

**Keith B. Bishop Co- CEO & Winemaker B.W. Bishop & Sons, Inc. 1355  
Boston Post Rd. Guilford, CT 06437-2399**

February 23, 2011

Dear Members of the General Assembly; Environment Committee: RE: Proposed Bills 994 and 992

I ask that you support and pass legislation to allow for the sale and tasting of wines made from 100% CT Grown products by holders of a CT Farm Winery License at Farmer's Markets. NY and MA already allow the sales of wines at Farmer's Markets. On next page is suggested bill language.

Farmer's Markets are a popular way for many people to purchase and connect with Connecticut Grown products. Customers at farm wineries are always asking where else they can purchase our wines. Many customers visit wineries as part of travel plans since most wineries are in rural locations, and hence it is harder for them to make regular purchases at wineries.

Tastings are an important component of having consumers satisfied with their purchases. Please allow for tastings as a part of the wording, just as we can do at our wineries.

Farmer's Markets take place in many venues in our towns. Many times they take place in central, downtown areas. Please make sure that other than local ordinances or zoning regulations, that Farm Wineries can sell at these locations.

Passing this will have many positive aspects:

- 1.Support the farms and wineries that grow the crops.
- 2.Keep land in agriculture that will be needed to grow the crops to qualify to be sold here.
- 3.Create more jobs to make and sell these wines
4. Draw more consumers to Farmer's Markets for this product which in turn will support the other farmers at the markets
- 5.Create more tax revenue for the State (one of few ag commodities taxed)

The only concerns should be easily handled by the permittees: selling only to qualified buyers as specified under existing regulations. The impact to other outlets selling non-CT wines will be minimal as Farmers Markets draw a unique demographic, and the total hours open a year at one farmers market is approximately 15 weeks x 4 hours = 60 hours a year.

Sincerely,

Keith B. Bishop Co-Owner & Co-CEORE:

Here is language suggested to be added to CGS Chapter 545 Section 30--16e.

(NEW) The holder of a farm winery permit may sell and offer the tasting of free samples of CT Farm wines at Farmer's Markets as defined in Chapter 422, Sec. 22--6g(2) and 22--6g (12) . A farmer's market wine sales permit shall allow the holder of a manufacturer permit for a farm winery issued pursuant to this subsection to sell at a farmers' market, as defined in section 22--6r, subject to all applicable municipal zoning, health and public safety ordinances or regulations. Such permit shall be valid for one year for an unlimited number of farmers' market appearances. The holder of the farm winery permit shall notify the Department of Consumer Protection electronically, or in writing, of the date, location and hours of each farmers market. The annual fee for such permit shall be two hundred fifty dollars. The holder of the farm winery permit shall be exempt, at any farmer's market, from the provisions of sections 30--38, 30--52 and 30--54 and from the requirements to affix and maintain a placard, as provided in subdivision (3) of subsection (b) of section 30--39.

(NOTE) The purpose of this addition is to allow Farm Wineries to sell at farmer's markets as defined in Chapter 422, Sec. 22--6g(2) and 22--6g (12). This restricts the locations, requires CT Grown products (see Section 22--6r(7)) and requires a bonafide farmer's market registration. The process follows the same notification as currently in the statute Sec. 30-- 37j. Caterer liquor permit.

(NOTE) Section 22--6r(7) "Farm products" means any fresh fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, nuts, shell eggs, honey or other bee products, maple syrup or maple sugar, flowers, nursery stock and other horticultural commodities, livestock food products, including meat, milk, cheese and other dairy products, food products of "aquaculture", as defined in subsection (q) of section 1--1, including fish, oysters, clams, mussels and other molluscan shellfish taken from the waters of the state or tidal wetlands, products from any tree, vine or plant and their flowers, or any of the products listed in this subdivision that have been processed by the participating farmer, including, but not limited to, baked goods made with farm products.

Reference for NY York sales of NY wines at Farmers Markets:

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?url=http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/ap/Farmers-Market-Wine-Events.pdf> Reference for MA sales of MA wines at Farmers Markets: <http://www.winelawonreserve.com/?p=393>