

NC Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program (NCATDSP) Study



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Executive Summary

This research project focused on studying the NCATDSP (North Carolina Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program) from a regulatory standpoint and benchmarking it against other similar highway signage programs in select states across the country. NCATDSP is currently co-administered by NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) and NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT). A total of 21 different highway signage programs across 10 different states were studied, including NCATDSP, NC Logos and NC TODS. Additionally, many interviews were held with key stakeholders in North Carolina and the selected peer states to collect data and information needed for the analysis.

The primary findings of this research are as follows:

1. **Overall Finding:** While stakeholders have significant concerns about the program, the bulk of those involved in NCATDSP believe the program is unique and effective for participant wineries, leads to increased visits and is vital for the growth of the industry.
2. **Program Administration:** The co-administration of NCATDSP by two state agencies - NCDA&CS (first phase) and then NCDOT (second and final phase) is not perceived to be well coordinated by most NC wineries interviewed. This lack of effective coordination often results in communication becoming opaque, thereby resulting in customer dissatisfaction.
3. **Program Regulations:** Benchmarking with highway signage programs in other states reveals that overall, the other programs tend to be less prescriptive with regards to rules and regulations than NCATDSP. While the intent of the NCATDSP regulations is always to benefit the citizenry, several of these have understandably caused considerable concern among NC wineries.
4. **Program Cost:** By far the most common concern identified by participating wineries is the overall cost of the program and is perhaps the most important impediment that prohibits the smaller wineries from participation. Benchmarking with other highways signage programs in other states reveals a more nuanced picture with regards to the relative cost of NCATDSP signs in relation to factors such as size of the signs, placement, recurring annual fees etc. The research team believes that the most important factor which makes the cost daunting, especially for smaller wineries, is that entire cost of the program must be paid up front.

In light of these findings above, this report makes the following recommendations with regards to the NCATDSP. More details are available in the final section of this report.

Changes to the Administrative Infrastructure of NCATDSP

1. The administration of NCATDSP should be assigned completely to NCDA&CS with NCDOT functioning similar to an “external contractor” that is “hired” by NCDA&CS to perform specific activities in the entire process in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. Further, NCATDSP staff at NCDA&CS should serve as the sole liaison that agritourism entities such as wineries need to communicate with when participating in NCATDSP.

2. A new website for NCATDSP should be created that is easy to read and contains links to all needed materials and references including, program regulations, FAQs, links to appropriate legislation, links to NC TODS and NC Logos and an easy-to-understand description of the entire process involved in approving and installing a sign.
3. NCATDSP should establish and maintain a database of all applicants, successful and unsuccessful including reasons for lack of success. This database should also include signs that are replaced or signs that are removed because of wear and tear.
4. An online tracking system should be developed that informs every applicant to NCATDSP about the current status of their requests.

Changes to Program Regulations Governing NCATDSP

1. The terms “winery” and “wine” should be allowed to be used on NCATDSP signs.
2. Regulations must be modified to permit more than 4 wineries to participate on signage at a given location. Some suggested solutions are given in the final section.
3. NCDA&CS and NCDOT should seek feedback from all agritourism facilities in the state about the necessity and appropriateness of the current hours of operation requirement and make any necessary modifications. Once these hours are determined, enforcement must be made through random checks as well as follow-up of complaints by visitors about noncompliance.
4. NCDA&CS and NCDOT should jointly examine each operating requirement specified in NCATDSP that is not required in the majority of other programs studied in this report and unless there are compelling reasons to do otherwise, every such requirement should be removed from the program.

Addressing the Cost of Participating in NCATDSP

1. Given the current levels of awareness among NC wineries, especially the smaller and newer ones, the NC Wine & Grape Council should make all North Carolina wineries aware of all the options available to them to post signs within NCATDSP as well as the NC Logos and the NC TODS programs.
2. NC Wine & Grape Council should investigate ways to defray the cost of installing signs under the NCATDSP. Besides examining the possibility of subsidizing the cost, the Council should also investigate the possibility of developing and initiating an amortization program in collaboration with one or more financial institutions of the state that makes it easier for the smaller wineries to participate in NCATDSP.
3. NC Wine & Grape Council should investigate the feasibility of implementing an insurance program for all signs participating in NCATDSP. Under such a program, participants would be able to purchase insurance for replacement or repair costs for damaged signs.

1. Overview of NC Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program

1.1 Overview

It is well documented that over the last decade, including the years of the Great Recession, the wine industry in North Carolina (NC) has shown remarkable growth. As evidence of the same, note that as of April 2014, NC has 130 wineries with tasting rooms, representing a 16% increase over a two-year period from 2012. In addition, the state is home to more than 400 individually owned grape vineyards. Overall, the state now ranks ninth in the United States in terms of wine and grape production. As expected, the industry now generates a substantial economic footprint in the state. According to the most recent economic impact study conducted in 2009 and updated in 2011 (see references), the annual economic impact of the NC wine and grape industry is \$1.28 billion and it supports nearly 7600 jobs; this represents a 58% growth from over a four-year period from 2005. (The NC Wine and Grape Council will release an updated economic impact study in 2015.) One notable aspect of the NC wine and grape industry, in contrast to other industries in the NC economy, is that the bulk of its impact occurs on the rural regions of the state since most wineries are located in rural areas. This last aspect makes it particularly noteworthy in light of the economic impact of job losses over the last two decades in NC's rural areas.

As the 2010 study "Study of Visitors to North Carolina Wineries" in 2010 (see Reference [13]) has validated, the wine industry spawns a substantial impact on tourism in the state and the state has been cited as one of the top five state destinations for wine and culinary tourism activities. Particularly noteworthy is that in 2009 there were 1.26 million wine tourist visits in NC who generated \$156 million in wine tourism revenue. Thus wine tourism adds a unique and differentiated type of activity to NC's tourism product mix and permits the state to expand its portfolio of tourism assets and lessen its dependence on any single tourism driver.

As the wine industry continues to grow in NC, it can be assumed that the associated wine tourism sector will grow as well. However, a vital condition necessary to facilitate such growth is that it should be easy for tourists to find wineries and related businesses. To address this issue, in 1999 the state legislature passed NC General Statute (NCGS) 106-22.5 to establish *North Carolina Agricultural Tourism Directions Signage Program* (<http://www.ncagr.gov/markets/agritourism/HighwaySignInfo.htm>) as a joint partnership between NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) and the NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) – see program logo (Figure 1). For the remaining report, the program will be referred to by its acronym, NCATDSP. This program allows for signs to be located on road systems ranging from freeways to two lane road ways (NC Department of Transportation Signing Section)



Figure 1

NCATDSP is widely regarded by the wine and grape industry in North Carolina as beneficial to the industry as it creates awareness of wineries and assists visitors locate wineries, especially in rural areas. Both the increased awareness and wayfinding assistance to the wineries are not only beneficial to the wineries but also economically important to the mostly rural communities where the wineries are located. For example, in 2013 the economic impact of tourism in Yadkin County, NC, (where over 12 wineries are located and are considered a main attraction) was \$33.39 million and directly supported 330 jobs (see Reference [14]). For the individual winery the program provides a degree of credibility to their winery and in theory legitimizes the business.

Notwithstanding the overall success of the program in terms of heightening the visibility of the industry, several major concerns with the program are consistently reported by wineries. A significant source of these concerns lies in the fundamental dichotomy of expectations of wineries and NCDOT in regards to the program: while businesses such as wineries regard highway signs as a form of advertising, the signs are in fact classified as traffic control devices that are regulated by federal as well as state laws. In acknowledgment of the same, the “Strategic Plan for the North Carolina Wine and Grape Industry (2014-2019) recommended that NC *“conduct a benchmarking study of the NC Agritourism Highway Signage Program”* and this research is a direct result of that recommendation. As can be verified from Appendix A, the purpose of this research project is to review NCATDSP, benchmark it against similar ones in other states, and based on the same, make recommendations for improvement to the NC program.

1.2 History

In 1999, NCATDSP was established in NC General Statute 106-22.5 which states:

(a) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall provide directional signs on major highways at or in reasonable proximity to the nearest interchange or within one mile leading to an agricultural facility that promotes tourism by providing tours and on-site sales or samples of North Carolina agricultural products to area tourists.

(b) An agricultural facility must be open for business at least four days a week, 10 months of the year in order to qualify for the directional signs provided for in this section. The Department shall assess the facility the actual reasonable costs of the sign and its installation. (1999-356, s. 1.)

Prior to this legislation, vineyards and wineries were limited in their individual ability to market their businesses to tourists. Other states, such as Virginia, had already established programs to promote their agritourism attractions (including wineries) which left the NC wine and grape industry at a competitive disadvantage. Through the efforts of NC wine and grape industry pioneers and leaders including Charlie and Ed Shelton, Buddy Norwood, and legislators such as Harold Brubaker and Mark Bassnight, the North Carolina Agricultural Tourism



Directional Signage Program was designed, developed and approved. The program was and still is a joint venture between the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) and the NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT). The responsibility of NCDA&CS is to ensure that an application meets requirements. Once that is done, NCDOT handles or oversees the engineering, manufacturing and installation of the signs.

It is important to note that the program has been and is available to any agritourism business that meets the requirements. However, to date, most of the signs are for wineries. This program has no doubt contributed to the rapid growth of the wine industry, its subsequent positive economic impact on the state of North Carolina and the preservation of the state's rural landscape.

The basic criteria for eligibility in the program were developed through collaboration between NCDA&CS and NCDOT. Over the years the requirements and stipulations of the program have



Figure 2

evolved, driven primarily by motorist safety as required by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration’s “Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD - <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/>)”, North Carolina Supplement to the MUTCD, NCDOT Standard Specifications for Roads and Structures, North Carolina Roadway Standard Drawings, and in compliance with federal and state Policies (Standard Practice, p.1). In addition, over the life of this program, NCDOT and NCDA&CS have appended other requirements, stipulations and qualifications to these guidelines primarily to assure the readability of the sign and assurance of the overall tourist/traveler experience. For example, the original signs developed were relatively small in size (Figure 2). However, because most signs are located on major highways and interstates where speed limits are higher, signs were redesigned to a larger format.

As a result of the accretion of stipulations, the two initial requirements, stipulated in NCGS 106-22.5, have grown to an extensive set of requirements and guidelines. These include the “On-Premise Growing Area Requirement” (at least 500 square feet of grape vines or other agricultural products used in producing their product) and “Words on Signs Requirement” (which clarifies or specifies what words are and are not allowed on the signs).

2 Current Signage Programs in NC

Presently NC wineries may participate in one of three Highway signage programs. The first, and the most prominent, is the above-mentioned North Carolina Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program (NCATDSP), and is the primary focus of this research project. In addition, there are two other programs that may be used by qualifying wineries to post highway signs: “Logos” and the “NC Tourist-Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) Program” This section describes the essential requirements of these three programs; however, the primary focus is on NCATDSP.

2.1 NCATDSP Requirements

Since the program's inception, NCATDSP was and is a joint partnership between the NCDA&CS and NCDOT. NCDA&CS continues to ensure compliance of every application with the program requirements while NCDOT handles or oversees the manufacturing, engineering and installation of the signs. The basic requirements for eligibility to participate in the program are detailed in the *Standard Practice for Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage* document (see Appendix B and C as well as References [1]-[5]). A brief description of the salient requirements is presented below.



2.1.1 Distance Requirements

The Standard Practices document details requirements for distance to the facility as follows:

For sign locations on freeway or other grade separated interchanges, the maximum distance that an agricultural tourism facility may be located from the initial interchange containing an agricultural tourism sign shall not exceed fifteen (15) driving miles via paved public roads. If requested and approved, freeway or expressway signs shall be located at the nearest interchange to the facility. Requests for signing at additional interchanges within fifteen (15) driving miles of the facility will be reviewed and approved on a case by case basis by the State Traffic Engineer. Additional signed interchanges shall not be located along the same route. Consideration may be given to a facility where less than ¼ mile of the driving miles is via an unpaved publicly maintained gravel or soil road.*



** Grade separated interchanges are defined as fully-controlled access interchanges that do not have intersections or driveways within the limits of the interchange*

For sign locations on all other roadway types, the maximum distance that an agricultural tourism facility may be located from the furthest agricultural tourism sign shall not exceed one driving mile via a paved public road. The one-mile limit is specified in G.S. 106-22.5. Signs must be located at intersections. Consideration may be given to a facility where less than ¼ mile of the driving mile is via an unpaved publicly maintained gravel or soil road (p. 1).

2.1.2 Operational Requirements

Operationally, applicants must have an onsite attendant, be open 10 full months a year; 4 days a week; 32 hours per week (with some exceptions – see below), have a permanent display of operating hours on property and the business' website. The full description of these

requirements can be found in the Standards of Practice (Appendix B). The following are some excerpts from that document:

Operating hours and days

The agricultural tourism facility shall be open for customers and tourists ten (10) full months per year, and at least four days per week to total a minimum of 32 hours per week.

In the event that a facility is not open 32 hours per week year-round, a supplemental sign will be required at all ramp and selected trailblazer sign locations stating when the facility is closed. These supplemental signs will prevent motorists from needlessly traveling to a facility that is not open. The Department will determine the location, design, and number of these supplemental signs (p 2).

Display of hours

The agricultural tourism facility shall have a permanent sign posted in a prominent and visible location that states the name of the business with the days and hours of operation. The agriculture facility shall also have a permanent sign posted on the premises stating the times that tours are offered, or stating that tours are available upon request. The sign shall be posted in a conspicuous location that is visible to customers entering the facility (p 2).

The agricultural tourism facility shall maintain a web site with the hours of operation and directions to the facility, preferably including a map, posted. The hours of operation specified on the web site must meet minimum requirement (p 2).

NCATDSP also requires the business to provide specific facilities and experiences to the public including growing areas, samples and tours.

The agricultural tourism facility shall provide on-site permanent public restroom facilities, drinking water suitable for public consumption, and an on-site telephone available for public use (p 2).

The agricultural tourism facility shall be able to accommodate customers in a permanent, all weather structure, and have adequate on-site parking (p 2).

The agricultural tourism facility shall offer samples and/or sales of North Carolina agricultural products (p 2).

In 2008 a clarification was posted by NCDA&CS that detailed the requirement of an on premise growing area (see Appendix E).

The intent of the legislation that created the Agricultural Tourism Signing Program is to introduce visitors to the growing area of a farm or vineyard. The NCDA&CS has determined that Agricultural Tourism Program signing will not be allowed unless the facility has an actual growing area of at least 500 square feet that can be toured from the signed facility location. Tours must be offered of the growing area, in addition to tours of any production area located on premises. Permanent on premise signing specifying the times for the tours and hours of operation of the facility must be in place prior to the qualification site visit by NCDA&CS. The growing area must be complete and in production prior to the qualification site visit by NCDA&CS. If a facility produces wine or other agricultural product but does not have a growing area on the property, it would not qualify for the program.

In addition, all participants in NCATDSP must offer tours of the facility to the public.

The agricultural tourism facility shall offer a tour to the public. The term tour is defined as an activity that is:

- (a) Directed by a knowledgeable employee (tour guide) of the business.*
- (b) Educational, informative, and entertaining in nature.*
- (c) Of sufficient length to clearly describe the materials, equipment, and processes used in the production of agricultural products by the facility.*
- (d) Conducted regularly during open business hours or, in the absence of regular tour times, upon customer demand within a reasonable time [within thirty (30) minutes of request].*

“Conducted regularly during open business hours” is defined as a minimum of two (2) regularly scheduled tours during each day the facility is open to the public (p 2).

2.1.3 Multiple Applicants for Same Sign

If there are multiple applicants at the same intersection, NCATDSP requires that all agricultural tourism facility applicants must share a sign and that a maximum of 4 facilities can be on a sign.

The names of all agricultural tourism facilities using the same intersection, freeway interchange, or ramp for access shall appear only on a single sign for each direction of travel. In order to ensure the safety of the travelling public by limiting distractions and confusing signage, a maximum of four (4) qualifying agricultural facility names may appear on the sign. Multiple agricultural tourism signs shall not be allowed for any direction of travel of an interchange, intersection, or ramp.

The NCDOT shall not maintain a waiting list for the program if the maximum number of four facility names has been met.

2.1.4 Program Cost

Based on interviews with multiple stakeholders and additional evidence uncovered by the research team, the cost of posting signs in NCATDSP varies widely based on a number of factors. These include the size of the sign needed based on location of sign; length of the facility name and number of facilities on the sign and the number of signs needed to direct the traveler to the location. Interviews revealed that a rough average estimated for a facility on a freeway (defined as a divided, multilane, control of access roadway) would be \$25,000 with some locations having to pay around \$50,000. For other types of roadways, i.e. two lane roads the cost is much less. It is estimated that a majority of the cost for the sign is for the support structure. The remainder of the cost is for building the sign and the sheeting. The estimated normal lifespan of a sign is 10 years. All costs for the program are paid by the applicant facility or facilities in full before the sign is installed. It is important to note that this program was and continues to be designed to only recover costs and is considered cost neutral. The program is not a revenue generating program for NCDOT or NCDA&CS.

All costs associated with the requested agricultural tourism signs will be at the expense of the requestor. This includes administration, investigation, design, materials, equipment, fabrication, inspection, installation, and maintenance, as well as any replacement costs as required to repair the signs and supports due to damage or deterioration. The NCDOT Traffic Engineering Branch will provide the estimate for the initial installation after approval by NCDA & CS. The cost estimate will include sign installation on steel supports for freeway and expressways and sign installations on u-channel posts on ramps and conventional roads, except where due to the sign message, the size of the sign requires steel supports. Sign locations behind adequate guardrail may be installed on non-breakaway steel supports. The requestor may elect to hire a qualified contractor to install the signs rather than reimbursing NCDOT for the installation. The NCDOT Division Engineer may require the requestor to hire a qualified contractor to perform the installation of the signs. The selected contractor shall be approved and licensed to do work in the State of North Carolina and shall follow all federal and state standards and specifications. Such a contractor must obtain prior approval from NCDOT of the materials and methods to be used. Sign installations are subject to inspection, approval, and acceptance by NCDOT.

2.1.5 Permitted Terms on Signs

NCATDSP is also very specific on the terms such as not allowing the word “winery” (even if it is a legal part of the business’ name) and images that are allowed on the sign;

The word “TOURS” is required on the signs that include the name of the business. The word “WINERY” shall not be permitted on any signs. The NCDOT reserves the right to disallow other words or messages if deemed inappropriate. Attached are example Agricultural Tourism sign designs and cost estimates for your reference. The actual department furnished sign designs and cost estimate will vary depending on the name of the facility (which determines the size of the sign) and type of installation(s).

Standard logos or emblems designed by the NCDA&CS and approved by the Department are allowed on agricultural tourism signs. The standard logo or emblem must represent the type of business, products, and tours offered to the public. If a standard logo/emblem does not exist for a type of approved business, the NCDA&CS will determine and design the appropriate logo or emblem. Businesses may not design their own unique logo.

In 2008 a clarification of the wording on signs was developed (see Appendix F).

Agricultural Tourism signs direct motorists to an agricultural tour. The sign message includes the official business name and the word "TOURS" with the following exception and clarifications:

- 1) *The word "Winery" will not be allowed on a sign even if it is included in the official name of a business.*
- 2) *Facilities that desire to use the word "Vineyard(s)" or "Farm(s)" on Agricultural Tourism Signs must meet the following requirements (in addition to all other Program requirements):*
 - *Have an actual working vineyard or farm on the same site as the facility to which motorists are directed*
 - *Provide an informative, guided tour of the actual vineyard or farm*
 - *Include vineyard or farm tour times on required permanent sign that displays other facility tour information*



Businesses that have a working vineyard or farm that is not located on the same property as the signed agricultural facility are not permitted on the Agricultural Signage Program. The signed facility must be located on the same property as the vineyard, farm, or other growing area available for touring. The vineyard, farm, or growing area (location of tour) must be a short walking distance from the signed facility/parking area, as determined by NCDA&CS when the qualification site visit is made.

If the agricultural facility is in the business of making wine but does not have a vineyard (or a suitable growing area representing the vineyard) that can be toured, program participation will not be allowed.

