FAPC researcher named Oklahoma enologist of the year

By Rebecca Bailey, FAPC Communications Graduate Assistant

(Stillwater, Okla. – Jan. 30, 2013) Oklahoma State University’s Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center is proud to announce one of its own was honored as one of the Max L. Knotts Oklahoma Enologists of 2012 – an award presented to Oklahomans who have excelled in the modern industry.

William McGlynn, FAPC horticultural products processing specialist, was bestowed this honor at the Oklahoma Grape Industry Council Annual Meeting on Jan. 20.

“I didn’t know I was even a contender for this award, so I was quite surprised,” McGlynn said.

McGlynn, along with Roy Mitchell of Grayson County College, received this distinction for their work in assessing Oklahoma wine quality and establishing a wine quality testing capability at the FAPC.

Originally a one-year project, funded by the Oklahoma Viticulture and Enology Fund, McGlynn said they now have funding for a second year allowing for the continuation of the project.

“We will continue our research this year, and see where it goes from there,” McGlynn said.

The goals of this project include improving wines made from Oklahoma grapes to increase market sales share of Oklahoma wines, identifying common areas for quality improvements, and assisting with areas of improvement and highlighting positive winery practices.

McGlynn said he is hopeful this work will help the future of the Oklahoma wine industry.

“The ultimate goal of this project is to help the industry and improve the consistency and quality of Oklahoma wine, which ties into the mission of the FAPC,” McGlynn said.

Gene Clifton, Oklahoma Grape Industry Council president addressed the audience at the OGIC Annual Meeting, and said how far the Oklahoma grape and wine industries have come.

“We are proud of our Oklahoma grape and wine pioneers and equally proud of the Oklahomans who have chosen to invest in, build and operate over 250 vineyards and wineries throughout the state, primarily in rural areas where employment and economic development are needed,” Clifton said.

“Oklahoma’s wine industry has grown from three wineries in 2000 to 57 wineries in 2013.”
McGlynn said it is a privilege to be a recipient of this prestigious award, especially because of the meaning behind it.

“The individual this award is named after is a legendary figure, so being associated with him is a great honor,” McGlynn said.

The award is given in honor of the late Max L. Knotts, a modern day pioneer in the Oklahoma grape and wine industry.

Knotts established Dos Okies Winery in Oklahoma City during the mid ‘80s with his partner, Richard Sias. They planted and made wine from Rubaiyat grapes developed at OSU by Hermann Hinricks. With Robert Bartunek of Enid, who had already started his own winery, and George Girouard, a grape breeder and enologist from Oklahoma City, they started the first statewide grape and wine organization in Oklahoma in 1995.

Although Knotts passed away in 2011, the Max L. Knotts Viticulture and Enology Fund at the OSU Foundation was started to continue his legacy. Today, the fund serves as a tribute to Knotts and serves to promote and foster growth of viticulture and enology programs in the Oklahoma State University department of horticulture and landscape architecture.

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