

Featured Speakers

Steve DiFrancesco is Winemaker for Glenora Wine Cellars and Knapp Vineyards in the Finger Lakes of New York. He earned a BS from Stetson University and has since enjoyed 29 harvests in the Finger Lakes, and one in Chile. Mr. DiFrancesco worked with Guy DeVaux and Charles Fournier at Gold Seal Vineyards, with their excellent sparkling wines, from the late 70s to the mid 80s. He then worked with high-quality, barrel-aged red hybrids at Bully Hill Vineyards. Mr. DiFrancesco was an assistant winemaker at Glenora in the late 80s, as part of an ambitious expansion program with an emphasis on Sparkling Wines. He then became the winemaker at Lucas Vineyards in the early 90s, and helped expand production in high-quality, still and sparkling wines. Mr. DiFrancesco returned to Glenora in 1995 as winemaker and has helped expand their reputation and production. In 2000, the owners of Glenora purchased Knapp Vineyards and Mr. DiFrancesco is responsible for winemaking at both properties. Riesling is at the forefront of production for both wineries, though other varieties produced include other aromatic white vinifera, sparkling wines, and red vinifera, as well as hybrids and natives.

Ramón Mira de Orduña studied microbiology, biochemistry, and molecular biology at the University of Tübingen in Germany and the Universidad Autonoma of Madrid (Spain) and obtained his MSc in microbiology in Tübingen. Ramon carried out doctoral studies on the microbiology of wine lactic acid bacteria at Massey University in New Zealand and was a postdoctoral fellow at the Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute of Brock University in Canada. After 5 years as Assistant Professor at the University of Guelph, Ramon accepted an appointment as Associate Professor at Cornell University one year ago, January 2007. His studies concentrate on the effect of wine lactic acid bacteria on wine quality and yeast bacterial interactions.

Heidi Orsini is a marketing veteran with extensive agency and client experience specializing in the food industry. Over her 20-year career she has extensive marketing expertise in all aspects of advertising and marketing including marketing research, strategic planning, analysis, brand, product and project management, marketing and advertising communication, sales promotion, new product development, and menu management. Heidi was President of HAO Marketing, a marketing consulting firm specializing in developing customized marketing programs for Ohio food companies. Before that, Heidi was a former marketing executive at Ron Foth Advertising and Bob Evans Restaurants where she managed the marketing programs. Recently, she assumed the position of Breakfast Brand Strategist at Wendy's International where she will be launching "Breakfast" companywide. Heidi holds a BA in Media Management from Marietta College. She currently serves on the board of the Columbus Chapter of the American Red Cross, American RSDHope, and participates in the Women's Foodservice Forum.

Mark Saunders is the Director of Fun at the family-run Saunders Farm where he works with his wife Angela and his parents Bill and Anne. Mr. Saunders studied History at the University of Guelph before spending five years traveling the world and living in Europe. In 1993 he returned to his family strawberry farm to help take it in a new direction. Mr. Saunders is now the General Manager and also looks after event planning and the sales and marketing of Saunders Farm. He volunteers his time and abilities to many organizations and is President of the Ontario Farm

Fresh Marketing Association and North American Farmer's Direct Marketing Association. Mr. Saunders is also a founder of "Ottawa's Countryside," an award-winning marketing cooperative. He has spoken at more than 40 conferences in Britain, the U.S., and across Canada. Mr. Saunders and his wife are very busy at home with an eight-year-old son, Aiden, five-year-old daughter, Molly, and 4-year-old daughter Julia.

Alice Wise: As the Viticulturist for Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County since 1991, Alice Wise conducts applied research and educational programs for the Long Island wine industry in New York. Ms. Wise manages a 2.5 acre research vineyard based in LIHREC. The vineyard consists of a variety trial and a second block where experiments on viticulture and pest management are conducted. Research projects are also done in commercial vineyards. Projects are often done in cooperation with faculty at the Cornell University NYS Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva.

James "Jim" Wolpert is a native of Indiana. Mr. Wolpert received his Bachelor of Science from Purdue University in Horticulture in 1973, and took further training at Michigan State University, receiving a Master's degree in 1978 and a PhD in 1983. Both projects involved research on production practices and how they influence cold hardiness of 'Concord' grapevines. In 1983, Wolpert went to UC Davis as Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Pomology where he investigated production problems of pistachio nut trees. In 1985, Mr. Wolpert joined the Department of Viticulture and Enology as Viticulturist Extension Specialist, where he is responsible for applied research and grower education programs for winegrapes in northern California. His main areas of research are performance of rootstocks, winegrape clones and varieties, as well as improvements in vineyard design and cultural practices as they influence wine quality. Mr. Wolpert has been invited to speak at industry meetings in Colorado, Michigan, Missouri, New York, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Washington, as well as in Canada, Germany, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, and Spain, and is the author of more than 50 scientific and technical publications. Mr. Wolpert is past-President of the American Society for Enology and Viticulture and is recently past Chair of the Department of Viticulture & Enology where he held the title of Marvin Sands Endowed Department Chair.

State Specialists, Extension Educators, and State agency and agribusiness representatives will present topics relevant to viticulture, enology, and marketing. Speakers include: **Jerome Cajka, Dr. Imed Dami, Bruce Benedict, Dr. Doug Doohan, Dr. Mike Ellis, Marc Hunger, Gary Jones, Dave Marrison, Dr. Bill Randle, Dave Scurlock, Todd Steiner, Dr. Roger Williams, and Donniella Winchell.**