The salient requirements of NCATDSP are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Overview of NC Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program

Regulation	NC Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program
Operational Requirements	On-site attendant required Must be open 10 full months; 4 days a week; 32 hours per week** Display of operating hours must be permanently displayed. Web-site with hours of operation and directions required.
Tour Requirements	Tours offered must have a knowledgeable guide; be educational, informative, and entertaining; long enough to describe facility; and conducted regularly (or are within 30 minutes of customers request); must have a sign on premises with hours or operation and tour times***
Facility Requirements	Requires restroom, drinking water, public telephone, indoor seating, parking, permanent/ all-weather shelter and a growing area of at least 500 square feet
Activity Requirements	Samples and/or sales of product required
Distance Requirements	Freeway* – not to exceed 15 driving miles from first intersection; All other roads – not to exceed 1 mile from first intersection
Other	Terms required/ allowed on signs are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Tours” – required • “Vineyard” - allowed • “Winery” – not allowed Does not allow signs for freeway to freeway*
Joint Signage	Allowed – all facilities share cost (maximum of 4)****
Updating or Replacing Existing Signage	The facility is required to upgrade all existing signs (either by choice or based on DOT determination of it needing to be replaced because of accidents or storm damage or normal wear and tear) to meet current standards. Requires the facility to enter into a new agreement where the facility must meet all current criteria and requirements.

* *Grade separated interchanges are defined as fully-controlled access interchanges that do not have intersection or driveways within the limits of the interchange (NCDOT – Standard Practice Guide)*

** *if the facility is not open 32 hours per week year round, a supplemental sign will be required at all signage locations*

*** *“Conducted regularly” is defined as a minimum of two (2) regularly scheduled tours during each day the facility is open*

*****if a facility wishes to be added to an existing sign they must pay all costs associated with the addition of their name*

2.2 Logos and NC Tourist-Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) Program

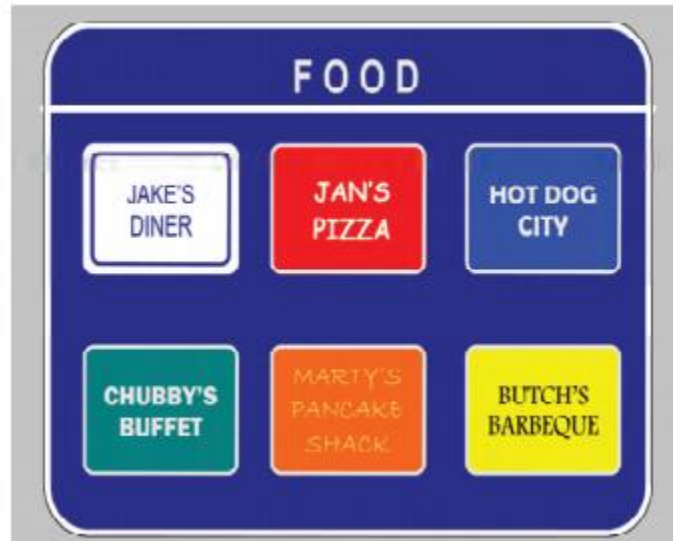


Figure 3

2009 Edition Part 2 Figure 2K-1. Examples of Tourist-Oriented Directional Signs

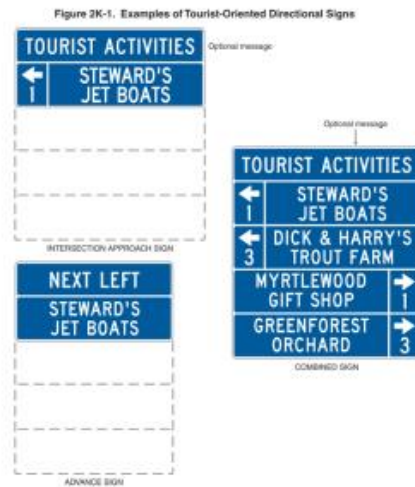


Figure 4

In addition to NCATDSP, North Carolina operates two additional programs that are utilized by wineries and other agricultural tourism facilities. These programs are the NC “Logos Program” (Figure 3) and the NC “Tourist-Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) - (Figure 4)”. It must be mentioned however, that a facility with a sign posted under NCATDSP on a given highway may not request another one under NC Logos or NC TODS.

The NC Logos Program (see Appendix I) “provides eligible businesses with the opportunity to be listed on official signs within the right-of-way of fully controlled access highways.” To participate in the program facilities must have a public restroom, parking, and a telephone available to the

public. Wineries and other agricultural tourism facilities maybe considered an “Attraction” under this program as either a “Manufacturing Facility” or an “Agricultural Facility”, per the criteria listed below:

"ATTRACTION" service. Criteria for erection of a business panel on a sign for any business or establishment shall include:

(f) Only facilities whose primary purpose is providing amusement, historical, cultural, or leisure activities to the public and are categorized as follows shall be allowed signing:

(v) Manufacturing Facilities: Locations that manufacture or produce products of interest to tourists and offer tours at least four times daily on a regularly scheduled year-round basis such as candy, ice cream, cookie, or pickle manufacturing facilities. Facilities shall produce or manufacture and exhibit or sell their products at the facilities.

(vi) Agricultural Facilities: Locations that provide tours and exhibit or sell their agricultural products or provide on-site samples of their products, such as vineyards and regional farmers markets;



By contrast, NC Tourist-Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) Program (see Appendix J) is limited to “highways other than fully controlled access highways that are either in rural unincorporated areas or in towns or cities with a population of less than 40,000.” “Tourist oriented businesses” or “tourist oriented facilities” shall be businesses or facilities that are a destination for tourists and must provide products or services that meet tourists' primary needs or interests.” Wineries and other agricultural tourism facilities may be considered under this program as either a “Facility Tour Location” or an “Agricultural Facility” per the criteria listed below:

An applicant may show that it is one of the following, which are presumed to be "tourist oriented businesses" or "tourist oriented facilities:"

(C) Facility Tour Location: a facility such as a factory, institution or a plant which conducts tours at least four times daily on a regularly scheduled year-round basis;
(H) Agricultural Facility: a facility that provides tours, on-site samples of agricultural products, or produce stands.



Both NC Logos and NC TODS programs allow for facilities to have information on roadways but the size and some requirements are different. Both programs require that a business be open 8

hours a day for 5 days a week (slightly more than NCATDSP). Under the Logos program the facility cannot be located more than 15 miles from the first interchange. Under the TODS program the facility cannot be located more than 5 miles from the first interchange. Finally, using the word “winery” is **not** prohibited under either NC Logos or NC TODS as it is under NCATDSP.

2.3 Summary Comparison between the Three NC Highway Signage Programs

In conclusion, Table 2 summarizes the comparisons between the three Highway signage programs in NC.

Table 2: Operational & Facility Requirements for NC Signage Programs

Program	On-site Attendant	Operational Hours*	Permanent Display of	Restroom & Drinking Water	Public Telephone	Indoor Seating	Parking	Permanent Shelter	Handicapped Accessible	Growing Area
NC Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program (NCATDSP)	✓	10 months 4 days/ wk. 32 hours/ wk.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NS	At least 500 sq.ft.
NC Logos Signage Program	✓	8 hours/day 5 days/wk.	NS	✓	✓	NS	✓	✓	NS	NS
NC Tourist-Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) Program	NS	8 hours/day 5 days/wk.	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

NS= Not specified in the regulations

3. NCATDSP: Process Description

This section describes the process that an agritourism facility such as a winery has to undergo to obtain a sign under NCATDSP. To the best of the knowledge of the research team, such a comprehensive description of the process does not currently exist. This process has multiple steps and primarily involves four stakeholder groups: the agritourism facility applying for the sign, NCDA&CS, NCDOT; contractor hired to install the sign (a facility may use an NCDOT-supplied contractor or privately select one from a list of approved contractors). The estimated time line

for the process is at minimum 6-9 months and could take 18 months or longer. The length of time depends on a variety of factors such as the time needed to receive necessary approvals and time spent selecting of a contractor. The general process is described below.

Initial Application and Approval from NCDA&CS

1. Visit the North Carolina Department of Transportation website <http://www.ncdot.gov/> and
 - a. Find applications, requirements, costs, etc.
 - b. Contact the appropriate NCDA&CS liaison (currently at (919) 707-3000) for a walk through of the website.
2. Send an application to the NCDA&CS.
3. Application is then reviewed for completeness by NCDA&CS liaison with regards to information such as whether or not hours of operation are listed, tours are mentioned etc.
4. Once an application is verified for completeness, NCDA&CS schedules and conducts a site visit.
5. NCDA&CS either approves or rejects the application. Approved applications are sent over to NCDOT liaison as an electronic file.

Review by NCDOT and Determination of Cost Estimate

6. NCDOT conducts a field investigation to ensure the appropriate amount of space for signs. Highway personnel look at the at the actual site, measure distances between signs, review the number of existing signs and conduct other technical requirements based on the MUTCD to assure the sign can actually be installed at the location requested. Also at this point NCDOT tries to make an initial contact with the applicant.
7. Following the field verification and measurements, the size of the design and the cost estimate is developed by NCDOT. The estimate is then sent to the applicant.

Contractor Selection and Payments

8. Applicant reviews the estimate and signs the contract and sends it back to NCDOT.
9. Once NCDOT receives a signed contract, they complete a formal cost estimate.
10. The applicant has two choices with regard to contractor selection. The applicant chooses a contractor privately on their own from a list of approved contractors provided by NCDOT or, let NCDOT select the contractor on behalf of the winery. The state encourages the applicant to privately select an approved contractor because using NCDOT to recruit a state-approved contractor slows down the process (NCDOT has to go through the bid process or use a “contractor on call” and even with the latter, NCDOT is required to provide them with considerable lead time). Additionally, privately selecting a contractor from the approved list allows the applicant to bargain for price and lead time. Regardless, once a contractor is selected,
 - a. The approved contractor places the order for materials (primarily steel) needed for installation sign since acquiring the steel for the supports takes a significant

amount of time (approx. 1 month). To speed up the process, NCDOT recommends that this be done by the contractor when the sign production order is placed.

- b. The approved contractor then provides all of the steel supports, “I beams,” etc. for the signs and does the actual installation. Note that the NCDOT only provides the actual sign to the approved contractor and meets with the contractor prior to the actual installation.
11. Payment for the sign is required before installation. With regard to billing, if the applicant chooses to have NCDOT select the contractor, they will receive one bill from NCDOT. On the other hand, if the applicant privately hires one of the contractors on the approved list, the applicant receives 2 bills – one from NCDOT (for the sign) and one from the contractor (for installation).

Sign Installation and Final Inspection

12. Once the order for the sign is placed, it takes about one month to construct the sign and about one month to get the sign to the location. The sign can be delivered by the state to Regional NCDOT Division Headquarters or the contractor can pick-up the sign at the applicant’s expense. Typically, the signs are delivered to Regional NCDOT Division Headquarters and picked up by the contractor.
13. The contractor picks up the sign at the Regional NCDOT Division Headquarters and then installs the signs.
14. Final inspection of signs is conducted by the NCDOT.

The above process is diagrammatically represented in Figure 5 where each box represents a different activity in the process and is color-coded based on the party that has primary responsibility for the step in the process. The color code is as follows:

- Purple indicates that the applicant has primary responsibility
- Green indicates that it is a NCDA&CS responsibility
- Red represents that the process is owned primarily by NCDOT
- Blue indicates the contractor that is primarily responsible

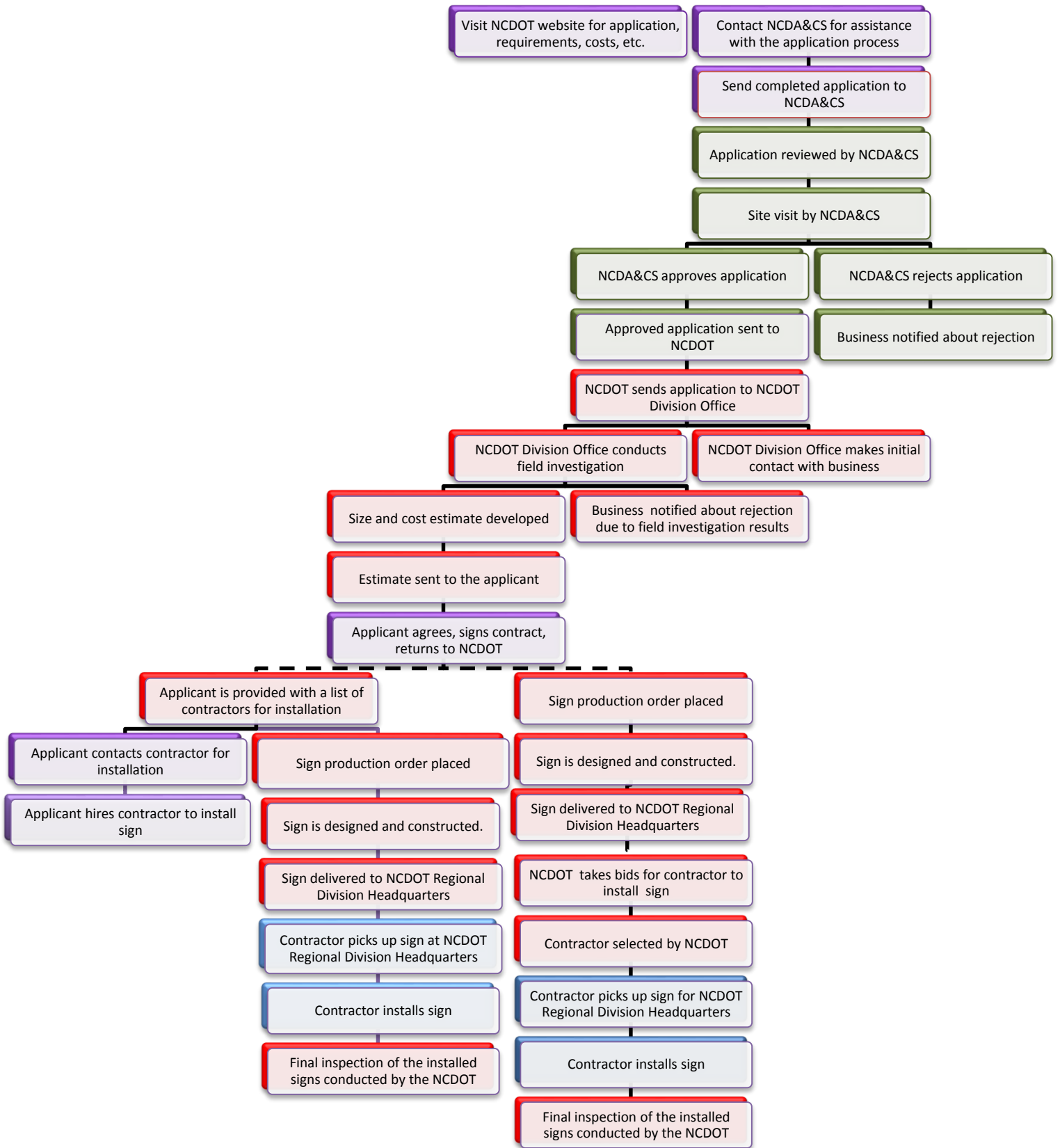


Figure 5

4. Benchmarking Results with Peer State Comparisons

An important component of any evaluation is benchmarking with peers; hence, one aspect of the evaluation of NCATDSP is comparing it to similar highway signage programs in other wine producing states. This section describes below the summary of the important highway signage programs in the following states: California (CA), Florida (FL), Georgia (GA), New York (NY), Ohio (OH), Oregon (OR), Pennsylvania (PA), Virginia (VA) and Washington (WA). The selection of these states was made with the objective to represent wine industries that are smaller than that of NC but growing (e.g., FL, OH, PA), ones that are peers/competitors (e.g. VA), aspirant states (e.g. NY, OR) as well as industry leaders (CA, WA).

In most peer states the Logos and TODS programs are run by the individual states. However, Interstate Logos Company, a privately owned company, manages Logos programs for 23 states and TODS programs for 14 states. States included under this umbrella included Florida, Georgia, Virginia, and Ohio.

4.1 California

The wine industry is of great significance to California. In 2009, the most recent economic impact study of the California wine industry was \$61.5 billion and was responsible for 300,000 jobs. A 2013 report from the Wine Institute shows that the state had 4100 bonded wineries. California does not have a specific agritourism signage program. There is a California Farm Trails program that is a part of the Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of California: http://www.calagtour.org/California_Farm_Trail_Links/# . Wineries and vineyards are given as examples of agribusinesses included in the program. It appears the program is internet based as no mention of an accompanying signage program is mentioned. With that said, the TODS code specifically states that any county having an active farm trails program that is recognized by the board of supervisors of that county may use the individualized farm trail symbol on a generic tourist oriented directional sign. Wine trails exist but the best inference from available data indicates that they are local or county based, some at least use signs; however, no specifics could be found by the research team in the public domain.

With regard to TODS and Logos, California has both programs. However, in 2012 research material indicates that the Logos program is only available for four categories Food, Fuel, Lodging and Camping. TODS in California is quite different from other states studies. All TODS signs are generic and do not list the participating businesses' name. They only get a grape cluster and an arrow pointing the tourist in the direction of the facility. The TODS program is not centralized. Applicants are referred to 1 of 12 Caltrans District Coordinators for approval.

A summary of the salient features of the highway signage programs in California is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: California - Highway Signage Program Features Summary

Regulation/ Cost Issues	CA TODS
Operational Requirements	6 days per week 40 hours per week for a minimum of three consecutive months per year and maintain regular hours and schedules (Sign needs to be covered if closed seasonally)
Tour Requirements	Not specified
Facility Requirements	Not specified
Activity Requirements	Applicants must certify that “A major portion of the income or visitors to this business is derived from motorists not residing in the immediate area of this business or activity.”
Distance Requirements	10 miles from the nearest highway intersection
Other	Decentralized program – Applicants are referred to TODS Coordinator in their respective Caltrans District Signs are generic – not company specific (grape cluster for example) Possess appropriate licenses No attraction shall be eligible for a generic tourist oriented directional sign if it is adjacent to, and visible from the highway
Joint Signage	No more than three TODS shall be allowed on one sign structure and no more than two sign structures shall be allowed at one intersection, one in each direction
Updating or Replacing Existing Signage	At the applicant’s sole cost and expense, any TODS sign which is lost, stolen, defaced, damaged or destroyed by third parties, or is found by the Department to be in a deteriorated conditions, regardless of cause.
Cost	Caltrans installs the sign(s) The cost for one panel, one direction is \$400.00 for the initial permit and Caltrans Maintenance maintains the sign panel(s). Additionally, \$70.00 - Non-refundable eligibility / application fee; \$30.00 - Annual Maintenance fee per panel per direction; \$300.00 - Installation / Processing fee per panel per direction; Total TODS Fee = \$400.00
Relevant Document Links	http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/engineering/tods/

Notes On California Farm Trails Program: In addition to CA TODS, the literature suggests that CA wineries may also participate in the California Farm Trails Program. Unfortunately, there is little information to indicate there are signs associated with them and the trails appear to be internet based. Only one reference can be found other than in the TODS Code “*In any county having an active farm trails program that is recognized*”

by the board of supervisors of that county, the individualized farm trail symbol may serve as the symbol on the generic tourist oriented directional signs". Wine trails do exist but appear to be county based.

4.2 Florida

Florida has a relatively small wine industry with about 25 certified farm wineries and another 23 listed as winemaking/wine selling operations with a total economic impact approaching \$895 million (Reference [15]). The state legislature seems to be solidly behind the viticulture industry-as evident in 2012 Florida statutes, Title XXXV, Act 599 called "Florida Viticulture Policy Act". The act contains a "State Viticulture Plan" and establishes a Viticulture Trust Fund managed by the Florida Viticulture Advisory Council to support the enactment of the plan. Some 50% of all excise taxes collected from wine sales go into this fund as do the revenues earned by the wine industry's signage program. The most recent data indicate that the fund earned \$600,000 per year of which the Council expended \$200,000 towards research and \$375,000 towards marketing and promotion of the wine industry. The highway signage program was started in 1980s but picked up usage in the 1990s and has started flourishing after the current Commissioner Adam Putnam started his tenure in 2011. The program is named **Florida Farm Winery Program** and is a part of the Highway Guide Sign Program, whose rules are available in Chapter 14-51 of the Florida Administrative Code. In that code, "farm wineries" are classified as a separate category along with recreational attractions, gas, lodging etc. However, no specific regulations/rules are imposed in that code on wineries and hence, the Florida Farm Winery Program is simple with few rules and requirements. In order to obtain a sign under the Florida Farm Winery Program, a winery is required to be registered with and certified by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services of Florida as a farm winery. One notable fact about Florida is the responsiveness of the state legislature to the industry which is attributable to the strong advocacy role played by the Council. For example, the Council lobbied the legislature to change the acreage requirement from 10 acres to 5 acres a few years ago. This change was primarily made at the request of some of the newer wineries and permitted 6 additional wineries to get certified as farm wineries. Another example of such supportive climate is that in order to qualify for a sign, per applicable statute of the Florida Administrative Code, other facilities such as recreational attractions have to prove a minimum number of visitors - e.g., recreational attractions must demonstrate they generate at least 100,000 trips annually. However this restriction is not imposed on the certified farm wineries that request a sign under this program.

