truly showcase how far New York's wine industry has come over the last 30 years."

Sam Filler, Executive Director of the New York Wine & Grape Foundation, said, "We are excited to partner with our friends in the Legislature and NYWIA to showcase the diversity

and quality of wine being produced by the State's wine regions.”

The **NYWIA** was established in 2009 by a group of grape growers, winery owners and other industry professionals as an advocacy, public awareness and education organization.

The following Finger Lakes wineries participated in this year's "Sip and Sample": **Anthony Road Wine Company** (Penn Yan); **Atwater Estate Vineyards** (Burdett); **Billsboro Winery on Seneca Lake** (Geneva); **Fox Run Vineyards** (Geneva); **Frontenac Point Vineyard and Estate Winery** (Trumansburg); **Fulkerson Winery** (Dundee); Hazlitt 1852 Vineyards (Hector); **Lakewood Vineyards** (Watkins Glen); **Miles Wine Cellars** (Himrod); **New Vines Bed & Breakfast** (Penn Yan); **Sheldrake Point Winery** (Ovid); and **Three Brothers Wineries & Estates** (Geneva); and **Treleven Wines** (King Ferry).

The following producers from the Hudson Valley, Long Island, and Central and Western New York regions were represented: Artisan Foods (Rochester, Monroe County); **Brotherhood Winery** (Washingtonville, Orange County); **Casa Larga Vineyards & Winery** (Fairport, Monroe County); and the **Long Island Wine Council**.

Representatives from the **College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University**, **Cornell Cooperative Extension** and the **New York Wine & Grape Foundation** also participated.

The Wine & Grape Foundation estimates the state's grape, grape juice and wine industry annually generates approximately \$5 billion in overall economic benefits to New York.

For more information on regional cheese farms, creameries and other producers, visit the **New York State Cheese Manufacturers' Association** and the **Finger Lakes Cheese Alliance**.