

Washington, DC -- U.S. Representatives Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica), Maurice Hinchey (D-Hurley), and James Walsh (R-Syracuse) announced today that they have secured over \$5 million in congressionally-directed funding for construction of a Grape Genetics Research facility at the New York State Agriculture Experiment Station in Geneva, and ongoing apple and grape research programs at Cornell University.

“Too often specialty crops, from apples to grapes, are left behind in national agriculture legislation and yet they have a huge impact on the economy of New York State, especially communities here in Upstate,” **Arcuri said**. “In the 24th district, vineyards are a major source of economic growth as local businesses, as well as centers of regional tourism. The grape and apple industries are vital parts of our local economy and this funding will invest in critical research to keep crops healthy and increase yields. I am pleased to bring taxpayer dollars back home to help Upstate farmers and support national agricultural research going on in our very own laboratories and Universities.”

“These funds will help strengthen and improve the grape and apple industries in New York, which play critical roles in our state’s economy,” **said Hinchey, who is vice-chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, which appropriated the funds** . “Cornell plays a central role in the research and technology needed to bolster the agriculture industry in New York, which is why I am so pleased that my colleagues and I were able to have money for these research projects included in this funding bill.”

“As agriculture remains New York’s number one industry, these investments in research at Cornell facilities in Geneva and Ithaca will strengthen our region’s grape and apple growers, as well as provide direction to industry interests across the nation,” **said Walsh**.

Funds secured by Arcuri, Hinchey and Walsh include:

\$2.69 million - Center for Grape Genetics Research, Geneva, NY: Funding will go toward construction of a \$29.6 million USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) facility that will focus on research programs to help make the U.S. wine industry more competitive. The Center for Grape Genetic Research will replace the current outdated ARS facilities in Geneva with a state-of-the-art research building. Congress has appropriated \$9.055 million to date. ARS has completed planning, design, and site prep work and is holding \$6.625 million toward

construction on account. The agency is ready to commence construction as soon as the balance of construction funds is appropriated.

Dr. Thomas J. Burr, Director of the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station said, "Adding this level of scientific expertise will greatly strengthen ARS-Cornell collaborative efforts and further elevate the world-class status of Geneva in all aspects of enology and viticulture. Improving our basic understanding of grape genetics will result in discoveries aimed toward future improvements in grape and wine production practices. Research done at the Center will positively impact the state, national and international wine industries. We are very fortunate to have elected officials that support agriculture and understand how research benefits our society."

U.S. Rep. Thomas M. Reynolds (R-Clarence), who also played a significant role in securing funds for the Grape Genetics Research Center said, "As Western New York's economy continues to evolve into different areas, it is important to support efforts that will help the economy expand and create jobs. The Grape research center is a part of this new economy, and helping grape growers expand and flourish is critical."

\$2.079 million - Viticulture Consortium Special Research Grant, New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, NY: The Viticulture Consortium (VC) is a multi-state special research grant that operates as a national competitive grants program to fund applied, mission specific research relevant to grape growing. The VC enhances research coordination and collaboration, improves efficiency, and eliminates duplication of effort. From FY 2003 to FY 2006, the Consortium has received over \$7.35 million to enhance grape production throughout the country.

The wine and grape industry is a \$7 billion industry in New York State. New York ranks third in national grape production, behind only California and Washington. Nationwide, the wine and grape industry is responsible for 1.1 million jobs and \$33 million in wages paid. The Congressional Wine Caucus, of which Arcuri is a member, recently oversaw a national economic impact study which concluded that the wine, grape and grape products industries contribute over \$162 billion to the American economy each year

\$495,000 - Apple Fire Blight Special Research Grant, New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, NY: The apple fire blight research seeks to understand and manage the apple fire blight disease by investigating the molecular basis of disease resistance in apples and

developing disease resistant apple varieties. Fire blight is the most damaging disease affecting apple trees in New York State and nationally. Crop and tree losses and the costs of control measures cost more than \$100 million per year nationally. In a bad year, New York State losses can reach \$10 million. All 60,000 acres of apples in New York State are vulnerable to the disease and may succumb when the weather favors the disease with rain, heavy dews, and high humidity. From FY 2003 to FY 2006, \$1.9 million has been appropriated for this project.

Apple is the biggest tree fruit crop in New York, worth more than \$2 billion annually. New York State produces 25 million bushels of apples each year (53% sold as fresh fruit and 47% for processing). New York's 694 family apple farms create 10,000 agricultural jobs. Only Washington State grows more apples than New York.

Funds were secured by Arcuri, Hinchey and Walsh in the fiscal year 2008 Agriculture Appropriations Act, which was approved by the full House Appropriations Committee this week, and will be considered by the House in the coming weeks.

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