A summary of the salient features of the highway signage programs in Florida is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Florida - Highway Signage Program Features Summary

Regulation/ Cost Issues	Florida Farm Winery Program
Operational Requirements	The certified farm winery must be open to public for at least 30 hours each week. Additionally, the size of the winery and local content are specified as follows: the farm winery is required to produce and sell less than 250,000 gallons of wine annually of which 60% of the wine

Regulation/ Cost Issues	Florida Farm Winery Program
Operational Requirements	should be produced from Florida agricultural products. An interview with a representative of the Viticulture Advisory Council indicates that this last “local content” requirement is not checked for enforcement and that the Council is wary of some of the newer wineries that may be violating this rule.
Tour Requirements	Tours are required – in fact, the governing statute recognizes farm wineries as “tourist attractions” and further specifies that such qualification is permitted only if the winery is registered with and certified by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services of Florida. This approval is needed before a farm winery may request a sign.
Facility Requirements	Requires parking, permanent all-weather shelter. Also must maintain a minimum of 5 acres of owned or managed land anywhere in Florida, which produces commodities used in the production of wine. This requirement used to be 10 acres before but was subsequently reduced upon the request of the industry.
Activity Requirements	Besides requiring tours, there are no other activity-based regulations governing this signage program.
Distance Requirements	Nothing specified in the description of the Florida Farm Winery Program.
Other	<p>The status of being recognized as a certified farm winery has another benefit beside the ability to request a sign under the Florida Farm Winery Program. It allows the winery to distribute its own wines on premise as well as anywhere else in the state. Wineries that do not have this certification are not allowed to self-distribute.</p> <p>A winery has to apply every year to renew its certification as a farm winery. In addition to applicable fees, the documentation also requires the winery to send current photographs of the required 5 acres of vineyard as well as photographs of signage showing the hours the winery is open and identifying location of said signage.</p> <p>The signs and their posting under this program are subject to applicable regulations from Highway Guide Sign Program, (Chapter 14-51 of the Florida Administrative Code). Such regulations govern the actual site where signs can be placed, size, spacing etc.</p> <p>Wineries are also eligible to request signs under FL’s TODS program. However, TODS is limited to rural counties that meet the specific criteria referenced in Section 288.0656 of the Rural Economic</p>

Regulation/ Cost Issues	Florida Farm Winery Program
Other	Development Initiative of Florida Statute. Additionally, the winery has to demonstrate that the majority of its visitors are from tourists not residing within 20 miles. The research team could not find examples of any prominent winery in FL that posts signs under TODS.
Joint Signage	<p>Because the number of participating wineries is still small, no situation has occurred where more than one winery has requested to be placed on the same sign. However, the applicable section on the maximum number of services listed for signs in Florida is section 2 (Standards) of Article 14-51.021 (General Service Signs of Part II of the Florida Administrative Code) and it suggests that at most 4 facilities can be listed on a given sign. It also seems that this number is based on guidance available in MUTCD. Interestingly, this rule also states <i>“if 4 or more general services are available at an interchange, or are anticipated in near future, a supplemental roadside sign denoting the available general services and reading “NEXT RIGHT” or the interchange exit number shall be installed.”</i> Therefore, it appears that up to eight wineries may be listed at an interchange across two different signs.</p> <p>For guidance on non-limited access roadways, the regulations governing Florida’s TODS program allows for 4 business services/activities per sign assembly and three maximum sign assemblies at one intersection approach. This allows up to 12 services to be listed.</p>
Updating or Replacing Existing Signage	2012 Florida Statute, Title XXXV, Chapter 599, Article 599.004, 2 (b) states that <i>“All costs for placing each sign shall be paid by the certified Florida Form Winery requesting the sign. However, the cost of placing the sign shall not exceed \$250 and the annual permit fee shall not exceed \$50”</i> . This leads to the conclusion that the wineries pay for updating or replacing existing signage; however, the cost structures are vastly lower in Florida.
Cost	<p>Per the statute, the cost of raising a sign cannot exceed \$250 per sign and the annual permit fee cannot exceed \$50 per sign. In addition a licensing fee of \$10 every year is paid to Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services for each sign posted on behalf of a farm winery.</p> <p>However, in order to be eligible to receive a sign, a farm winery has to be recertified as such every year. The costs of this recertification are \$100 application and registration fee and \$10 licensing fee for each sign posted on behalf of the winery.</p>

Regulation/ Cost Issues	Florida Farm Winery Program
Cost	Therefore, the total initial cost to a farm winery to post one sign is at most \$420, including certification, permit and licensing fees. Thereafter, the recurring annual cost of maintaining that sign is \$120.
Relevant Document Links	http://www.flsenate.gov/Laws/Statutes/2012/Chapter599/All http://forms.freshfromflorida.com/06602.pdf

4.3 Georgia

Georgia’s wine industry can be considered small, with approximately 39 wineries in the state, however the industry is growing with over a dozen new wineries opening in recent years in north Georgia. Recently a new American Viticulture Area (AVA) has been established that includes northern Georgia and western North Carolina – the Upper Hiwassee Highlands AVA. NC and GA wineries located in the new AVA work together to conduct joint marketing and events. Economically, “Georgia wineries and vineyards and related sectors, along with visitor spending contributes up to \$81.6 million in output, 655.6 jobs throughout the state’s economy, and \$4.1 million in state and local tax revenue (Wolfe, Kane, & Stubbs, 2013 p 29).”

Georgia has two programs for tourism highway signage. As with many states Georgia has a Logos program. This program is managed by a private company Georgia Logos, L.L.C. which is a division of the larger Interstate Logos LLC, a division on Lamar Advertising Company. Interstate Logos Company manages Logos programs for 23 states and TODS programs for 14 states. States included under this umbrella included Florida, Georgia, Virginia, and Ohio. When contacted by this research team, Floyd Williams, President of Interstate Logos indicated that he should be the only one from the company to address any questions relating to the programs in the states Interstate Logos manages. However, his reply to most of the questions was that the website contained the needed information. Finally, he also stated that he had directed all of the Interstate Logos offices to not answer any questions if contacted by the research team and that the team be referred to his office and the website instead. Therefore, this report on Georgia is restricted to information obtained from their website (<http://www.georgia.interstatelogos.com/state/home.aspx>).

The second program is the Georgia Agricultural Tourist Attraction program managed by a joint effort between the Georgia Department of Agriculture and the Georgia Department of Transportation. Based on interviews this program was based on the NC Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program, so it not surprising that the programs have many similarities (see Table 12). Two of the main differences between the programs are the size of the signs and the cost. The signs are 3’ x 3’ and cost is a \$300 application fee and then \$134 (one time) for each sign. If the signs are damaged on need to be replaced, the business is financially responsible.

One major difference between the NC program and the GA program is that signs are not allowed on interstate highways, but are at the top of exit ramps on interstates. They can be placed on other roads as well. The overall process of applying and placing signs are similar to the NC program with a few differences. A location that would like to participate in the program contacts the Agritourism Manager in the Georgia Department of Agriculture and completes the application form. All applicants must pay a registration fee of \$300 at the time they submit the application. The Agritourism Manager then reviews the application, conducts a site visit and then makes the final decision on approving the site for the program. Once a site is approved the application is sent to the Georgia Department of Transportation (Georgia DOT) for the installation of the sign. All signs are a standard 3' x 3' structure and cost \$134 for each sign. Throughout the process the applicant's main contact is the Agritourism Manager. The Agritourism Manager works/negotiates with the Georgia DOT on behalf of the site. Once the sign has been placed the Georgia DOT notifies the Agritourism Manager. The Agritourism Manager keeps a file and record of all signs and their status. This process normally takes nine months to one year. Because of the impact these signs have on attracting tourists to specific areas some local destination management organizations have been willing to pay for part or all of the signage cost for a site.

Georgia has approximately 96 sites participating in the program. Of the approximate 39 wineries in the state, almost all have a highway sign.

A summary of the salient features of the highway signage programs in Georgia is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Georgia - Highway Signage Program Features Summary

Regulation/Cost Issues	GA Logo	GA Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program
Tour Requirements	Not specified	Tours required; must be educational, informative, and entertaining; must have a sign on premises with hours or operation and tour times
Activity Requirements	Regional interest to traveling public and qualify as a participating category	<i>The activity allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment and/or educational purposes, to view or enjoy agriculturally related activities.</i>
Distance Requirements	5 miles from first intersection	10 miles from first intersection
Joint Signage	Allowed – up to 6 facilities	Not specified
Updating or Replacing Existing Signage	All logo sign maintenance will be performed by Georgia Logos, LLC or its contractors.	Additional fees may be assessed to cover the cost of replacing the sign or sign panels.
Cost	\$550 per year/per direction/per mainline sign	\$300 application fee \$134 (one time) for each sign – signs are 3'x3'

Regulation/Cost Issues	GA Logo	GA Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program
Cost	\$200 per year/per direction/per ramp sign \$100 per year/per trailblazer NOTE: Additional fees for production and installation of logos also apply.	
Other		Signs cannot be placed on interstate highways. However, where appropriate, they are placed at the top of exit ramps.
Relevant Document Links	http://www.georgia.interstatelogs.com/state/home.aspx	http://agr.georgia.gov/agri-tourism_in_Georgia.aspx

4.4 New York

New York has an established wine industry with over 353 wineries, 1,631 family vineyards and an annual production that approximates 15 million cases. It has several AVA regions and numerous wine trails. The total economic impact of the industry approximates \$4.6 billion.

The primary Association is New York Wine & Grape Foundation (<http://www.newyorkwines.org/>). The foundation was formed in 1985 with legislation that specifically requires it to foster cooperation in the industry. In particular, Jim Tresize (President) confirmed that the primary objective of the foundation is to get the stakeholders of this industry to work together and promote winery related tourism. The foundation has done a very effective job of educating legislators on the economic significance of the wine industry and the tourism that it generates approximately 5,000,000 visits last year. The foundation is funded through state appropriations but spends all its money on wine industry related research conducted at Cornell University and pays for a substantial measure (40%) of the costs of the wine trail associations. One proof of the effectiveness of the advocacy conducted by this foundation is that in 2014 it got Governor Cuomo to sign several laws on behalf of the industry that were aimed squarely at facilitating the growth of the industry. Among others, this law added wine trails, expanded existing ones, allowed farm wineries to operate up to five branch stores, gave them custom crush capability to encourage smaller vineyards to enter the industry, made direct shipping more efficient and consolidated a two-license system into one. Another bill passed in 2013 and supported by this Association allows wine to be sold at farmers markets from wineries that are located within 20 miles of the roadside market. In addition, in October 2012 the Governor hosted New York's first Wine, Beer and Spirits Summit and the Governor's Cup and Wine Tour in the Finger Lakes Region; the 2013-14 state budget included \$7 million for Market New York and Taste New York to support a multi-faceted regional marketing plan.

A NY winery can obtain a sign in one of three ways:

1. Participate in the *Wine Trail Sign Program* (available at foundation website) sponsored by the NY Wine & Grape Foundation
2. Request a sign under the *NYS Signs Program-Tourist Oriented Directional (TODS) Signs program* (available at <https://www.dot.ny.gov/programs/nys-signs/tod>) or request one under
3. Request a sign under the *NYS Signs Program-Specific Service (Logos) Signs Program* (<https://www.dot.ny.gov/programs/nys-signs/logo>) as an “Attraction”.

The primary program is the first one, which was started at the behest of the foundation in 1989 in the Finger Lakes Region, three years before the Agritourism Highway Signage Program’s initiation in North Carolina. Descriptions of both programs are available at the websites mentioned in Table 6.

The New York Wine Trail Sign Program is open to all wineries that qualify by being within the 5 mile limit of a wine trail. There are two kinds of wine trails in New York: the legislated wine trails and other wine trails managed by private organizations. A winery has to be a part of a legislated wine trail to obtain a sign under the program; however, if a winery shows proof that it is working towards becoming a part of a legislated wine trail within a definite period of time in the future, it may obtain a sign under this program despite not being a part of a legislated wine trail. In New York, the New York State Liquor Authority issues different kinds of licenses to different wineries. The most common license issued is that of a Farm Winery (approximately 350 of the 373 wineries in New York have this designation). A farm winery license stipulates that 100% of the grapes should be from New York even though the grapes may or may not be grown on the premises of the winery itself. This is how New York implements a practice of local content. However, a winery need not be a holder of a farm winery license (in other words, it can get its grapes or fruit or juice from anywhere in the world) in order to obtain a sign under this program.

In order for a farm winery to qualify for the foundation sponsored wine trail sign program, it has to be a part of a legislatively approved wine trail and be within 5 miles of the designated wine trail (research indicates that most farm wineries are covered under this definition). Per the Wine Trail Sign Program, a farm winery is expected to “usually grow their own fruit” and is limited to producing a maximum of 150,000 gallons of wine annually (approximately 750,000 bottles or 62,500 cases).

Overall, New York seems to have taken a “trail-oriented” approach to the development of this industry and the focus is as much on developing and marketing regional wine trails as it is on individual wineries. Also evident is the ultimate objective of increasing winery related tourism.

A summary of the salient features of the highway signage programs in New York is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: New York - Highway Signage Program Features Summary

Regulation/ Cost Issues	NY Wine Trail Sign Program
Operational Requirements	No specifications about hours of operation in description of program or display of signs with hours of operation
Tour Requirements	The winery is required to be a tourism attraction. Article II.C (Policies-Gen. Principles) of <i>Wine Trail Sign Program</i> that says <i>“to be eligible for signing, wineries must provide a tourism component. Examples include, but are not limited to vineyard tours, wine making demonstrations, wine tasting and the sale of products authorized in Section 76-a through Section 76-D of the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law.”</i> Therefore, the best inference is that although not specifically required by the <i>Wine Trail Sign Program</i> , tours are expected by virtue of the requirement that the farm winery provide tourism related activities.
Facility Requirements	<p>Facility requirements are not specified anywhere except in the Logos program regulations which stipulate that the facility have “adequate parking areas, restrooms and drinking water where appropriate, provide or be reasonably close to a phone for public use and, if seasonal, provide covering/removal of the sign when not in use.”</p> <p>Nonetheless, it is reasonable to assume that amenities such as restrooms, drinking water, indoor seating etc. are implicitly expected in the approval process administered by New York State Department of Transportation.</p>
Activity Requirements	Not specified
Distance Requirements	<p>(1) For a farm winery to get a sign under the <i>Wine Trail Sign Program</i>, it needs to be at most 5 miles off the designated wine trail.</p> <p>(2) For a farm winery to get a sign under the TODS program, it has to be at most 5 miles from the Highway. Exceptions are granted but only if the facility <i>“is of significant tourist interest, as determined by DOT.”</i></p> <p>(3) To qualify under the Logos program, a winery needs to be within 15 miles of exit ramp.</p>
Other	<p>The best inference is that samples and or sales of product are required in this program indirectly by virtue of the specification by the Wine Trail Sign Program that the farm wineries provide tourism related activities.</p> <p>Also, the program does not impose any growing area requirement, stating instead that <i>“a winery is a location where wine is actually manufactured. The grapes used in the manufacturing process may be grown on the same premises as the winery, or maybe obtained from an off-premise source.”</i></p>

Regulation/ Cost Issues	NY Wine Trail Sign Program
Joint Signage	<p>Never directly addressed for the <i>Wine Trail Sign Program</i></p> <p>For the TODS program, the regulations say that “at any given intersection a maximum of 12 TODS signs may be accommodated.”</p> <p>The Logos program allows for a maximum of four services to be listed on one sign. Additionally, only one Logos sign is allowed per intersection/interchange.</p>
Updating or Replacing Existing Signage	<p>For the <i>Wine Trail Sign Program</i>, the guideline states that the “<i>association representing the wine trail is responsible for all costs associated with manufacturing installation and maintenance</i>”. A conversation with Jim Tresize (President of NY Wine and Grape Foundation) confirmed that the Foundation only pays for the trail sign. If a winery wishes a sign with the word “winery” on it, the winery has to pay but Tresize estimated that the cost is about \$300 per sign. Further, if the winery wishes to list its own name in addition to the word “winery,” then the New York State Liquor Authority charges an additional \$50 per year under “Use & Occupancy Permit.”</p> <p>For the TODS and Logos programs, the individual facility is responsible for installation and maintenance. However, costs are very reasonable. In addition to the cost of the initial sign, posts and back panels, the permit cost per sign in the TODS program is \$50 per year and is \$100 per year per location in the Logos program.</p>
Cost	<p>Under the <i>Wine Trail Sign Program</i>, the association that manages a wine trail pays for the signs that announce the wine trail on the highways covered by the wine trail. Individual wineries pay for signs that promote their names; however, as noted above, the cost is in the low hundreds.</p> <p>Wineries that are not a part of a wine trail or do not qualify for <i>Wine Trail Sign Program</i> and opt for TODS or Logos programs have to pay for the sign and costs of installation. Permit costs are \$50 per year for TODS and \$100 per year per location for the Logos program.</p>
Relevant Document Links	<p>www.newyorkwines.org</p> <p>https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/operating/oom/transportation-systems/repository/TSMI13-03.pdf</p> <p>https://www.dot.ny.gov/programs/nys-signs</p>

4.5 Ohio

Ohio has over 175 wineries in the state. Ohio’s grape and wine industry’s economic impact is estimated to be \$786 million on the state’s economy and provides 5,291 jobs. It is estimated that 2,737,000 million wine related tourists visited Ohio wineries in 2012 (Reference [5]).

Ohio has two programs for tourism highway signage. As with many states Ohio has a Logos and TODS program. Both of these programs are managed by a private company Ohio Logos, L.L.C. which is a division of the larger Interstate Logos Company. Based on information obtained from their website (<http://www.ohio.interstatelogos.com/state/home.aspx>) both programs are straight forward.

A summary of the salient features of the highway signage programs in Ohio is presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Ohio - Highway Signage Program Features Summary

Regulation/Cost Issues	Ohio Logos	Ohio TODS
Operational Requirements	Can be a seasonal business, <i>but the signs must be covered, removed or months of operation added during those times the business is not in operation.</i>	<i>8 hours per day, 5 days per week (one of which must be a Saturday or Sunday).</i> Can be a seasonal business, <i>but the signs must be covered, removed or months of operation added during those times the business is not in operation.</i>
Tour Requirements	Not specified	Not specified
Facility Requirements	Requires parking	
Activity Requirements	<i>Must have regional significance. Have as its primary purpose the provision of amusement, historical, cultural, or leisure activities for the public.</i>	Winery falls under the commercial designation. <i>Must derive a major portion of its income or motorists during the normal business season from motorists not residing in the immediate area (within 10 miles of the Tourist Oriented Activity).</i>
Distance Requirements	5 miles from the exit in urban areas and 15 miles in rural areas	10 miles from intersection
Other	Not specified	<i>Attendance of at least 2,000 in 12 consecutive months Not eligible to participate in the Logos program Must be in rural area</i>

Regulation/Cost Issues	Ohio Logos	Ohio TODS
Joint Signage	Allowed – up to 6 facilities	<i>A business plaque is 6’ wide by 2’ high. There is a maximum of 4 signs per assembly with a 6’ wide by a 1’ high header plaque. A symbol or logo is allowed on the signs. Three assemblies per direction (12 activities) may be installed at an intersection. This number may vary depending on the layout of the intersection.</i>
Updating or Replacing Existing Signage	All Logos signs maintenance will be performed by Ohio Logos, Inc. or its contractors.	All Logos sign maintenance will be performed by Ohio Logos, Inc. or its contractors.
Cost	<i>Prices range between \$900 and \$1200 per year/per direction depending on the traffic count at each exit. This is inclusive of one (1) mainline and one (1) ramp logo. A trailblazer, if required, is \$120 per year.</i>	\$360 annually. Trailblazer costs \$120 per year. Additional fees may be apply for production, fabrication, and installation of the actual sign.
Relevant Document Links	http://www.ohio.interstatelogos.com/state/home.aspx	http://www.ohiotods.interstatelogos.com/state/home.aspx

4.6 Oregon

In 2010 the economic impact of the Oregon wine industry was \$2.7 billion and supported 13,518 jobs. As of that time, Oregon had 418 wineries and 848 grape growers. The wine industry’s impact grew some 93% since the previous study was conducted in 2005 (see http://www.oregonwine.org/media/60858/or_econreport_2010_final.pdf). As established in Oregon Statute, the structure for the tourism signage program in Oregon is somewhat unique. The governing body is called the Oregon Travel Information Council, 10 members are appointed by the governor and one position represents the Oregon Transportation Commission. Their mission is to create a great visitor experience by providing directions to destinations, connecting travelers with Oregon’s resources, and ensuring safe and convenient travel. (<http://ortravelexperience.com/>). They conduct business under the Oregon Travel Experience (OTE) moniker. Guidelines, rules and regulations were significantly changed in late 2014 and the description provided below is based on the draft supplied by Sign Operations Director of Oregon Travel Experience. Wineries, vineyards, tasting rooms and trails all qualify for Oregon’s Logos and TODS program. Signage cost varies greatly by location and traffic volume. Both programs are designed for businesses located within three miles of an interchange; however, waivers are permitted for facilities located up to 15 miles from the initial sign. Standard operating hours under both programs are reasonable. In addition, waivers for seasonable hours and limited hours

are available for wineries, vineyards and tasting rooms. Interestingly, Oregon has been in leader in formulating both the TODS and Logos highway signage program. OTE initiated the TODS program in 1983 and was given permission by the Federal Highway Administration to install them on an experimental basis. In 1989, Oregon’s standards were adopted into the Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and this program is now permitted for use in all states. (2) With regard to “Attraction” signs covered under the Logos program, Oregon experimented with “Attraction” Logos signs in the late 1990’s. The Federal Highway Administration officially added the “Attraction” Logos signs to permitted services on Logos signs in 2000. Oregon does not have an Agritourism Signage Program. The closest thing they have is Oregon Country Trails that bills itself as Oregon’s “only agritourism system.” It was originally funded by a Rural Business Enterprise Grant but is now funded through small annual dues. This is a true “hybrid trail” program utilizing brochures, website and Facebook. They are not currently expanding the program; only maintaining current trails. The website, <http://www.oregoncountrytrails.com/> is not regularly updated. Signs are made from wood and are available at minimal cost to members and are located on private property.

