



Sarah's Vineyard

Annual Operating Plan

November, 2003

Goals:

1. Establish Retail Market - Studio, Gallery, Future Winery.
2. Establish Water Source.
3. 2004 Fruit Plantings.
4. Complete Wildlife Exclusion Fence Encircling Fields 192-A&B.
5. Complete Supporting Trellis System.
6. Second Annual Summer Solstice Art Show.
7. Develop Sarah's Vineyard Entrance from Steels Corners Road.
8. Inclusion of former Parry home site in the Sarah's Vineyard lease with the CVNP.
9. Establish Grape Cutting Nursery.
10. Drain Tile for the Vineyard.
11. Develop and Implement Foliar Feed/Pesticide Spray Program.
12. Begin Mowing and Soil Building Program - Fields 187, 188, 189, and 190.
13. Begin Limited Wine Sales.

1. Establish Retail Market - Studio, Gallery, Future Winery.

Please consider the following points:

- Sarah's Vineyard is at a standstill. No building exists for the production and retail of the value added products that are planned to support the growth of Sarah's Vineyard as it strives to become a sustainable agricultural enterprise.
- This #1 goal, the establishment of the Studio, Gallery, and Winery, was also the #1 goal of the 2003 Annual Operating Plan submitted in November of 2002. See Appendix A.
- Sarah's Vineyard has teamed with Kristofer Sperry Architects to produce site plans proposing three possible locations for building the Studio, Gallery, and Winery. These plans evolved during numerous meetings with CCC and CVNP personnel beginning in the early spring of 2003, and ending with the latest submission in August. See Appendix B.
- The CCC and CVNP have not developed and submitted the required Environmental Assessment (EA) needed to begin the final planning and building of this much needed facility. This EA also involves a lengthy approval process once it is submitted.

We are finding it increasingly difficult to make sound business decisions. Please also consider the following points.

- We have invested over \$70,000.00 dollars in Sarah's Vineyard since the Spring of 2001. Much of this investment is in capital improvements to the farmstead that is owned by the National Park Service. This investment can only be recaptured by Sarah's Vineyard through the production and sale of our products.
- We still do not know if, when, or where we are going to be able to build a building for production and sales.
- How do we justify more expenditures given this current situation of no return on investment? Are we expected to keep throwing time and money into our enterprise with the hope that some day our partners, the CVNP and CCC, will be able to devote the necessary resources to produce the required Environmental Assessment? Will we have any time or money left when this happens? What will we do with our first grape harvest in the fall of 2005 - sell it on the wholesale market?

Sarah's Vineyard faces many uncertainties until the EA process is completed. Only then can we be sure that the alternative judged to be the best for the park fits with what is best for Sarah's Vineyard as a sustainable agricultural enterprise. We simply can not make good business decisions until the results of the EA are realized.

2. Establish Water Source.

Water is still a major problem facing Sarah's Vineyard. It was also listed as a major goal in the 2003 operating plan (see Appendix A). Water is so important to the success of this enterprise that the value of discussions on other goals, including the Retail Market and Vineyard, are moot until this problem is solved. Sarah's Vineyard is still a Farm without a water source.

3. 2004 Fruit Plantings.

Sarah's Vineyard must put further investment in fruit plantings on hold until the problems of Water and the EA are solved.

4. Complete Wildlife Exclusion Fence Encircling Fields 192-A&B.

The Wildlife Exclusion Fence proposed in the 2003 Operating Plan (appendix A) will be completed in the spring. This project was not completed in 2003 because the ground had hardened to the point where the line posts could not be driven in the summer. The corner post installation has been completed. The line posts have been purchased and will be driven when the ground is soft again. The fence wire will be purchased and installed when the problems of Water and the EA are solved - and we are certain that it will be worth the expense of protecting Sarah's Vineyard from the wildlife.

5. Complete Trellis System.

The Trellis System proposed in the 2003 Operating Plan (appendix A) will also be completed this year. The line posts, end posts, earth anchors, and 20% of the trellis wire has been installed. The remaining trellis wire has already been purchased and will be installed in the vineyard by mid summer.

6. Second Annual Summer Solstice Art Show

We view the First Annual Summer Solstice Art Show, held June 21st and 22nd, 2003 as being a huge success. It generated:

- local publicity for the Countryside Initiative and marketing opportunity for

Sarah's Vineyard.

- more than 1000 visitors to the park.
- educational and fun activities for children and adults.
- more than \$15,000.00 in total sales for 22 artists and 3 food vendors - netting the National Park Service \$750.00+.