A summary of the salient features of the highway signage programs in Oregon is presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Oregon - Highway Signage Program Features Summary

Regulation/ Cost Issues	Oregon Country Trails	OR TODS	OR Logos
Operational Requirements	In order to qualify, business must have an attractive property, something to do, something to see and something to buy. Required to post and maintain regular operating hours.	6 continuous hours a day 6 days a week (No reservations or appointments allowed) May operate seasonally (30 or more days consecutively) On-site attendant required. Businesses must display permanent on premise signing which is visible from the roadway and sufficient to direct motorists to appropriate entrance. The on premise signing must display all or part of the Registered Business Name. Samples and or sales of product required to qualify as a Winery or Tasting Room.	6 hours a day, 6 days a week of continuous operation during normal business season (waivers available through an approved supplemental message). “Seasonal operation” with waiver (No reservations or appointments allowed as part of operating hours.) On-site attendant required. Businesses must display permanent on premise signing which is visible from the roadway and sufficient to direct motorists to appropriate entrance. The on premise signing must display all or part of the Registered Business Name.

Regulation/ Cost Issues	Oregon Country Trails	OR TODS	OR Logos
Operational Requirements		<p>To qualify as a Vineyard, must have 15 acres onsite and must provide proof of acreage.</p> <p>To qualify wineries must have a license to offer tasting and to sell their wines or cider at retail directly to the consumer; Tasting Rooms must have a license to offer tasting and to sell their wine, cider, and/or spirits directly to the consumer.</p>	<p>Photograph required showing outdoor on premise signing that is visible to motorists.</p> <p>Samples and or sales of product required to qualify as a Winery or Tasting Room.</p> <p>To qualify as a Vineyard must have 15 acres onsite and must submit proof of acreage.</p> <p>To qualify, wineries must have a license to offer tastings and to sell their wines or cider at retail directly to the consumer; Tasting Rooms must have a license to offer tastings and to sell their wine, cider, and/or spirits directly to the consumer.</p>
Tour Requirements	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
Facility Requirements	Requires restroom	<p>Facility must be “Regionally Significant” (means a travel experience that is important to Oregon visitor interests and the state of Oregon tourist industry).</p> <p>Requires restroom, drinking water, and parking. Written assurance required that the business conforms to public accommodations act and ADA guidelines.</p>	<p>Facility must be “Regionally Significant” (means a travel experience that is important to Oregon visitor interests and the state of Oregon tourist industry).</p> <p>Requires restroom, drinking water, parking, and reasonably close public telephone. Written assurance required that the business conforms to public accommodations act and ADA guidelines.</p>
Activity Requirements		Not specified	Not specified
Distance Requirements		Distances to eligible businesses may not exceed 3 miles in any direction of an	Distances to eligible businesses may not exceed 3 miles in any direction of an interchange or

Regulation/ Cost Issues	Oregon Country Trails	OR TODS	OR Logos
Distance Requirements		<p>interchange or intersection. The limit of eligibility may be extended in 3-mile increments until one or more businesses choose to participate, or until 15 miles is reached, whichever comes first.</p> <p>Facility must not be visible or recognizable to the motorist within 300 feet of the approaching intersection or access to the facility.</p>	<p>intersection. The limit of eligibility may be extended in 3-mile increments until one or more businesses choose to participate, or until 15 miles is reached, whichever comes first.</p> <p>Ramp sign not required if facility is visible from exit.</p>
Other	<p>Oregon’s only branded rural tourism system funded through associated membership fees (\$100 per business) and corporate sponsors (originally funded by a Rural Business Enterprise Grant). Now it is a private entrepreneurial program that works in conjunction with local CVB’s and Chambers of Commerce.</p> <p>Program is an example of a hybrid trail</p>	<p>Standards for TODS signs, etc. were significantly updated on November 1, 2014</p> <p>Some cities have been declared “no TODS zones”</p> <p>TODS signs must be limited to areas primarily rural in character or to areas where adequate sign spacing can be maintained.</p> <p>ODOT’s goal is to turnaround sign applications within 30 days. ODOT is allowed another 40 days on reviews forwarded to them. Once approved, the timetable adjusts based on the time to fabricate the signs and have them installed. The total estimated time for the entire process is 90-120 days.</p> <p>Winery must submit copy of Registered Business Name</p>	<p>Standards for Logos signs, etc. were significantly updated on November 1, 2014</p> <p>Logos signs must be limited to areas primarily rural in character or to areas where adequate sign spacing can be maintained.</p> <p>Logos program in OR does not allow signs at interchanges leading motorists to another freeway or expressway.</p> <p>New sign installation requires an ODOT engineering review.</p> <p>Oregon Travel Experience (OTE) strives to process applications within 30 days. Once ODOT is in receipt of the application, their process is usually completed within 40 days. Once approved, the timetable is based upon the applicant’s response time to OTE’s permit and plaque manufacturing specifications. Applicant supplies the plaque.</p>

Regulation/ Cost Issues	Oregon Country Trails	OR TODS	OR Logos
Other	<p>Website is not actively maintained.</p> <p>Bylaws available in document referenced below in this table</p> <p>The organization, Oregon Country Trails, helps design the route, provides brochures and markets the trail.</p>	<p>from Secretary of State's Office and Map/sketch of the business in relation to the nearest highway.</p> <p><u>Advance TODS signs</u> are limited to two lines of Directional Legend and two lines of Registered Business Name identification.</p> <p><u>Intersection TODS signs</u> are limited to two lines of Registered Business Name identification, arrow and mileage to the business.</p>	<p>However, sign sketch must be approved by OTE.</p> <p>Winery must submit copy of Registered Business Name from Secretary of State's Office and Map/sketch of the business in relation to the nearest highway. Only the applicant's Registered Business Name, or portion of that name, is allowed by Federal and State Standards.</p>
Joint Signage	Not specified	<p>Up to four TODS signs per post, per intersection.</p> <p>Signs may be used in conjunction with county or city programs.</p>	<p>Maximum of 4 Logos signs per interchange each direction and a maximum of 6 panels per sign. (Often there is room for only one board).</p> <p>Signs may be used in conjunction with county or city programs.</p>
Updating or Replacing Existing Signage	Not specified	If the name of the company changes, a fee of \$100 per sign is charged to cover the costs of manufacture and installation.	If an applicant wants to replace a Logos sign, the fee is \$75 per panel plus the cost of production.

Regulation/ Cost Issues	Oregon Country Trails	OR TODS	OR Logos
Cost	All signs wood construction Main Sign 24"x18" one sided \$48. Two sided \$65. Rider signs 24" x6" \$22. One sided \$35. (Basically say open or closed)	Oregon Travel Experience (OTE) sign fees are determined by highway location and traffic density. Signs are mounted on treated wood posts. The signs themselves are prismatic sheeting/plywood	Oregon Travel Experience (OTE) sign fees are determined by highway location and population density.
Relevant Document Links	http://www.oregoncountrytrails.com/ShowArticle.aspx?ID=116	http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/pages/rules/oars_700/oar_733/733_030.html	http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/pages/rules/oars_700/oar_733/733_030.html

4.7 Pennsylvania

In 2011 there were 160 wineries in Pennsylvania. According to the economic impact study conducted in 2013 (see Reference [14]), the economic impact of the wine and grape industry in Pennsylvania in 2011 was \$1.9 billion (a 20% decrease from 2007) and it was responsible for 8,629 jobs. Also, the wine and grape industry saw 1.2 million tourists visit Pennsylvania wineries.

Pennsylvania operates two highway signage programs, Logos and TODS, which are relevant to agritourism businesses including wineries. Both programs are managed by the Pennsylvania Tourism Signing Trust. "The Pennsylvania Tourism Signing Trust was created in 1984 by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT). The Trust is comprised of seven trustees and a representative from PennDOT and the Department of Community and Economic Development. The purpose of the Trust is to provide the day-to-day administration of the Logos Signing Program and the Tourist Oriented Directional Signing (TODS) Program in accordance with the applicable statutes and PennDOT Guidelines. The Trust is responsible for determining the fees necessary for the administration of the programs, collecting of fees paid by the program participants, executing contracts for construction, engineering and maintenance of signs, paying expenses, and providing for long-term financial viability of the programs by establishing a fund for replacement of signs necessitated by casualty or deterioration (<http://palogo.org/about-us>).

The requirements in both programs are similar with cost being the main difference. Both have a non-refundable application fee (\$500 for Logos and \$75 for TODS). Under the Logos program a Mainline sign costs \$7,000 (with a \$326 annual fee), Ramp signs cost \$250 (with a \$152 annual fee), and Trailblazer signs costs \$200 (with a \$152 annual fee). The cost for the TODS program in urban areas is \$650 per sign and in rural areas is \$800 per sign with no annual fee.

A summary of the salient features of the highway signage programs in Pennsylvania is presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Pennsylvania - Highway Signage Program Features Summary

Regulation/ Cost	PA Logos^(*)	PA TODS^(*)
Operational Requirements	Open 30 days and 1,500 hours per year	30 days per calendar year 1,500 hours per year
Tour Requirements	Tours required and must be educational	Tours required and must be educational
Facility Requirements	Requires restroom, drinking water, parking, and a growing area of at least 3,000 vines or 5 acres of vineyards	Requires parking, and <i>maintaining 3,000 vines or 5 acres of vineyards in the Commonwealth</i>
Activity Requirements	Attraction via Penn DOT Traffic Engineering Manual – <i>A facility that is of interest to and destination for motorists and is eligible for participation in the Logos program</i>	Open to the general public for tours, tasting and sales
Distance Requirements	5 miles from the exit in urban areas and 15 miles in rural areas <i>Not allowed at interchanges with other freeways</i>	5 miles from intersection
Joint Signage	Allowed – up to 6 facilities	Allowed – up to 6 facilities
Updating or Replacing Existing Signage	<i>Additional fees may be assessed to cover the cost of replacing the sign or sign panels.</i>	The participant is responsible for all maintenance costs.
Cost	\$500 non-refundable application fee Mainline sign - \$7,000 (w/ a \$326 annual fee) Ramp sign - \$250 (w/ a \$152 annual fee) Trailblazer - \$200 (w/ a \$152 annual fee)	\$75 non-refundable application fee; Urban area \$650 per sign; Rural area \$800 per sign (No annual fee)
Other	Must have a paved driveway. A licensed site that produces a maximum of 200,000 gallons of wine per year	Must have a paved driveway. A licensed site that produces a maximum of 200,000 gallons of wine per year

Regulation/ Cost	PA Logos ^(*)	PA TODS ^(*)
Other	Admission charge, if any, must be apparent to prospective visitors at point of entry.	Admission charge, if any, must be apparent to prospective visitors at point of entry.
Relevant Document Links	http://www.palogo.org/logo-program	http://www.palogo.org/tods-program

(*) Both PA Logos and PA TODS are maintained by PA Tourism Signing Trust.

4.8 Virginia

The wine industry plays an increasingly important role in Virginia's economy. In 2012, Virginia released a report on the economic impact of the wine industry on Virginia's economy, using data from 2010. The data shows an increase in the economic impact growing from nearly \$362 million dollars in 2005 to \$747 million in 2010. Full-time equivalent jobs in the industry increased from 3162 jobs in 2005 to 4753 jobs in 2010. According to this same study, the number of wineries increased from 129 to 193. However, current data on websites <http://www.virginiawine.org/wineries> lists 255 wineries.

To support this growing industry, Virginia has an extensive signage program for the wineries. In fact, there are five signage programs that promote the industry:

- Signs were installed to Promote Virginia's AVAs and Wine Regions (signs approximately 35 square feet in size placed as you enter AVAs and/or wine regions) – The program was enacted in 2012 and the first signs were erected in 2014.
- Virginia Supplemental Guide Signs Program (Grandfathered) Brown Signs
- Virginia TODS Program (Blue signs on rural Primary and Secondary routes) – This is an enhanced program over other states in this study.
- Virginia Logos Program (Blue signs on Limited Access Highways under the Attractions service) – This program is very inclusive of the wine industry.
- The Logos and TODS Programs include provisions to allow "Wine Trails" to be displayed. (Separate wine trails also exist that are not covered under either of these programs.)

The TODS Program and the Attractions service of the Logo Program were established as part of the Integrated Directional Signing Program (IDSP) in September of 2004 and include a broad range of agricultural products, including beer, ciders, distilleries, wineries, etc. Once those Programs were established, wineries no longer qualified for the brown winery signs. The existing brown signs for wineries were all grandfathered into Supplemental Guide Sign Program. Virginia Logos is the independent contractor that administers the IDSP for VDOT.

The TODS Program includes an Application Fee of \$100 and an Annual Fee of \$450 for each sign. Participants in the Logo Attractions Program either provide their business logo plates or order them directly from Virginia Logos. In addition, there is an Annual Fee of either \$800 or \$1,000 per direction for one mainline sign and one ramp sign to participate in the Logo Program. The

wineries participating in the Supplemental Guide Sign Program pay an annual fee of \$450 per set of up to 5 signs. Any maintenance needed on the signs is paid for by VDOT as part of that annual fee. More information can be found at the link below:

<http://www.virginiaspecial.interstatelogos.com/State/WinerySignage.aspx?ProgramID=191>)

Adding to these two programs, in 2012 the state also announced a new signage program to promote Virginia Wine Regions. This program is funded by a grant from the federal Transportation Enhancement Program and matching funds from the Commonwealth Transportation Board. The signs will be placed on primary and secondary roads primarily and will announce the visitor has entered a particular Virginia AVA or wine region. The first phase of the program covered 17 signs covering 4 AVA's and one wine region (note that Virginia has 7 AVA's). The second phase included 25 signs for 7 wine regions and 2 AVA's.

Wine trails are allowed to participate in the TODS Program and as an Attraction under the Logo Program. A wine trail can qualify for signs if it meets certain requirements:

- A minimum of three wineries declaring their intention to participate as a trail
- Each winery must meet the minimum qualifications for the TODS and/or Logo Program
- They must publish joint marketing materials for the wine trail
- The wineries must be within 15 miles of each other
- The nearest winery on the trail must be less than 15 miles from the requested sign location.

It is important to note the above requirements only apply for participation in the TODS Program or as an Attraction under the Logo Program. Participation in these programs is not required to be considered a wine trail. Many wine trails in Virginia do not participate under these programs, yet they advertise and are recognized as wine trails; for example, "Heart of Virginia Wine Trail" <http://www.hovawinetrail.com/> .

Both types of trails are often internet based. The visitor goes to a website; for example, <http://www.monticellowinetrail.org/> and then selects from a list the wineries they want to visit along with their starting address. The application will then provide the most efficient way to visit the wineries you select by providing step by step directions for a custom wine trail of the AVA/wine region.

In conclusion, the numerous signing programs for the wine industry offer flexibility for new wineries and wine trails while keeping the grandfathered brown signs for older wineries. While the brown signs may be more traditional, they were only originally offered because there were no other sign options. Once the TODS and Logo programs were established, the Supplemental Guide Sign Program could be used for government facilities, parks, and historical sites. The TODS Program has grown considerably since 2004 and is quickly becoming a more recognizable indication of available tourism destinations in the area. However, as a result of the five different programs, the signage, while helpful, can at times be overwhelming to the tourist and may

possibly lead to a loss of branding for the wine industry. In addition, not only do these programs cover the wine industry but also, in many cases, they cover a broad range of agricultural products including beer, ciders, distilleries, etc. This leads to an overabundance of signs at some intersections.

Virginia’s programs are more extensive than in many other states while the associated costs are still comparable with other states. The costs are not necessarily less expensive than programs in other states studied in this report.

A summary of the salient features of the highway signage programs in Virginia is presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Virginia - Highway Signage Program Features Summary

Regulation/Cost Issues	Virginia Supplemental Guide Signs Program	Virginia TODS	Virginia Logos
Operational Requirements	<p>Brown sign grandfathered in 2004</p> <p>Hours of operation requirement: 5 days per week, 6 hours per day (at least 9 consecutive months per year).</p> <p>Permanent Display of Operating Hours not required</p>	<p>A substantial portion of the applicants products must be of interest to tourists and/or the applicant must derive a major portion of income or visitors during the normal business season from road users residing outside of 15 mile radius from sign placement.</p> <p>Hours of operation requirement: 5 days a week, 6 hours a day (Must be open minimum number of hours and days during at least a 12 week consecutive period) During “off season” VDOT offers a service to temporarily cover signs -- \$50</p> <p>Permanent Display of Operating Hours not</p>	<p>Must be of regional interest to the travelling public and on the approved list of eligible facilities.</p> <p>Hours of operation requirement: 5 days a week, 8 hours a day during normal operating season.</p> <p>Permanent Display of Operating Hours not required</p>

Regulation/Cost Issues	Virginia Supplemental Guide Signs Program	Virginia TODS	Virginia Logos
Operational Requirements		required. The facility is required to have the name and address of business prominently displayed on the premises that is visible to motorists from the public highway.	
Tour Requirements	Not specified	Required	Required (Wine making facility)
Facility Requirements	Nothing is specified in regulations except that handicap accessibility is required.	Restrooms required, as is handicap accessibility. However, no other requirements specified such as On-site Attendant, Drinking Water, Public Telephone, Indoor Seating, Parking, Permanent/ all-weather shelter etc.	Restrooms and parking required as is handicap accessibility. However, no other requirements specified such as On-site Attendant, Drinking Water, Public Telephone, Indoor Seating, Permanent/ all-weather shelter etc.
Activity Requirements	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
Distance Requirements	Signs are located on primary and secondary roads and must be located no more than 15 miles from the initial supplemental sign.	15 miles of the intersection of a non-controlled access primary system highway where the initial TODS panel is located	Mainline and ramp Logo signs may be installed on any limited access route (interstates and some primary routes) maintained under the authority of the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). Trailblazer signs can be installed on primary and secondary routes maintained under the authority of VDOT or

Regulation/Cost Issues	Virginia Supplemental Guide Signs Program	Virginia TODS	Virginia Logos
Distance Requirements			<p>under permit by the appropriate municipality.</p> <p>15 miles maximum distance from interchange of facility</p>
Joint Signage		<p>A maximum of 3 TODS assemblies, each accommodating 4 business panels, is allowed per direction per intersection – they are not winery exclusive.</p>	<p>Each sign may have up to six attractions</p>
Updating or Replacing Existing Signage	<p>Per statute 24 VAC 30-551-80, when an existing supplemental guide sign is damaged or for any other reason needs to be replaced, the replacement sign may be a supplemental guide sign or a TODS sign. The fee to install the supplemental guide sign will be the standard installation fee. The requesting entity will thereafter be required to pay the standard annual fee for supplemental guide signs or TODS signage, whichever is applicable.</p>	<p>Not specified</p>	<p>Not specified</p>
Cost	<p>Per statute 24 VAC 30-551-80 (14), as of 8/6/2010, participants are charged an annual fee equal to the fee for standard TODS signage (Signing per set –</p>	<p>Each panel has a \$100 application fee per sign and \$450 annual fee per mainline panel.</p> <p>Trailblazer signs with only iconic grape</p>	<p>Price for signs based on road volume (high volume 40,000 plus motorists) \$1000 per sign plus \$150 per trailblazer. For roads under 40,000 volume,</p>

Regulation/Cost Issues	Virginia Supplemental Guide Signs Program	Virginia TODS	Virginia Logos
Cost	<p>main and trailblazers (\$450).</p> <p>Exceptions are provided where the old brown signs may be replaced.</p>	<p>cluster have a \$100 application fee and \$100 annual fee.</p> <p>Additional fees may apply for production, fabrication and installation of the actual business signs.</p>	<p>\$800 per sign, \$100 per trailblazer</p> <p>At applicant's cost the applicant furnishes the panels according to VDOT specifications.</p>
Other	<p>These brown signs were grandfathered into the IDSP Program in 2004. The previous program dated back to the early 1980's.</p>	<p>Wineries and wine trails are eligible for TODS program and it is operated by a private company. The program is very broad and includes many industries.</p> <p>Generally takes 3 to 6 months to produce and place signs</p> <p>Wineries shall be licensed as farm winery operations by Virginia Department of ABC.</p> <p>Wine Trails (*) have very specific criteria.</p> <p>Wineries may elect to have the grape cluster icon as part of their sign.</p> <p>Trailblazer signs include only the grape cluster and direct tourists thru necessary turns.</p>	<p>Logos program is operated by a private company. This program cannot be used in combination with other signage programs.</p> <p>Generally takes 6 weeks to 6 months to produce and place signs</p> <p>Trailblazer signs that are the same size as the Logo signs are available for \$150 each on an annual basis.</p> <p>Shall be licensed as farm winery operation by the Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control</p> <p>Wine Trails have very specific criteria.</p> <p>Wineries may elect to have the grape cluster</p>

Regulation/Cost Issues	Virginia Supplemental Guide Signs Program	Virginia TODS	Virginia Logos
Other		Shall be licensed and approved by the appropriate state and/or local agencies regulating that particular type of business or activity.	icon as part of their sign.
Relevant Document Links	http://www.virginiaspecialinterstatelogos.com/State/WinerySignage.aspx?ProgramID=191	http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/sign-programs.asp http://www.virginiadotds.interstatelogos.com/state/home.aspx	http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/sign-programs.asp http://www.virginiainterstatelogos.com/state/home.aspx

(*) 'Wine trail' means a trail that consists of a group of three or more wineries that have declared their intention to be a wine trail and published joint marketing materials. To participate in either the Tourist-Oriented Directional Signing (TODS) Program or Logo program, each winery on a wine trail must meet the hours of operation and licensing requirements for that program. The driving distance between one winery and the next wine trail facility shall not be greater than 15 miles. To be eligible for participation in the TODS Program, the first and last facilities on a wine trail must be located within 15 miles of the intersection of a non-controlled access state primary or secondary system highway where the initial TODS panel is to be located. To be eligible for participation in the Logos Program, the facility at one terminus of the wine trail must be located within 15 miles of the interchange. The facility at the other terminus must be eligible for either TODS or Logos signage.

4.9 Washington

Washington's wine industry is very large and second in size only to that of California. The main industry association is the Washington Wine Commission (www.WashingtonWine.org). Per the statistics available on the website, Washington has over 50,000 acres of vineyards and the annual production of wine is approximately 20.1 million gallons. There are over 800 wineries and 350 grape growers. The state has 13 appellations and over 15 regional wine associations. The annual economic impact of the wine industry in Washington is \$8.6 billion. The wine tour/trail creation website in Washington at www.Washingtonwine.org/explore is a well-designed tool that NC could emulate.

In Washington, there is no separate signage program related exclusively to wineries. There is no mention of signs anywhere on the winery guide or the website of the Washington Wine Commission. All signs posted on state highways (including interstates) are governed by the Motorist Information Sign Program administered by the WSDOT (Washington State Department of Transportation). The entire program description is available on their website. Program description on the website is simple, easy to read and very clear in its directions and is definitely

a model that NCDOT should look at in revamping NCATSDP related websites. However, under this program, businesses are allowed to place only one sign in each direction at any interchange. In other words, each participating business is required to have exactly two signs-one in each direction. In addition, this program is limited to placement of signs on state highways. Signs that are on highways other than state highways are governed by applicable regulations of the appropriate city or county. Yakima Valley was the first area in Washington that initiated its own county level signage program. It was funded entirely by that County’s tourism department, implying that the first set of wineries that received their signs under this program did not have to pay for them. Finally, it is unclear whether Washington administers this signage program under the Logos or the TODS program. However, some of the rules make it probable that the program represents Washington’s adaptation of the Logos program.

As an example of a county-level wine signage program, the research team spoke to Susan Trimpe, Director of Cascade Valley Wine Country Association that covers Chelan and Douglas counties which currently have 66 wineries and tasting rooms. Prior to 2012, these counties did not have a wine signage program. This implies that there were no administered signs on the county roads. This was a potential problem as tourists could not easily find their way to the wineries once they got off the state highways. Wineries placed signs at inappropriate locations and the county was being forced to remove them. About two years prior to 2012, Trimpe started working with county commissioners, the Port of Chelan County and interested wineries, about 50 at the time, to develop a wine signage program. Currently the program in these counties is a part of TODS but administered differently than in other states and with a lot of independence for the counties. They jointly developed regulations and stipulations for participation. For example, wineries have to be open at least 1000 hours per year. The rules were subsequently approved by both counties and the Port of Chelan County. The two counties and the Port invested funds into the program and covered almost \$45,000 of the initial \$65,000 cost for implementing the initial program. About 25 wineries from the two counties participated. The cost to the wineries was between \$100-\$200 for roadside signs and \$650 for destination signs. Destination signs are placed in front of the winery and are optional. For new wineries, this cost will be approximately \$1000-\$1100 for the roadside signs and \$650 for the optional destination signs. The roadside signs are trailblazers that give the direction to the winery. A maximum of 4 wineries are allowed on one sign. Trimpe stated that if more than 4 wineries want a sign at a location, they would try to accommodate by installing a second set of signs. She also stated that in case a sign was damaged, the individual winery was responsible for replacement. A summary of the salient features of the WA Motorist Information Sign Program in Washington is presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Washington - Highway Signage Program Features Summary

Regulation/ Cost Issues	WA Motorist Information Sign Program
Operational Requirements	“Tourist oriented businesses” are expected to be “open to the motoring public without appointment at least 6 hours a day, 5 days a week including Saturday and/or Sunday.” In other words, 30 hours a week including at least one of the weekend days.

Regulation/ Cost Issues	WA Motorist Information Sign Program
Tour Requirements	Not specified
Facility Requirements	Not specified unless the winery is also classified under the category of “Food Activity”. In that case there are plenty of facilities requirements including a modern sanitary restroom, a public telephone, indoor seating for at least 20 people and parking for at least 10 vehicles.
Activity Requirements	<p>The best inference from available documentation is that these are required since wineries are classified under the category of “<i>tourist oriented business</i>” under the Motorist Information Sign Program. Further, eligibility requirements for this signage program state that “<i>A unique or unusual commercial or nonprofit activity, the major portion of whose income or visitors are derived during its normal business seasons from motorists not residing in the immediate area of the activity.</i>”</p> <p>It is also possible that wineries with restaurants are also additionally classified under the “Food Category” that has a plethora of facilities related requirements. (See “Facility Requirements” above.)</p> <p>Requirements to have samples and or sales of products are not specified but are probably implied by the classification of a winery as a “tourist oriented business” and definitely as a “Food Activity”.</p>
Distance Requirements	If classified as a “Food Activity”, the distance requirement is 3 miles from the interchange. If not, a “tourist oriented activity “is required to be within 5 miles. However, the program allows for exceptions up to a maximum of 15 miles if there are no services available (within a 3/5 mile limit) that participate in the program or even up to a maximum of 20 miles if the service is located within a distressed area.
Other	The program has a few simple but common sense guidelines for what each business logo should look like such as: easy to read simple fonts; use a minimal amount of words and the letters that are at least 8 inches high; light background with dark letters, etc.
Joint Signage	A maximum of six business logo signs can be installed on one panel. A total of four back panels can be installed at an interchange if sign spaces available.
Updating or Replacing Existing Signage	A fee of \$115 is charged to cover costs of removing the old sign and installing the new one. This fee applies regardless of who originates the request to change the sign-whether it’s WSDOT (because the sign is deteriorating and/or is losing its reflectivity) or the business itself.

Regulation/ Cost Issues	WA Motorist Information Sign Program
Cost	<p>Businesses are free to choose any company they want to get their signs manufactured. WSDOT provides ballpark figures for this manufacturing cost that indicates no sign should cost more than \$530.</p> <p>As for the cost of placing a sign, it varies depending on the density of traffic on the highway. For Zone 1 (more than 80,000 vehicles per day) the annual cost of 2 signs (one in each direction) is \$910. For Zone 2 (less than 80,000 vehicles per day), the corresponding cost of \$683. For conventional two-lane highways, the cost is \$364.</p>
Relevant Document Links	http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Operations/Traffic/Signs/mis.htm

The operational requirements from each of the highway signage programs listed above are summarized in Table 12. As is conspicuously evident from that table, NCATDSP is much more specific with regards to rules and regulations than most other highway signage programs in other states. This is an important observation that is repeated in the final section of this report along with accompanying recommendations.

Table 12: Operational & Facility Requirements For Wineries In Peer States

Program	On-site Attendant	Operational Hours*	Permanent Display of Operating Hours	Restroom & Drinking Water	Public Telephone	Indoor Seating	Parking	Permanent Shelter	Handicapped Accessible	Growing Area
NC Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program	✓	10 months 4 days/ wk. 32 hours/ wk.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NS	At least 500 sq. ft.
NC Logos Signage Program	✓	8 hours/day 5 days/wk.	NS	✓	✓	NS	✓	✓	NS	NS
NC Tourist-Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) Program	NS	8 hours/day 5 days/wk.	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
GA Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program	NS	Days and hours must be posted	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Required
GA Logos	NS	Continuous operation 5 days/wk. in season	NS	✓	✓	NS	✓	NS	NS	NS
PA Logos	NS	30 days/year 1,500 hours/year	NS	✓	NS	NS	✓	NS	NS	At least 3,000 vines or 5 acres of vineyards
PA TODS	NS	30 days/year 1,500 hours/year	NS	NS	NS	NS	✓	NS	NS	At least 3,000 vines or 5 acres of vineyards
OH Logos	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	✓	NS	NS	NS

Table 12: Operational & Facility Requirements For Wineries In Peer States

Program	On-site Attendant	Operational Hours*	Permanent Display of Operating Hours	Restroom & Drinking Water	Public Telephone	Indoor Seating	Parking	Permanent Shelter	Handicapped Accessible	Growing Area
OH TODS	NS	8 hours/day 5 days/wk. (1 of which must be a Sat. or Sun.)	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
VA Supplemental Guide Signs Program	NS	5 days per week; 6 hours per day; (at least 9 consecutive months per year)	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
VA Logos	NS	During normal operating season 5 days a wk. 8 hours a day;	NS	✓	NS	NS	✓	NS	✓	NS
VA TODS	NS	5 days a wk. 6 hours a day	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	✓	NS
NY Logos	NS	NS	NS	✓	✓	NS	✓	NS	NS	NS
NY Wine Trail Sign Program	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

Table 12: Operational & Facility Requirements For Wineries In Peer States

Program	On-site Attendant	Operational Hours*	Permanent of Display Operating Hours	Restroom & Drinking Water	Public Telephone	Indoor Seating	Parking	Permanent Shelter	Handicapped Accessible	Growing Area
FL Farm Winery Program	NS	30 hours/wk.	NS	NS	NS	NS	✓	✓	NS	5 acres of owned or managed land in Florida, that produce crops used in the production of wine
Oregon Country Trails	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
OR Logos	✓	6 hours/day 6 days/wk. (Seasonal allowed with waiver)	NS	✓	✓	NS	✓	NS	NS	NS
OR TODS	NS	6 hours/day 6 days/wk. (May operate seasonally)	NS	✓	✓	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
CA Farm Trails	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

Table 12: Operational & Facility Requirements For Wineries In Peer States

Program	On-site Attendant	Operational Hours*	Permanent of Display Operating Hours	Restroom & Drinking Water	Public Telephone	Indoor Seating	Parking	Permanent Shelter	Handicapped Accessible	Growing Area
CA TODS	NS	6 days and 40 hours a week for a minimum of three consecutive months per year	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
WA Motorist Information Sign Program	NS	6 hours a day 5 days a week including Saturday and/or Sunday	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

NS: Not specified in regulations

*See description for full detail about requirements for operating days and hours.

4.10 Cost Comparison

With regards to NCATDSP, one of the most significant issues of concern identified by the wineries is the associated cost. Presented below is an analysis of “comparative cost analysis” with regard to the selected peer states.

As Section 4.1-4.9 reveals, it is difficult to directly compare the costs associated with the 21 different highway signage programs in 10 different states because of a wide range in parameters that determine the final cost. For example, one very notable difference is the size of signs. In North Carolina the standard size signs on Expressways are 6’ x 7’6” while they are only 3’x3’ in Georgia, obviously decreasing the cost in Georgia. Such factors also include:

- differences in construction material (e.g., in Oregon, Country Trail signs use wood, a less expensive material for construction),
- location of the signs (e.g., in Georgia, signs are not allowed on the interstates but only at the end of the ramps),
- traffic count (e.g., in Ohio and Virginia some of the highway signage programs charge by the traffic count on the highways where the signs are going to be placed),
- one-time requirements such as application fees, etc.

The net summary of the above statements is that any comparison of costs across different states must be viewed in light of the fact that multiple variables are in play in the determination of the final cost to the winery and hence, a direct one-on-one comparison with NCADTSP is not possible. Nonetheless, it is possible to obtain a general idea of what types of cost factors affect highway signage programs in the different states so that one gains a better understanding of the programs. This is what is presented below in Tables 13 and 14.

In order to present a common platform against which costs can be compared across the 21 different highway signage programs in the 10 states, Table 13 lists the various cost components in the different highway signage programs across the states for 2 main signs over a 10 year time period. The 10 year time period was selected because that is the guaranteed life of a sign in NCATDSP. Thereafter, Table 14 rank orders the different signage programs by total costs for a relative comparison.

By examining Table 13 and Table 14, it can be seen that similar to NCATDSP, 5 of the 9 states studied (55.55%) had programs that required an application fee (in most cases non-refundable) ranging from \$70 to \$500. Further, every state charges an installation fee just as NCATDSP does; however, by contrast 17 out of the 21 signage programs (81%) studied require some form of an annual fee ranging from \$30 to \$1,200 that NCATDSP does not. Further, 6 different signage programs, across 5 states, charge according to the traffic flow on the highway where the sign is installed. NCATDSP does not. Finally, one similarity of NCATDSP to other programs is that most highway signage programs make the business owner financially responsible for any maintenance or replacement costs.

As mentioned above, Table 14 rank orders the total costs of installing and maintaining 2 main signs on a highway over a period of 10 years. By examining Table 14, it becomes evident that when it comes to posting signs on freeways and expressways, NCATDSP is among the 5 most expensive programs across the 10 states. By contrast when placing signs on 4-5 lane conventional highways, NCATDSP is around the median in terms of costs. On the smallest highways, NCATDSP's total cost is among the bottom one third across the states. However, it must be noted that in general, NCATDSP also provides signs that are larger than those in other states and made of more durable material (construction grade steel). Therefore, when compared on a per square foot basis, NCATDSP turns out to be a cost competitive program. For example, Table 15 clearly shows that for a period of 10 years, 2 NCATDSP signs installed and maintained on a freeway cost much more than their counterparts under the NC Logo program - \$13,779 versus \$6000. However, the average NCATDSP Freeway Sign's dimensions are 9 ft. x 8 ft., leading to an estimated 10 year cost to be \$191.38 per sq. ft. Based on available NC Logos documentation, the size for one Logos panel is 3 ft. x 4 ft., which results in an estimated 10 year cost of a NC Logos sign to be \$250 per sq. ft.

The overall conclusion of the research team is that the primary source of the hardship caused by the cost of installing signs on freeways and highways under NCATDSP is the fact that the entire cost has to be borne upfront by the agritourism facility which makes it cost prohibitive for smaller facilities. This is an observation made in the concluding section along with accompanying recommendations.

Table 13: Cost Comparison Between Different Signage Programs

	Application Fee	Year 1 cost for Main-Line/ Initial Sign (one direction) (incl. year 1 annual fees)		Recurring Annual Costs		Estimated Cost for 2 Main Signs Over 10 years	
NCATDSP	NA	Freeway	\$ 6,889.87	NA		Freeway	\$ 13,779
		Expressway	\$ 5,871.29			Expressway	\$ 11,742
		4-5 Lane Conventional	\$ 4,328.56			4-5 Lane Conventional	\$ 8,657
		2 Lane	\$ 1,453.54			2 Lane	\$ 2,907
NC Logos	NA	\$300		\$300		\$6,000	
NC TODS	NA	\$200		\$200		\$4,000	
CA TODS	\$70	\$330		\$30		\$1,270	
Florida Farm Winery Program	NA	\$420		\$120		\$3,000	
GA Logos	NA	\$550		\$550		\$11,000	
GA Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program	\$300	\$134		NA		\$434	
New York TODS	NA	\$50		\$50		\$1,000	
New York Logos	NA	\$100		\$100		\$100	
NY Wine Trail Sign Program	NA	\$300		\$50		\$1,600	
Ohio Logos Fees are determined by traffic count at each exit.	NA	Low Traffic	\$900	Low Traffic	\$900	Low Traffic	\$18,000
		High Traffic	\$1,200	High Traffic	\$1,200	High Traffic	\$24,000
Ohio TODS	NA	\$360		\$360		\$7,200	
OR TODS Fees are determined by highway location and traffic density	NA	Low Traffic	\$331	Low Traffic	\$331	Low Traffic	\$6,620
		High Traffic	\$552	High Traffic	\$552	High Traffic	\$11,040

	Application Fee	Year 1 cost for Main-Line/ Initial Sign (one direction) (incl. year 1 annual fees)		Recurring Annual Costs		Estimated Cost for 2 Main Signs Over 10 years	
OR Logos Fees are determined by highway location and traffic density	NA	Low Traffic	\$331	Low Traffic	\$331	Low Traffic	\$6,620
		High Traffic	\$552	High Traffic	\$552	High Traffic	\$11,040
PA Logos	\$500	\$7,326		\$326		\$21,020	
PA TODS Fees are determined by location – Urban v Rural	\$75	Urban	\$650	NA		Urban	\$1,375
		Rural	\$800			Rural	\$1,675
Virginia Supplemental Guide Signs Program (Grandfathered Program – Brown Signs)	NA	\$450		\$450		\$9,000	
Virginia Logos Price for signs based on road volume	NA	Low Traffic	\$800	NA		Low Traffic	\$1,600
		High Traffic	\$1,000			High Traffic	\$2,000
Virginia TODS	\$300	\$450		\$450		\$9,300	
Washington Motorist Information Sign Program Fees are determined by highway location and traffic density	NA	Low Traffic	\$1,424	Low Traffic	\$364	Low Traffic	\$4,700
		Med Traffic	\$1,743	Med Traffic	\$683	Med Traffic	\$7,890
		High Traffic	\$1,970	High Traffic	\$910	High Traffic	\$10,160

NA: Not Applicable

Table 14: Ranking of Costs Based on the Estimated Cost for 2 Main Signs over 10 Years

Highway Signage Plan	Total
OH Logos (High Traffic)	\$ 24,000
PA Logos	\$ 21,020
OH Logos (Low Traffic)	\$ 18,000
NCATDSP Freeway	\$ 13,779
NCATDSP Expressway	\$ 11,742
OR TODS (High Traffic)	\$ 11,040
OR Logos (High Traffic)	\$ 11,040
GA Logos	\$ 11,000
WA Motorist Information Sign Program (High)	\$ 10,160
VA TODS	\$ 9,300
VA Supplemental (Grandfathered Program)	\$ 9,000
NCATDSP 4-5 Lane Conventional	\$ 8,657
WA Motorist Information Sign Program (Mid)	\$ 7,890
OH TODS	\$ 7,200
OR TODS (Low Traffic)	\$ 6,620
OR Logos (Low Traffic)	\$ 6,620
NC Logos	\$ 6,000
WA Motorist Information Sign Program (Low Traffic)	\$ 4,700
NC TODS	\$ 4,000
FL Farm Winery program	\$3,000
NCATDSP Lane	\$ 2,907
NY Logos	\$ 2,000
VA Logos (High Traffic)	\$ 2,000
PA TODS (Rural)	\$ 1,675
NY Wine Trail	\$ 1,600
VA Logos (Low Traffic)	\$ 1,600
PA TODS (Urban)	\$ 1,375
CA TODS	\$ 1,270
NY TODS	\$ 1,000
GA Agricultural Tourism	\$ 434

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

This research project focused on studying the NCATDSP (North Carolina Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program) from a regulatory standpoint and benchmarking it against other similar highway signage programs in select states across the country. A total of 21 different highway signage programs across 10 different states were studied, including NCATDSP, NC Logos and NC TODS.