The scheduled dates for the Second Annual Summer Solstice Art Show are June 19th and 20th, 2004.

7. Develop Sarah's Vineyard Entrance from Steels Corners Road.

The access road to fields 192 A&B will have to be widened at the entrance from Steels Corners Road if and when we are permitted to proceed with the construction of our production and sales facility in this location. In it's present condition, the entrance does not easily allow for simultaneous entering and exiting of vehicles.

8. Inclusion of former Parry home site in the Sarah's Vineyard lease with the CVNP.

We are requesting that the former Parry home site (see Appendix B - pg. A-04) be included in our lease with the National Park Service. If the EA process determines that this is the most favorable site for the location of our proposed production and sales facility, and we can put together the financial resources to locate the facility in this site, then the land would have to be included in the lease. Including the site in the lease now would alleviate any further delays once the EA is completed. If this site is not deemed the preferred alternative, then it will be utilized as a picnic/special events area for guests visiting Sarah's Vineyard. The site is a beautiful setting and should be made available for the enjoyment of CVNP visitors.

9. Establish Grape Cutting Nursery

Since we can not economically justify extensive fruit planting this year, we would like to establish a small grape cutting nursery in field 192 B. The nursery will be approximately 40' x 60', and pruned cuttings from vines planted in spring 2003 will be used to start new rootstock.

10. Drain Tile for the Vineyard

Our research and experience is pointing toward the necessity of field drainage tile in the vineyard. Organic grape growing literature and visits with organic vineyard managers all point to the same conclusion: field drainage tile is a critical soil amendment for organic and sustainable grape growing. Field drainage increases oxygen levels in the soil, and stimulates the growth of the micro organisms, which are essential for healthy grapevines. Healthy grapevines are more disease resistant and require less chemical input.

First year experience at Sarah's Vineyard backs up our research. Grapevines in areas of the vineyard with good drainage had vigorous first year growth (up to 8'), and are going into the winter season strong and healthy. Other vines in low areas are stunted and frail (6" growth), and we are unsure if they will make it through the winter.

We have contacted Dan Ross, Summit County Soil and Water Conservationist. Dan says that drainage tile will improve the soil quality of Sarah's Vineyard, and at the same time decrease rainfall runoff into parkland streams. More rainwater will be absorbed by the subsoil and the timing of runoff will be slowed, helping to alleviate storm related flooding.

We have estimates from local farm field drainage contractors, and would like to proceed with the design and construction of a drainage system. Again, we will have to wait for the results of the EA, and secure a water source, before additional capital investments can be made.

11. Develop and Implement Foliar Feed/Pesticide Spray Program.

A Foliar Feed/Pesticide Spray Program for the vineyard will be developed and submitted to the CVNP for approval this winter. The spray program will be implemented during the 2004 growing season.

12. Begin Mowing and Soil Building Program - Fields 187, 188, 189, 190.

Fields 187, 188, 189, and 190 are full of scrub, brush, and small trees. Each year that these fields are left unmanaged they fall further and further into succession. We would like to begin a mowing and soil building program on these fields, and need the CVNP to do the initial clearing as agreed to in the lease. CVNP staff must also mark wetland buffer areas so they can remain undisturbed. Once cleared and marked, we can begin planning farming operations and caring for these fields as we do fields 191 and 192. Sarah's Vineyard needs it's partners, the CVNP and CCC, to do their part so these fields can be restored and contribute to the cultural landscape.

13. Begin Limited Wine Sales:

We have been experimenting and vinting small batches of wine. This year we are making approximately 300 gallons of fruit and grape varieties, including wine made from a pear tree at Sarah's Vineyard. Last year's Summer Solstice Art Festival generated much excitement, as well as marketing opportunities for Sarah's Vineyard. We would like to build on this excitement by offering wine sales to our visitors at the 2004 Summer Solstice Festival, and possibly on Saturday afternoons in the vineyard.

Operational Items:

- Gain State and Federal licenses, permits, and insurance.
- Make/store wine in farmhouse cellar.
- Sell wine at 2004 Summer Solstice Art Festival by the bottle.
- Sell any leftover wine & future wine on Saturdays at a stand in vineyard until the production/retail building is completed. The stock will be held in the farmhouse cellar. The stand will be a garden type shed on pallets (no foundation) - eventually to be placed in the butterfly garden at the winery.

This plan is contingent on the economic factors involved in gaining the necessary permits and insurance, and the operational costs involved. This overview is being submitted to the park for conceptual approval with the realization that further collaboration between Sarah's Vineyard, the Countryside Conservancy, and the CVNP will be needed to make it an actuality.