The benchmarking portion of our research has revealed that highway signage programs are administered very differently across the country and sometimes even within the same state. For example, California and Washington primarily operate through county based programs without any statewide program targeted towards agritourism facilities; whereas, New York, Florida, Virginia and Georgia have developed agritourism signage programs that are specifically designed for stimulating the wine industry. We also found that agritourism facilities including wineries are allowed to participate in the TODS and/or Logos program in every state. However, in some states (for example, Pennsylvania and Ohio) these are the only two programs under which highway signage appears to be permitted. In terms of operational/regulatory requirements, there are differences as well but two observations are noteworthy: first, the only agritourism signage program that is similar to NCATDSP is that of Georgia. This is unsurprising given that the latter was modelled after the former. Second, the highway signage programs of Florida and New York are noteworthy in terms of their simple design and use of certification as the primary criterion for participation.

A study of the governing regulations and conversations with appropriate officials in the different states clearly indicates that state legislatures in Florida, Georgia, Virginia and New York are strong in their support for the wine industry; for example, in Florida half of all excise taxes collected from wine sales are plowed back into support for the state viticulture industry. This support is also evident from the substantially lower cost to place signs in other states such as New York, Georgia, and Florida which seems likely possible only with appropriate subsidies from the state government. However, there are also states such as Ohio which take a hands-off approach towards highway signage. Ohio has both programs (Ohio TODS and Ohio Logos) that are administered by a private company at a cost that is the highest among all the 20 programs studied in the report. Virginia stands out among the states studied in terms of the variety of different signage programs that are available to agritourism facilities in that state. Finally, the TODS and Logos programs in Oregon appear to have the most precise and well detailed description of the regulatory requirements among all the programs studied and could serve as a model for North Carolina should it choose to revise the regulations governing NC TODS and NC Logos programs.

With regards to NCATDSP (North Carolina Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program) itself, the most prominent conclusion of the research team is that while the stakeholders have significant concerns about the program, the bulk of those involved in NCATDSP believe that the program is unique and effective for participant wineries and leads to increased visits that are vital for the growth of the industry. Every winery interviewed that has signs included under NCATDSP reported substantial positive impact of these signs in driving up tourism traffic. It is also

noteworthy that since its launch, the program has become a model for other states, such as Georgia, in developing their own agritourism signage program. All of this points to the unquestionable success of the program. However, this research has also identified that there are several significant concerns and issues with regard to NCATDSP that need to be addressed. As mentioned in the Introduction, a notable source of these concerns lies in the fundamental dichotomy of expectations of wineries and NCDOT in regards to the program. While businesses such as wineries regard highway signs as a form of advertising, NCDOT views the signs primarily as traffic control devices that are regulated by federal as well as state laws. Significant issues are identified below and wherever applicable, appropriate recommendations are also made to address the same.

5.1 Program Administration

As described in Section 3 of this report, the program is currently administered by NCDA&CS (first phase) and then NCDOT (second and final phase). Any program that is co-administered by two different agencies requires a significant amount of coordination in order to work smoothly. As was repeatedly observed in our interviews, with responsibilities divided between the two agencies, communication with agritourism facilities participating in NCATDSP often becomes opaque leading to customer dissatisfaction. This dissatisfaction has led to frustration for many wineries with the administration of NCATDSP.

Overall, this study has found that wineries do not find that a high degree of coordination currently exists between the two agencies. Several wineries state that once NCDA&CS sends the application to NCDOT, there is little or no follow-up by NCDA&CS on the status of the sign unless an inquiry is made by the applicant. In fact, applicant wineries lack sufficient information about the status of their application throughout the entire process. It is also claimed by some that there is no recorded documentation made available when an application is denied along with the reasoning for the same. In addition, the website design for NCATDSP needs to be improved and links corrected. For example the link to NCATDSP on the NCDA&CS website (see Reference [1]) leads to <https://connect.ncdot.gov/resources/safety/Pages/default.aspx>, which is not the correct website for NCATDSP on the NCDOT website. However, it is not intuitive or easy to get to the website referred in [Reference 2] from any of the NCDOT links available on [Reference 1]. The summary conclusion of the above statement is that for many wineries the bureaucracy associated with NCATDSP can be overwhelming and confusing.

In order to address these concerns we make the following recommendations:

Recommendation(s)

5.1.1: The administration of NCATDSP should be assigned completely to NCDA&CS with NCDOT functioning similar to an “external contractor” that has been “hired” by NCDA&CS to perform specific activities in the entire process in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. This is the model used in Georgia which, as stated above, modeled its own program after NCATDSP. Further, NCDA&CS should ensure that it has designated NCATDSP staff who serve as one-stop, sole points of contact for any questions or concerns from all the

agritourism facilities participating in the program. This would eliminate the need for participants to have to communicate with other agencies and the runaround that wineries reported having encountered while participating in NCATDSP. However, the research team also notes that implementing this recommendation will not be feasible without additional resources, mainly personnel, to the current administration of NCATDSP at NCDA&CS.

5.1.2: Create a new website for NCATDSP that is easy to read and contains links to all needed materials and references to include: program regulations; FAQs; links to appropriate legislation and links to NC TODS and NC Logos. The Washington Motorist Information Sign Program is a good model to emulate in this regard. In addition to the above, a detailed description of the process, similar to Figure 5, should be made available on the program website so that all participating agritourism facilities have a complete understanding of the steps involved in the process along with expected timelines.

5.1.3: NCATDSP should establish and maintain a database of all applicants, successful and unsuccessful. If an applicant is unsuccessful, the reasons for the lack of success should be tracked as well. In addition this database should also include a list of signs that are replaced or signs that are removed because of wear and tear, demise of the winery, or a name change.

5.1.4: An online tracking system should be developed that informs every applicant to NCATDSP about the current status of their requests with regards to the process description (see Recommendation 5.1.2 in this section) on the website. The implementation of this latter recommendation will require a well-coordinated filing system between all staff involved in the program from the two agencies.

5.2 Program Regulations

As mentioned in Section 2.1 of this report, NCATDSP has numerous rules and regulations many of which have been added to the program since its inception. Additionally, the benchmarking with highway signage programs in other states (Sections 4.1-4.9) and as summarized in Table 12 reveals that overall, the other programs tend to be less prescriptive with regards to rules and regulations than NCATDSP. While the intent of the NCATDSP regulations is always to benefit the citizenry, several of these have understandably caused considerable concern. Below we mention a few of these regulations, associated concerns and, where appropriate, recommendations to address the same.

Using the Word “Winery” on Signs

Many agritourism facilities wish to have the word ‘winery’ on the sign, to reflect the true nature of their business and/or they want to use their officially registered name. However, the current rules prohibit the usage of this word even if the word “winery” is a part of the official name of the agritourism business. This restriction does not seem to be required in either the NC Logos or the NC TODS programs or in other states such as California, New York, Virginia and Washington. Further, this NCATDSP restriction damages the overall branding of wine as a product from the standpoint of the winery as well as from the marketing endeavors of the NC Wine and Grape

Council to promote North Carolina wine. Given the importance of winery related tourism in the state, as well as the need to promote the same, we recommend the following:

Recommendation(s)

5.2.1: The terms “winery” and “wine” should be allowed to be used on the signs that are part of NCATDSP.

Number of Signs and Number of Names on Each Sign

Currently, governing regulations of NCATDSP state that only one sign is allowed for any direction of travel on an interchange, intersection or ramp. The research team believes that this regulation poses an impediment to the growth of the North Carolina wine industry. As the evidence from established wine-industry states such as New York demonstrates, the success of the industry as a whole depends on clusters of wineries emerging in close proximity so that wine tourists may follow wine trails. For example, Shelton Vineyards, one of the most established wineries in the state, has stated the desirability of other wineries locating close to it so that all would benefit from tourists attracted to this cluster. This is a well-established principle of economic growth that is referred to as “agglomeration.” Given that the highway infrastructure in the state is not expected to expand significantly in the future; whereas, the number of wineries is expected to keep growing (especially in the major viticultural areas). The net impact of this regulation is that it impedes the future growth of winery clusters in the state since many new wineries will not be able to post signs on highways due to limited availability of signage space. Aside from this, it is also noteworthy that presently, neither NCDA&CS nor NCDOT, maintain a waiting list of agritourism applicants for each interchange, intersection and ramp in North Carolina. This implies that it is impossible for potential applicants to know whether or not their application will be denied outright by virtue of this restriction.

A related problem to this is that another NCATDSP regulation limits the maximum number of agritourism facility names allowed on one sign to 4. This poses a problem for areas such as Swan Creek especially one site where there are 5 wineries and a sixth one is expected to start operation in 2015. However, given the availability of interchanges within proximity of these wineries, the new winery is unable to participate in NCATDSP along with its neighboring wineries because the sign at the closest interchange already has 4 names on it. Needless to say, this imposes a serious competitive disadvantage for the new winery. (Researchers are cognizant of the fact that in this particular case applicants appear to be able to use the Logos program in addition to NCATDSP. For example on I-40 RayLen Vineyards and Winery uses NCATDSP and Medaloni Cellars uses NC Logos.) From a long-term perspective, as wineries grow in North Carolina but the number of available spots on the interstates, intersections and ramps remains the same, this problem is expected to worsen in the future especially in Yadkin Valley, Swan Creek and Haw River viticultural areas. As a final observation, we note that Washington Motorist Information Sign Program allows 6 facilities to be named on a sign, similar to the TODS and Logos programs. Additionally, officials from an emerging wine state (Florida) have stated in their interviews that while they have not yet run into maximum limits given the small size of their current industry,

they expect the appropriate agencies to be fully accommodating with regards to this restriction when the industry has grown to a point where multiple names need to be placed on each sign.

With the above in mind, we make the following recommendation;

Recommendation(s)

5.2.2: While the NCATDSP regulation limiting the maximum number of facilities listed on any sign to be 4 cannot be changed due to MUTCD requirements, it should be permissible when necessary to add a supplemental statement at the bottom of a sign with 4 names which states something similar to “More Wineries at This Exit”. An alternative could be to allow the use of a large sign containing only the iconic grape cluster (similar to California) for exits with multiple wineries. Further, in keeping with NC Logos and Logos programs in other states, NCATDSP should allow up to 6 individual wineries on each sign placed on a ramp as well as allowing Trailblazers for up to 6 wineries.

5.2.3: Explore the possibility of allowing an additional NCDATDSP sign at interchanges that currently have a full NCDATDSP sign with 4 wineries listed (as long as it meets MUTCD and NCDOT spacing requirements).

Enforcement of NCATDSP Regulations Regarding Hours of Operation

As described earlier in this report, NCATDSP has strict requirement about hours of operation of the agritourism facility - the facility is required to be open 10 full months; 4 days a week; 32 hours per week. Other highway signage programs in other states frequently have less restrictive requirements. For example, the Georgia Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage Program, which was modeled after NCATDSP, only requires that “days and hours be posted”. In Virginia, the Supplemental Guide Signs Program requires the facility to be open five days per week, six hours per day and at least nine consecutive months per year and Florida only requires operational hours to be 30 hours per week. Further, NCATDSP requires that the facility maintain a public display of these hours at all times; something that is not specified in the operational requirements of most of the other programs studied in this report (refer to Table 12). While it may be debatable what length of hours are appropriate for all wineries, especially the smaller ones or ones in very rural areas of the state such as Western North Carolina, it is inarguable that once publicly disseminated, every participating facility needs to adhere to their published hours of operation. Yet this research uncovered reports of locations being closed when they should be open and not maintaining the tours and other requirements as reported by disappointed customers to neighboring wineries. Needless to say, such negative experiences by visitors have an overall adverse impact on the reputation of the North Carolina wine industry. The summary conclusion here is that as long as this regulation is a part of NCATDSP, it needs to be enforced. Based on the above we make the following recommendation:

Recommendation(s)

5.2.4: NCDA&CS and NCDOT should seek feedback from all agritourism facilities in the state about the necessity and appropriateness of the current hours of operation requirement and

make any necessary modifications¹. Once these hours are determined, enforcement must be made through random checks as well as follow-up of complaints by visitors about noncompliance.

Revision of Regulations Governing NCATDSP

As mentioned at the start of this section, NCATDSP has numerous rules and regulations many of which are not a part of the original legislation but have been added to the program since its inception. Additionally, the results of benchmarking with other highway signage programs, including those from other states (Sections 4.1-4.9), as summarized in Table 12, clearly reveals that in general NCATDSP is more prescriptive with regards to rules and regulations than most other highway signage programs intended for agritourism facilities. While the intent of NCATDSP regulations is always to benefit the citizenry, several of these have understandably caused considerable concern. With that in mind we recommend the following:

Recommendation(s)

5.2.5: NCDA&CS and NCDOT should jointly examine each operating requirement specified in NCATDSP that is not required in the majority of other programs mentioned in Table 12. Thereafter, unless there are compelling reasons to do otherwise, every such requirement should be removed from the program. The information contained in Sections 4.1-4.9 and Table 12 can serve as the rationale in explaining the basis for each such deletion.

5.3 Program Cost

By far the most common concern identified by participating wineries, especially the smaller ones, is the overall cost of the program. As we have stated before, every winery interviewed that has posted signs in NCATDSP believes it to be a worthwhile investment. However, even some of the larger wineries agree that the financial cost of the program could be substantial and prohibitive for the smaller ones. Indeed, the research team found that the cost is perhaps the most important impediment that prohibits the smaller wineries from participating. However, this issue must be noted within the context of the following three facts.

First, as NCDOT indicates, NCATDSP is a revenue-neutral program in that all costs for participating in the program go towards the development and placement of the sign and there are no surpluses that accrue to either NCDOT or NCDA&CS.

¹ A special problem is encountered by wineries located in very rural areas such as in the newly announced Upper Hiwassee Highlands AVA in Western NC. Given their distance from major highways, the only applicable highway signage program if they wish to post signs is the NC TODS program. In that, they face two particular challenges: either their remoteness violates the distance requirement of the NC TODS program or the operational hours requirement of that program is excessive given their remote location and business generated. Although making recommendations about that program is outside the scope of this project, the research team suggests that NCDA&CS and NCDOT should investigate the possibility of easing the distance requirement and the operational hours requirement for NC TODS program since that program is often the sole option for agritourism facilities located in such extremely rural areas.

Second, as the benchmarking data presented in the prior section has demonstrated (see Tables 13 and 14), while NCATDSP is among the most expensive of the 21 programs studied, it is certainly not at the extreme high end of program costs. In the opinion of the research team, what makes the cost daunting, especially for smaller wineries, is that entire cost of the program must be paid up front. This is especially true when the signs are to be located on interstates or highways, this sum is considerable.

Third, there are less expensive options available to NC wineries for posting signs; specifically, the NC Logos and the NC TODS programs as well as the option to place signs on two lane roadways under NCATDSP. However, our interviews suggest that awareness about these options is low among wineries in NC, especially the smaller or newer ones.

Recommendation(s)

Since increased participation by North Carolina's wineries is an essential prerequisite for the success of NCATDSP, the following recommendations are being made.

5.3.1: NC Wine & Grape Council should make all North Carolina wineries aware of all options within the NCATDSP including the option to post signs only on two lane roadways since it is less expensive than freeway signage. In addition, the NC Wine & Grape Council should make all North Carolina wineries aware that, in addition to the multiple options in the NCATDSP, the NC Logos and the NC TODS programs are also available to them for posting highway signs as long as associated requirements are met. Both the Logos and the TODS programs are less expensive even though they lack the unique branding power and superior marketing efficacy associated with NCATDSP, and have increased operating hours requirements. Making all wineries aware of all options available will enable them to make an appropriate cost-benefit analysis to select which program best suits their needs. Another rationale for this recommendation is that in many other states such as Ohio, Pennsylvania and Oregon, Logos and TODS are the principal or sole highway signage programs available to agritourism facilities implying that these two highway signage programs are being used by wineries across the USA.

5.3.2: NC Wine & Grape Council should investigate ways to defray the cost of installing signs in NCATDSP. A direct way to do so is to examine the possibility of the Council subsidizing the cost for wineries interested in participating in NCATDSP. Additionally, given that substantial burden of having to pay the entire cost for participation in NCATDSP up front, the NC Wine & Grape Council should investigate the possibility of developing and initiating an amortization program in collaboration with one or more financial institutions of the state that makes it easier for the smaller wineries to participate in NCATDSP. The amortization program should seek to spread the total cost of obtaining a sign under NCATDSP over the expected life of the sign itself (around 10 years). The initial inquiries made by the research team about such a program indicate that none exists at the moment and it is our opinion that without appropriate loan guarantees from NC Wine & Grape Council/NCDA&CS, lending institutions will probably not be willing to develop such a program.

Also related to the issue of program cost, is the fact that a facility is held financially responsible for replacing a sign even if it is damaged or knocked down for reasons of force majeure. As a result, it is recommended that

Recommendation(s)

5.3.3: NC Wine & Grape Council should investigate the feasibility of implementing an insurance program for all signs in NCATDSP that participating agritourism facilities can purchase from. If need be, similar to the signage cost amortization program suggested above, this can be offered to these facilities through a private organization.²

² One crucial issue is whether state and federal laws permit NC Wine and Grape Council or NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services to implement Recommendations 5.3.2 and 5.3.3. The research team has already contacted NCDA&CS about this matter and it has been discussed there. However, as of the writing of this report, a definitive resolution about the legal permissibility of implementing these recommendations has not been relayed back to the research team.

References

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- [14] US Travel Association (2014). "The 2013 Economic impact of travel on North Carolina Counties." Available at:
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- [15] "Florida's Wine and Grape Industries Have a large Economic Impact on State". Published in Grape Times. Available at:
http://www.fgga.org/media/feb_2011_grape_times.pdf (Jan-Feb 2011)
- [16] Numerous other references were consulted in researching signage programs in other states. Due to the excessive number of such references, they have been mentioned instead within the summary tables for their respective states in Sections 4.1-4.9.

Appendix A: Statement of Work

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE
MARKETING DIVISION
NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & CONSUMER SERVICES
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA
And
BRYAN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA GREENSBORO
GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

This Memorandum of Understanding is entered into by the Bryan School of Business and Economics at the University of North Carolina Greensboro hereinafter designated as the Bryan School and the Marketing Division of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer services, hereinafter designated as NCDA&CS.

- I. This memorandum is intended to provide guidance and clarity to the project (hereafter referred to as *AGRI-SIGN Research Project*) of conducting a study of the North Carolina Agritourism Highway Signage Program. The Bryan School will facilitate the study with the North Carolina Wine & Grape Growers Council and NCDA&CS. *AGRI-SIGN Research Project* team members shall include Dr. Joy Bhadury, Dr. Erick Byrd, Mr. Sam Troy and additional members as required. *AGRI-SIGN Research Project* will provide rigorous and scientific basis for evaluating the North Carolina Agritourism Highway Signage Program and the outcomes of the project will include:
 - a. Identification of peer and aspirant wine producing states.
 - b. Comparison of the NCDOT Agritourism Highway Signs Program with other peer and aspirant wine producing states.
 - c. Benchmarking the NCDOT Agritourism Highway Signs Program with regards to highway signage costs for wineries and the rules and regulations associated with the signs relative to the selected wine producing states identifying the similarities and differences.
 - d. Assessment of the impact (positive and negative) for the differences identified in the above step on NC wine industry and development of specific strategies to address each issue identified based on broad business sector intelligence.

- II. The *AGRI-SIGN Research Project* will include the following activities and guarantees the deliverables listed below:
 - a. Conduct an exhaustive search of selected peer and peer and aspirant wine producing states to identify and inventory highway signage programs that are comparable with the NCDOT Agritourism Highway Signs Program.
 - b. Benchmark the NCDOT Agritourism Highway Signs Program with regard to highway signage costs for wineries and the rules and regulations associated with

the signs relative to the selected peer signage programs. Similarities and differences to be highlighted.

- c. Evaluate the impact (positive and negative) for the differences identified in the above step on NC wine industry and develop specific strategies to address each issue identified.

These activities will take place beginning May 1, 2014 and concluding January 31, 2015 with a final written report submitted to NCDA&CS. The Bryan School agrees to present the submitted final report to the NC Wine and Grape Growers Council at a meeting scheduled after January 31, 2015. At the direction of NCDA&CS, the plan may also be presented at other appropriate and related groups such as the NC Winegrowers Association and NC Muscadine Grape Association.

Appendix B: Standard of Practice for Agricultural Directional Signage

A-07

North Carolina Department of Transportation
Division of Highways
Traffic Engineering and Safety Systems Branch

STANDARD PRACTICE for Agricultural Tourism Directional Signage

It is the standard practice of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to allow installation of agricultural tourism directional signs to qualifying agricultural businesses providing the facility meets all criteria set forth in General Statute 106-22.5 and the criteria herein. The Agricultural Tourism Signage Program is a joint venture between the NCDOT and the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA & CS). Signs shall be located and erected according to the standards of the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)*, *North Carolina Supplement to the MUTCD*, *NCDOT Standard Specifications for Roads and Structures*, *North Carolina Roadway Standard Drawings*, and in compliance with federal and state policies.

CRITERIA

- The owner of the business whose name appears on an agricultural tourism sign shall certify in writing that the business is in full compliance with all applicable Federal, State and local laws, rules and ordinances, including all applicable license and permit requirements.
- All safety, sign spacing, and application criteria shall be satisfied.
- For sign locations on freeway or other grade separated interchanges*, the maximum distance that an agricultural tourism facility may be located from the initial interchange containing an agricultural tourism sign shall not exceed fifteen (15) driving miles via paved public roads. If requested and approved, freeway or expressway signs shall be located at the nearest interchange to the facility. Requests for signing at additional interchanges within fifteen (15) driving miles of the facility will be reviewed and approved on a case by case basis by the State Traffic Engineer. Additional signed interchanges shall not be located along the same route. Consideration may be given to a facility where less than ¼ mile of the driving miles is via an unpaved publicly maintained gravel or soil road.

* Grade separated interchanges are defined as fully-controlled access interchanges that do not have intersections or driveways within the limits of the interchange.

- For sign locations on all other roadway types, the maximum distance that an agricultural tourism facility may be located from the furthest agricultural tourism sign shall not exceed one driving mile via a paved public road. The one-mile limit is specified in G.S. 106-22.5. Signs must be located at intersections. Consideration may be given to a facility where less than ¼ mile of the driving mile is via an unpaved publicly maintained gravel or soil road.
- Agricultural tourism signs are not allowed at interchanges where a full control-of-access roadway exits or merges onto another full control-of-access roadway (freeway to freeway facilities).

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- Agricultural tourism signs that are installed on exit ramps shall have a panel with the mileage to the facility and a directional arrow. Mileage panels and directional arrows are also required on sign installations (which display the facility name) used as trailblazers on conventional roadways.
- The agricultural tourism facility shall be open for customers and tourists ten (10) full months per year, and at least four days per week to total a minimum of 32 hours per week.
- In the event that a facility is not open 32 hours per week year-round, a supplemental sign will be required at all ramp and selected trailblazer sign locations stating when the facility is closed. These supplemental signs will prevent motorists from needlessly traveling to a facility that is not open. The Department will determine the location, design, and number of these supplemental signs.
- The agricultural tourism facility shall offer a tour to the public. The term tour is defined as an activity that is:
 - (a) Directed by a knowledgeable employee (tour guide) of the business.
 - (b) Educational, informative, and entertaining in nature.
 - (c) Of sufficient length to clearly describe the materials, equipment, and processes used in the production of agricultural products by the facility.
 - (d) Conducted regularly during open business hours or, in the absence of regular tour times, upon customer demand within a reasonable time [within thirty (30) minutes of request].
 “Conducted regularly during open business hours” is defined as a minimum of two (2) regularly scheduled tours during each day the facility is open to the public.
- The agricultural tourism facility shall have a permanent sign posted in a prominent and visible location that states the name of the business with the days and hours of operation. The agriculture facility shall also have a permanent sign posted on the premises stating the times that tours are offered, or stating that tours are available upon request. The sign shall be posted in a conspicuous location that is visible to customers entering the facility.
- The agricultural tourism facility shall provide on-site permanent public restroom facilities, drinking water suitable for public consumption, and an on-site telephone available for public use.
- The agricultural tourism facility shall offer samples and/or sales of North Carolina agricultural products.
- The agricultural tourism facility shall be able to accommodate customers in a permanent, all weather structure, and have adequate on-site parking.
- The agricultural tourism facility shall maintain a web site with the hours of operation and directions to the facility, preferably including a map, posted. The hours of operation specified on the web site must meet minimum requirement.
- The names of all agricultural tourism facilities using the same intersection, freeway interchange, or ramp for access shall appear only on a single sign for each direction of travel. In order to ensure the safety of the travelling public by limiting distractions and confusing signage, a

maximum of four (4) qualifying agricultural facility names may appear on the sign. Multiple agricultural tourism signs shall not be allowed for any direction of travel of an interchange, intersection, or ramp.

- A qualifying agricultural tourism facility may apply to have their name added to an existing agricultural tourism sign, providing the maximum number of four facility names has not been met. The replacement sign(s) will include the names of all the agricultural facilities that were previously displayed, in addition to the new facility name. The requesting facility will be required to pay the entire cost of the updated replacement sign(s) and supports. All facilities listed on the sign will be required to equally share maintenance costs, as well as any sign and support replacement costs required to repair damage or deterioration.
- Should a facility choose to upgrade existing agricultural tourism signs, the facility will be required to upgrade all existing interchange and intersection signs including all mainline, ramp, intersection, and trailblazer signs to meet current standards. The Department will require the facility to enter into a new agreement, which will include all the upgraded signs. The facility must meet all current program criteria and requirements, before the facility will be approved for upgrades or additional signs. Additional signs will not be approved unless existing signs are also upgraded to meet current standards. An all-inclusive new Agreement covering all signs for that facility will be required.
- If the NCDOT determines that a sign replacement or modification is required, a new Agreement may be required. At that time, the Facility will be required to meet all current program criteria and requirements.
- All costs associated with the requested agricultural tourism signs will be at the expense of the requestor. This includes administration, investigation, design, materials, equipment, fabrication, inspection, installation, and maintenance, as well as any replacement costs as required to repair the signs and supports due to damage or deterioration. The NCDOT Traffic Engineering Branch will provide the estimate for the initial installation after approval by NCDA & CS. The cost estimate will include sign installation on steel supports for freeway and expressways and sign installations on u-channel posts on ramps and conventional roads, except where due to the sign message, the size of the sign requires steel supports. Sign locations behind adequate guardrail may be installed on non-breakaway steel supports. The requester may elect to hire a qualified contractor to install the signs rather than reimbursing NCDOT for the installation. The NCDOT Division Engineer may require the requester to hire a qualified contractor to perform the installation of the signs. The selected contractor shall be approved and licensed to do work in the State of North Carolina and shall follow all federal and state standards and specifications. Such a contractor must obtain prior approval from NCDOT of the materials and methods to be used. Sign installations are subject to inspection, approval, and acceptance by NCDOT.
- If the initial agricultural tourism sign request is for multiple agricultural facility names to appear on a shared sign, the facilities will be required to equally share the initial cost of the sign installation, maintenance costs, as well as any replacement costs required to repair damage or deterioration.

- Agricultural tourism sign designs shall conform to NCDOT standards. The word "TOURS" is required on the signs that include the name of the business. The word "WINERY" shall not be permitted on any signs. The NCDOT reserves the right to disallow other words or messages if deemed inappropriate. Attached are example Agricultural Tourism sign designs and cost estimates for your reference. The actual department furnished sign designs and cost estimate will vary depending on the name of the facility (which determines the size of the sign) and type of installation(s).
- Standard logos or emblems designed by the NCDA&CS and approved by the Department are allowed on agricultural tourism signs. The standard logo or emblem must represent the type of business, products, and tours offered to the public. If a standard logo/emblem does not exist for a type of approved business, the NCDA&CS will determine and design the appropriate logo or emblem. Businesses may not design their own unique logo. The size of the logo/emblem will not exceed 30"x 30" on freeway and expressway sign installations and 15" x 15" on conventional and ramp installations.
- A participating agricultural tourism facility that changes ownership shall provide written notice to the NCDA & CS and the appropriate NCDOT Division Engineer within 30 days of the transfer of ownership. To retain signs, the new owner is required to sign a new agreement with the NCDOT and the facility is required to meet all current program criteria and requirements. The new owner shall be responsible for all maintenance and replacement costs associated with the signs and supports due to damage, deterioration or loss, or name change at no expense or liability to the NCDOT. If the signs include other facility names or are later upgraded by other facilities, all maintenance and replacement costs required to repair damage or deterioration shall be shared equally by all facilities listed on the signs.
- An agricultural tourism signage agreement is not transferable to another business, facility, or location.
- Agricultural tourism signs shall not be placed where prohibited by local ordinance. If a trailblazer sign or other required sign cannot be installed due to a local ordinance or other limitation, no agricultural tourism signs will be allowed and the facility cannot participate in the program. All required signs must be installed to provide guidance to the facility.
- The NCDOT shall not maintain a waiting list for the program if the maximum number of four facility names has been met.
- The NCDOT will not require removal or covering of agricultural tourism signs if the facility is closed for 3 months or less for renovation, remodeling, or repair providing all program criteria will be met upon reopening. In cases where the facility is closed for more than 3 months but less than one year, the NCDOT will require temporary removal or covering of the signs, providing all program criteria will be met upon reopening. If the facility is closed more than one year, the signs shall be removed and the facility will be required to re-apply. The new request (application) will be handled in the same manner as a request from a new applicant. All costs for sign coverings, removals, and re-installations shall be paid for by the agricultural facility.
- Should a participating agricultural tourism facility cease to be in compliance with G.S. 106-22.5 and/or the criteria herein, the NCDA & CS shall notify the business owner that it will be given 30

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days to bring the facility into compliance or its agricultural tourism signs shall be removed. If the signs are removed and the facility later applies for reinstatement, the request will be handled in the same manner as a request by a new applicant. If it is determined that a facility is not in compliance twice within a two year period, its agricultural tourism signs shall be permanently removed.

- The NCDOT reserves the right to permanently remove any facility from the Agricultural Tourism Signage Program if the NCDOT determines that the facility has installed unapproved, illegal advertising signage within the roadway right-of-way. In the event that a facility is removed from the program, the Department shall not be required to refund any program costs paid by the facility.
- The NCDOT reserves the right to cover, relocate, or remove any agricultural tourism signs for maintenance or construction operations, or when deemed to be in the best interest of the NCDOT or the traveling public, without advance notice. The NCDOT reserves the right to remove signs when roadway improvements or changes in the roadway cross-section or configuration will no longer accommodate the existing signs. If existing signs no longer meet the Department's size and design requirements for an upgraded roadway and existing signs are removed, the facility may request to upgrade their signs, provided that minimum spacing is available on the upgraded roadway and the facility meets all current program criteria and requirements. All upgrade costs shall be paid for by the facility. A new Agreement will be required.
- The NCDOT has the responsibility and authority to relocate or remove agricultural tourism signs if a need for a higher priority regulatory, warning, or guide sign is identified.
- The NCDOT reserves the right to terminate this program or any Agreement for agricultural tourism signs, or any portion thereof, by furnishing the business written notice of such intent not less than 30 calendar days prior thereto.
- As described in General Statute 136-30 (a), (b), and (d), the NCDOT has the authority to control all signs within the right-of-way of the State Highway System.

APPLICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

- (1) An agricultural facility seeking agricultural tourism signs or revisions to existing signs must complete an application form available from the NCDA&CS. The application form must be completed in its entirety. Applicants must review all qualification criteria, estimated sign costs, and other program information located on the Agricultural Tourism Signage Program website to verify they are completely qualified and interested.
<http://www.ncdot.org/doh/preconstruct/traffic/tepl/Topics/A-07/A-7.html>
- (2) The applicant shall include an official map clearly depicting the requested sign location(s), the location of the agricultural facility, and the distance from each sign location to the facility. The distances can be handwritten on the map. An official county map can be obtained from your local NCDOT Division office. A list of these office locations is provided as "Attachment 1" in this document.

- (3) The agricultural facility must submit the application form with appropriate documentation to the NCDA&CS, Agritourism Office, 1020 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1020. Any additional paper correspondence shall also be directed to this address.
- (4) The NCDA&CS will review the application, visit and inspect the agricultural facility, verifying facility accommodations, days and hours of operation, appropriate tours are offered, and that all other criteria are met. NCDA&CS will make a recommendation based on fulfillment of the program requirements to the NCDOT State Traffic Engineer or designate.
- (5) If the agricultural facility is recommended for the Agricultural Tourism Signage Program by NCDA&CS, the NCDOT Division or Regional Traffic Engineer (or designate) will conduct a field investigation to verify that adequate spacing, right-of-way, and sight distance are available to safely install the signs. If these installation criteria are met, the NCDOT Division Traffic Engineer (or designate) will perform the field work to gather the survey data for the sign supports. The NCDOT Signing Section will design the signs, support systems, and prepare the cost estimate and agreement.
- (6) The NCDOT Division Engineer (or designate) will administer the agreement, and after receiving payment, will order and coordinate the installation of the signs.
- (7) The NCDA&CS Agritourism office will handle all verbal and written correspondence with the facility concerning the application and qualifications, as necessary. The applicant may be referred to NCDOT for questions regarding NCDOT responsibilities, such as designs, agreement, and installations.
- (8) Any appeals to decisions shall be made in writing to the NCDA&CS. NCDA&CS will coordinate with NCDOT to determine final decision of appeal.

North Carolina General Statutes

§ 106-22.5. Agricultural tourism signs.

- (a) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall provide directional signs on major highways at or in reasonable proximity to the nearest interchange or within one mile leading to an agricultural facility that promotes tourism by providing tours and on-site sales or samples of North Carolina agricultural products to area tourists.
- (b) An agricultural facility must be open for business at least four days a week, 10 months of the year in order to qualify for the directional signs provided for in this section. The Department shall assess the facility the actual reasonable costs of the sign and its installation. (1999-356, s. 1.)

§ 136-30. Uniform signs and other traffic control devices on highways, streets, and public vehicular areas.

- (a) State Highway System. – The Department of Transportation may number and mark highways in the State highway system. All traffic signs and other traffic control devices placed on a highway in the State highway system must conform to the Uniform Manual. The Department

Effective: 04/30/04
Last Revision: 08/22/07

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of Transportation shall have the power to control all signs within the right-of-way of highways in the State highway system. The Department of Transportation may erect signs directing persons to roads and places of importance.

- (b) **Municipal Street System.** – All traffic signs and other traffic control devices placed on a municipal street system street must conform to the appearance criteria of the Uniform Manual. All traffic control devices placed on a highway that is within the corporate limits of a municipality but is part of the State highway system must be approved by the Department of Transportation.
- (c) **Public Vehicular Areas.** – Except as provided in this subsection, all traffic signs and other traffic control devices placed on a public vehicular area, as defined in G.S. 20-4.01, must conform to the Uniform Manual. The owner of private property that contains a public vehicular area may place on the property a traffic control device, other than a sign designating a parking space for handicapped persons, as defined in G.S. 20-37.5, that differs in material from the uniform device but does not differ in shape, size, color, or any other way from the uniform device. The owner of private property that contains a public vehicular area may place on the property a sign designating a parking space for handicapped persons that differs in material and color from the uniform sign but does not differ in shape, size, or any other way from the uniform device.
- (d) **Definition.** – As used in this section, the term "Uniform Manual" means the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways, published by the United States Department of Transportation, and any supplement to that Manual adopted by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

§ 136-32. Other than official signs prohibited.

No unauthorized person shall erect or maintain upon any highway any warning or direction sign, marker, signal or light or imitation of any official sign, marker, signal or light erected under the provisions of G.S. 136-30, except in cases of emergency. No person shall erect or maintain upon any highway any traffic or highway sign or signal bearing thereon any commercial advertising: Provided, nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the erection or maintenance of signs, markers, or signals bearing thereon the name of an organization authorized to erect the same by the Department of Transportation or by any local authority referred to in G.S. 136-31. Any person who shall violate any of the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The Department of Transportation may remove any signs erected without authority. (1921, c. 2, s. 9(b); C.S., s. 3846(r); 1927, c. 148, ss. 56, 58; 1933, c. 172, s. 17; 1957, c. 65, s. 11; 1973, c. 507, s. 5; 1977, c. 464, s. 7.1; 1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 1030, s. 39; 1993, c. 539, s. 981; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c).)

Effective: 04/30/04
Last Revision: 08/22/07

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NCDOT Signing Section (2007). A-07 Directional Signage (Standard Practice).
<https://connect.ncdot.gov/resources/safety/Tepl/TEPPL%20All%20Documents%20Library/Practice.pdf>

Appendix C: Notice of Possible Program Changes and Department Responsibility

Notice of Possible Program Changes and Department Responsibility

The Standard Practice, approved by NCDA&CS and NCDOT, for the Agricultural Tourism Signage Program is subject to change without notice. All criteria and requirements included the Standard Practice in effect at the time of the execution of the Agreement between the Facility and the NCDOT shall apply to that specific Agreement. The NCDOT shall require any participating business that is requesting new signs or updated signs to meet all current program criteria and requirements, including sign and support designs, for all existing signs prior to approval of new signs. An all-inclusive new Agreement covering all signs for that Facility shall be required. If the NCDOT determines that any replacement or modified signs are required, a new Agreement will be required. At that time, the Facility shall be required to meet all current program criteria and requirements.

The NCDOT has the responsibility and authority to relocate or remove agricultural tourism signs if a need for a higher priority regulatory, warning, or guide sign is identified.

As described in General Statute 136-30 (a), (b), and (d), the NCDOT has the authority to control all signs within the right of way of the State Highway System.

The NCDA&CS and/or NCDOT reserve the right to terminate this program or any Agreement for agricultural tourism signs, or any portion thereof, by furnishing the business written notice of such intent not less than 30 calendar days prior thereto.

NCDA & CS and NCDOT (2005). Disclaimer: Notice to Applicants and Participants.
<https://connect.ncdot.gov/resources/safety/Tepl/TEPPL%20All%20Documents%20Library/Notice.pdf>

Appendix D: Agricultural Tourism Signs Application

Agricultural Tourism Signs Application

Date: _____

Name of Business _____

Contact Person _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

E-Mail Address _____

Internet Site _____

Requested Location of Sign(s)

1. Location of agricultural marketing facility

2. What are the months, days, and hours you are open for sales to the public?

3. What percent of your total annual sales comes from North Carolina-grown agricultural products? _____%

4. List the agricultural products sold to the public at this facility _____

5. List non-agricultural products sold at this facility _____

6. Do you provide tours for the public at this facility? Yes No

Note: To qualify for this program, the agricultural facility is required to conduct tours of the growing area, as well as any production area located on the farm or vineyard.

The word "TOURS" is required on all DOT signs that include the name of the business.

If your answer is No, you are not eligible for the Agricultural Tourism Signs program.

If yes, describe the type of tours, who directs the tours, and when the tours are provided.

7. Do you provide samples of your products? Yes No

List the types of samples: _____

8. Do you have a permanent sign near the roadway entrance to the premises with the name of your business and the days and hours of operation? Yes No

9. Do you have a permanent sign near the front door of your facility that states the times of scheduled tours, or that tours are available upon request (within thirty [30] minutes of request)? Per program requirements, this sign shall be posted in a conspicuous location that is visible to customers. Yes No

10. Is this market operated in a permanent structure? Yes No

11. Do you have restrooms available to the public? Yes No

12. Do you have an on-site telephone available for emergency public use? Yes No

13. Do you have drinking water available for public consumption? Yes No

14. List any local or state business licenses you are required to have to operate this business.

15. What is the distance from this agricultural facility to the closest major highway interchange? _____ miles

16. Do you want the logo (see cover) associated with your business included on the sign? Yes No (See criteria in Standard Practice for maximum size per sign type.)

17. Attach a NCDOT county map or other official map (see Standard Practice, p. 4, #2) clearly depicting the requested sign location(s) and the location of the facility. The DOT map can be obtained on-line at www.ncdot.org/planning/statewide/gis/GIS_mapping.html or by contacting your local NCDOT District Engineer's office (see Attachment 1). The Department of Transportation will determine the acceptability of requested sites.

Note: If the facility is requesting signing from a freeway interchange, the maximum distance signs may be placed from a business shall be fifteen (15) driving miles. For all other cases, the maximum distance a sign may be placed from a business shall be one (1) driving mile or less. All non-freeway signs shall be placed at intersections. See criteria for sign locations (Standard Practice, page 1, bullets # 3 and #4).

List these intersections including direction of requested sign [example: SR 1020 (May St.) northbound at SR 2015 (Plymouth Rd)]

18. Enclose photographs of your agricultural marketing facility with this application.

Photographs shall include pictures of any structures used, tour groups, fields or greenhouses in agricultural production, entrances to the facility, driveways and parking, on-premise signing requirements, and product displays.

I certify that this agricultural business is open for business and meets all applicable program requirements as stated in the Standard Practice for Agricultural Tourism Signage, complies with all Federal, State and local laws, rules and ordinances, including all applicable license and permit requirements, and that I have given true, accurate and complete information on this form to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Applicant _____
Date _____

Return this form to: Martha Glass
Agritourism Office
1020 Mail Service Center
Raleigh NC 27699-1020
919-707-3120
martha.glass@ncagr.gov

Rev. January 2011

NCDA & CS Agritourism Office (2005) Application for Signs.
<https://connect.ncdot.gov/resources/safety/Tepl/TEPPL%20All%20Documents%20Library/Application.pdf>

Appendix E – On-premise Growing Area Requirement

On-premise Growing Area Required to Qualify for the Agricultural Tourism Signage Program

The intent of the legislation that created the Agricultural Tourism Signing Program is to introduce visitors to the growing area of a farm or vineyard. The NCDA&CS has determined that Agricultural Tourism Program signing will not be allowed unless the facility has an actual growing area of at least 500 square feet that can be toured from the signed facility location. Tours must be offered of the growing area, in addition to tours of any production area located on-premises. Permanent on-premise signing specifying the times for the tours and hours of operation of the facility must be in place prior to the qualification site visit by NCDA&CS. The growing area must be complete and in production prior to the qualification site visit by NCDA&CS.

If a facility produces wine or other agricultural product but does not have a growing area on the property, it would not qualify for the program. *Reference: Letter from Martha Glass (Manager, NCDA&CS Agritourism Office) dated June 23, 2008.*

Clarification Posted: 07-01-2008

NCDA&CS and NCDOT (2008). A-07_clar01: On-Premise Growing Area Requirement
https://connect.ncdot.gov/resources/safety/Tepl/TEPPL%20All%20Documents%20Library/A-07_clar01.pdf

Appendix F – Wording On Signs

Clarification: Wording on signs

Agricultural Tourism signs direct motorists to an agricultural tour. The sign message includes the official business name and the word “TOURS” with the following exception and clarifications:

- 1) The word “Winery” will not be allowed on a sign even if it is included in the official name of a business.
- 2) Facilities that desire to use the word “Vineyard(s)” or “Farm(s)” on Agricultural Tourism Signs must meet the following requirements (in addition to all other Program requirements):
 - Have an actual working vineyard or farm on the same site as the facility to which motorists are directed
 - Provide an informative, guided tour of the actual vineyard or farm
 - Include vineyard or farm tour times on required permanent sign that displays other facility tour information

Businesses that have a working vineyard or farm that is not located on the same property as the signed agricultural facility are not permitted on the Agricultural Signage Program. The signed facility must be located on the same property as the vineyard, farm, or other growing area available for touring. The vineyard, farm, or growing area (location of tour) must be a short walking distance from the signed facility/parking area, as determined by NCDA&CS when the qualification site visit is made.

If the agricultural facility is in the business of making wine but does not have a vineyard (or a suitable growing area representing the vineyard) that can be toured, program participation will not be allowed.

Clarification Posted: 07-01-2008

NCDA&CS and NCDOT (2008). A-07_clar02: Wording on Signs.
https://connect.ncdot.gov/resources/safety/Tepl/TEPPL%20All%20Documents%20Library/A-07_clar02.pdf

Appendix G – Cost Estimates

NCDOT Signing Section (2007). Typical, Cost Estimates, Examples

<https://connect.ncdot.gov/resources/safety/Tepl/TEPPL%20All%20Documents%20Library/signs.pdf>

Typical Agritourism Installation on Freeway									
<i>(Cost per each sign location)</i>									
Signs									
Sign Type	Width (in)	Height (in)	Description	Location	Quantity	Unit Cost	Unit of Measure	Cost/sign	Total
A	96	108	Vineyard Sign	Divided Freeways	1	\$15.95	square foot	\$1,148.40	\$1,148.40
Sign Erection									
Sign Type			Description	Location	Quantity	Unit Cost	Unit of Measure	Total	
A			Sign Erection	Divided Freeways	1	\$450.00	each	\$450.00	
Steel Supports									
Description			Size	Quantity	Unit Cost	Unit of Measure	Total		
Breakaway Steel Beam Supports			n/a	445	\$2.45	pound	\$1,090.25		
Concrete									
Description			Quantity	Unit Cost	Unit of Measure	Total			
Reinforced Concrete Sign Footing			0.50	\$605.08	cubic yard	\$302.54			
Miscellaneous									
Description				Quantity	Unit Cost	Unit of Measure	Total		
Field Investigation for Type "A" Sign Assembly				1	\$1,000.00	one time fee	\$1,000.00		
Administration and Design for Type "A" Sign Assembly				1	\$1,000.00	one time fee	\$1,000.00		
NCDOT Inspection During Installation				1	\$1,000.00	See Note 3	\$1,000.00		
							Subtotal		\$5,991.19
							Mobilization & Traffic Control (15%)		\$898.68
							Total Sign Installation		\$6,889.87

If temporary wood supports are requested, add the following costs

Description	Quantity	Unit Cost	Unit of Measure	Total
6" x 8" drilled wood supports	2	\$700.00	each	\$1,400.00
Type "A" sign erection	1	\$450.00	each	\$450.00
Traffic Control	1	\$300.00	lump sum	\$300.00
Subtotal for Temporary Sign Installation				\$2,150.00
Total Sign Installation (if temp. supports req.)				\$9,039.87

Date: 10/30/03
Revision Date: 02/12/08

Note 1: NCDOT Field Investigation cost = \$1,000 one time charge if any "Type A" sign assemblies are part of project.

Note 2: NCDOT Administration and Design cost = \$1000 one time charge if any "Type A" sign assemblies are part of project.

Note 3: NCDOT Inspection cost for Type "A" sign assemblies = \$1,000 for first sign assembly; \$500 for each additional sign assembly.

Note 4: Final cost will vary depending upon the the number of lines of text on each sign, local wind speed, and location of installation.

Appendix H – Contacts for NCDOT

Contacts for North Carolina Department of Transportation Maps			
Division	Address	Counties	Phone
Division 1	113 Airport Dr., Suite 100 Edenton, NC 27932	Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hertford, Hyde Martin, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, Washington	(252)482-7977
Division 2	105 Pictolus Hwy (NC 33) P.O. Box 1587 Greenville, NC 27835	Beaufort, Carteret, Craven, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Pamlico, Pitt	(252)830-3490
Division 3	124 Division Dr Wilmington, NC 28401	Brunswick, Duplin, New Hanover, Onslow, Pender, Sampson	(910)251-5724
Division 4	509 Ward Blvd. P.O. Box 3165 Wilson, NC 27895	Edgecombe, Halifax, Johnston, Nash, Wayne, Wilson	(252)237-6164
Division 5	2612 N. Duke St Durham, NC 27704	Durham, Franklin, Granville, Person, Vance, Wake, Warren	(919)220-4600
Division 6	558 Gillespie St. P.O. Box 1150 Fayetteville, NC 28302	Bladen, Columbus, Cumberland, Harnett, Robeson	(910)486-1493
Division 7	1584 Yanceyville St. P.O. Box 14996 Greensboro, NC 27415-4996	Alamance, Caswell, Guilford, Orange, Rockingham	(336)334-3192
Division 8	902 N. Sandhills Blvd. Aberdeen, NC 28315	Chatham, Hoke, Lee, Montgomery, Moore, Randolph, Richmond, Scotland	(910)944-2344
Division 9	375 Sillas Creek Parkway Winston-Salem, NC 27127	Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Rowan, Stokes	(336)703-6500
Division 10	716 W. Main St Albemarle, NC 28001	Anson, Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, Stanly, Union	(704)982-0101
Division 11	P.O. Box 250 N. Wilkesboro, NC 28659	Alleghany, Ashe, Aveny, Caldwell, Surry, Watauga, Wilkes, Yadkin	(336)667-9111
Division 12	1710 Marion St. P.O. Box 47 Shelby, NC 28151-0047	Alexander, Catawba, Cleveland, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln	(704)480-9020
Division 13	P.O. Box 3279 Asheville, NC 28802	Burcombe, Burke, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Rutherford, Yancey	(828)251-6171
Division 14	235 Webster Road Sylva, NC 28779	Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Polk, Swain, Transylvania	(828)586-2141

Policy for Agricultural Tourism Directional Signs
Attachment 1

NCDOT Signing Section (2005). Contacts for NC County Maps.

<https://connect.ncdot.gov/resources/safety/Tepl/TEPPL%20All%20Documents%20Library/Maps.pdf>

Appendix I - NC Logo Program

LOGO RULES

19A NCAC 02E .0216 SPECIFIC SERVICE SIGNING (LOGO) PROGRAM

The Specific Service Signing Program, hereinafter "Program", provides eligible businesses with the opportunity to be listed on official signs within the right-of-way of fully controlled access highways. The Traffic Engineering and Safety Systems Branch is responsible for administering the program and receiving requests for information concerning the Program. Requests for information may be directed to the State Traffic Engineer, Division of Highways, Department of Transportation, 1561 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1561. Division Engineers, for the division in which the interchange is located, are responsible for receiving and distributing applications and copies of policies and procedures, executing agreements and administering the agreements.

History Note: Authority G.S. 136-89.56; 136-137; 136-139; 143B-346; 143B-348; 143B-350(f); 23 C.F.R. 750, Subpart A; 23 U.S.C. 131(f); Eff. April 1, 1982;

Amended Eff. April 1, 1994; October 1, 1993; October 1, 1991; Temporary Amendment Eff. October 13, 2003; Amended Eff. January 1, 2004.

19A NCAC 02E .0217 SPECIFIC INFORMATION PROGRAM DEFINITIONS

19A NCAC 02E .0218 LOCATION OF PANELS

History Note: Authority G.S. 136-89.56; 136-137; 136-139; 143B-346; 143B-348; 143B-350(f); 24 C.F.R. 750, Subpart A; 23 U.S.C. 131(f); Eff. April 1, 1982;

Amended Eff. August 1, 1998; September 1, 1984; April 1, 1994; October 1, 1993; October 1, 1991; April 1, 1986; November 1, 1985; Temporary Repeal Eff. October 13, 2003; Repealed Eff. January 1, 2004.

19A NCAC 02E .0219 ELIGIBILITY FOR PROGRAM

Businesses may participate in the program provided said businesses comply with the following criteria:

- (1) The individual business installation whose name, symbol or trademark appears on a business panel shall give written assurance of the business's conformity with all applicable laws concerning the provision of public accommodations without regard to race, religion, color, sex, age, disability, or national origin.
- (2) An individual business, under construction, may apply to participate in the program by giving written assurance of the business's conformity with all applicable laws and requirements for that type of service, by a specified date of opening to be within 60 days of the date of application. No business panel shall be displayed for a business which is not open for business and in full compliance with the standards required by the program. A business under construction shall not be allowed to apply for participation in the program if its participation would prevent an existing open business from participating, unless the existing business qualifies for or has a provisional contract.
- (3) Businesses may apply for participation in the program on a first-come, first-served basis until the maximum number of panels on the logo sign for that service is reached. If a business's panel is removed and space is available on the sign, or one or more of the existing businesses have provisional contracts, the first fully qualifying business to contact the Department shall be allowed priority for the vacant space or the space occupied by a business with a provisional contract.
- (4) The maximum distance that a "GAS", "FOOD", or "LODGING" service may be located from the fully controlled access highway shall not exceed three miles at rural interchange approaches and one mile at urban interchange approaches in either direction via an all-weather road. Where no qualifying services exist within three miles (rural) or one mile (urban), provisional contracts are permitted where

the maximum distance may be increased to six miles at rural interchange approaches and three miles at urban interchange approaches, provided the total travel distance to the business and return to the interchange does not exceed twelve miles. A rural interchange is defined as an interchange along a freeway (interstate or other fully-controlled access arterial highway) that is located either in a rural unincorporated area or within the corporate limits of a city or town with a population of less than 40,000. An urban interchange is defined as an interchange along a freeway (interstate or other fully-controlled access arterial highway) that is located either in or within one mile of the corporate limits of a city or town with a population equal to or greater than 40,000. Provisional contracts shall be written with the understanding that if a closer business applies, qualifies, and is within the three miles (rural) or one mile (urban) distance as applicable, and there is not otherwise room on the sign for the new business, then the provisional contract of the furthest business from the intersection shall be cancelled and the business panels shall be removed at the annual contract renewal date. The maximum distance for a "CAMPING" or "ATTRACTION" service shall not exceed 15 miles in either direction via an all-weather road.

- (5) "GAS" and associated services. Criteria for erection of a business panel on a sign shall include:
 - (a) licensing as required by law;
 - (b) vehicle services for fuel (gas, diesel, or alternative fuels), motor oil, and water;
 - (c) on premise public restroom facilities;
 - (d) an on premise attendant to collect monies, make change, and make or arrange for tire repairs;
 - (e) year-round operation at least 16 continuous hours per day, seven days a week; and
 - (f) on premise telephone available for emergency use by the public.
- (6) "FOOD" service. Criteria for erection of a business panel on a sign shall include:
 - (a) licensing as required by law, and a permit to operate by the health department;
 - (b) businesses shall operate year-round at least eight continuous hours per day six days per week;
 - (c) indoor seating for at least 20 persons;
 - (d) on premise public restroom facilities; and
 - (e) on premise telephone available for emergency use by the public.
- (7) "LODGING" service. Criteria for erection of a business panel on a sign shall include:
 - (a) licensing as required by law, and a permit to operate by the health department;
 - (b) overnight sleeping accommodations consisting of a minimum of 10 units each, including bathroom and sleeping room, except a Lodging business operating as a "Bed and Breakfast" establishment with less than 10 units may participate. "Bed and Breakfast" businesses shall be identified on the Logo signs by a standard message specified by the Department. "Bed and Breakfast" businesses shall only be allowed to participate in the program if the maximum number of qualified Lodging businesses do not request participation in the program and occupy spaces on the Logo signs. All "Bed and Breakfast" businesses shall have provisional contracts;
 - (c) adequate parking accommodations;
 - (d) year-round operation; and
 - (e) on premise telephone available for emergency use by the public.
- (8) "CAMPING" service. Criteria for erection of a business panel on a sign shall include:
 - (a) licensing as required by law, including meeting all state and county health and sanitation codes and having water and sewer systems which have been duly inspected and approved by the local health authority (the operator shall present evidence of such inspection and approval);
 - (b) at least 10 campsites with accommodations (including on premise public restroom facilities in a permanent structure) for all types of travel-trailers, tents and camping vehicles;
 - (c) adequate parking accommodations;
 - (d) continuous operation, seven days a week during business season;
 - (e) removal or masking of said business panel by the department during off seasons, if operated on a seasonal basis; and
 - (f) on premise telephone available for emergency use by the public.

- (9) "ATTRACTION" service. Criteria for erection of a business panel on a sign for any business or establishment shall include:
- (a) licensing as required by law;
 - (b) on premise public restroom facilities in a permanent structure;
 - (c) continuously open to the motoring public without appointment at least eight hours per day, five days per week during its normal operating season or the normal operating season for the type of business;
 - (d) adequate parking accommodations;
 - (e) on premise telephone available for emergency use by the public; and
 - (f) only facilities whose primary purpose is providing amusement, historical, cultural, or leisure activities to the public and are categorized as follows shall be allowed signing:
 - (i) Amusement Parks: Permanent areas open to the general public including at least three of the following activities: roller coasters, entertainment rides, games, swimming, concerts, and exhibitions;
 - (ii) Cultural Centers or Facilities: Locations for cultural events including museums, outdoor theaters, or a facility that exhibits or sells antiques or items painted or crafted by local artists;
 - (iii) Historic Sites: Buildings, structures, or areas listed on the national or state historic register and recognized by the Department as historic attractions or locations;
 - (iv) Leisure or Recreation Activity Areas: Attractions that provide tourists with opportunities such as golfing (excluding miniature golf, driving ranges, chip and putt areas, and indoor golf), horseback riding, wind surfing, skiing, bicycling, boating, fishing, picnicking, hiking, and rafting;
 - (v) Manufacturing Facilities: Locations that manufacture or produce products of interest to tourists and offer tours at least four times daily on a regularly scheduled year-round basis such as candy, ice cream, cookie, or pickle manufacturing facilities. Facilities shall produce or manufacture and exhibit or sell their products at the facilities.
 - (vi) Agricultural Facilities: Locations that provide tours and exhibit or sell their agricultural products or provide on site samples of their products, such as vineyards and regional farmers markets;
 - (vii) Zoological or Botanical Parks and Farms: Facilities that keep living animals or plants and exhibit them to the public;
 - (viii) Natural Phenomena: Naturally occurring areas that are of outstanding interest to the public, such as waterfalls or caverns; and
 - (ix) Motor Sports Facilities: Locations including museums, race tracks, and race team headquarters that exhibit or sell items related to automobile or truck racing.
- (10) Any other "ATTRACTION" not listed in Item (f) of this Rule shall be approved by the State Traffic Engineer.
- (11) Ineligible Attractions include, but are not limited to, shopping malls, furniture stores, drug stores, movie theaters; community business, historic, antique, or other districts; appliance stores, automobile or truck dealerships or garages, houses of worship, colleges, schools, real estate offices, sand and gravel facilities, produce stands, nurseries, grocery stores, restaurants, bars, lounges, adult establishments, and adult video, book, and novelty stores. An attraction is not eligible for both Travel Services (Logo) Signing and supplemental guide signing, such as Agriculture Tourism signing, at the same interchange.

History Note: Authority G.S. 136-89.56; 136-137; 136-139; 143B-346; 143B-348; 143B-350(f); 23 C.F.R. 750, Subpart A; 23 U.S.C. 131(f); Eff. April 1, 1992; Amended Eff. August 1, 1998; April 1, 1994; October 1, 1993; December 1, 1992; October 1, 1991; Temporary Amendment Eff. October 13, 2003; Amended Eff. January 1, 2004.

19A NCAC 02E .0220 COMPOSITION OF BUSINESS PANELS AND LOGO SIGNS

(a) No business panel shall be displayed that would mislead or misinform the traveling public. Any message, trademarks, or brand symbols which interfere with, imitate, or resemble any official warning or regulatory traffic sign, signal or device is prohibited.

(b) Each specific service business panel shall include only information that is related to that specific service. No more than one specific service type such as GAS, FOOD, or LODGING shall be allowed on a business panel.

(c) Combination signs are the large rectangular signs that include space for individual business logo panels with more than one specific service. Provisional contracts for the businesses on combination signs shall be required for all businesses other than the first three fully qualifying GAS panels and the first three fully qualifying FOOD panels.

Combination signs shall be allowed if one or more of the following conditions are met:

- (1) if space is not available for separate sign installations;
- (2) if the number of businesses desiring to participate exceeds the number of spaces available for business panels on sign; or
- (3) if the number of businesses desiring to participate does not warrant the installation of separate sign installations.

History Note: Authority G.S. 136-89.56; 136-137; 136-139; 143B-346; 143B-348; 143B-350(f); 23 C.F.R. 750, Subpart A; 23 U.S.C. 131(f); Eff. April 1, 1982; Amended Eff. August 1, 1998; October 1, 1993; November 1, 1987; Temporary Amendment Eff. October 13, 2003; Amended Eff. January 1, 2004.

19A NCAC 02E .0221 FEES

(a) All logo signs shall be constructed and maintained by the Department. These logo signs shall be owned by the Department. The participating logo business shall pay an annual fee established by the Board of Transportation. All logo contracts existing under prior administrative code provisions are terminated in accordance with the terms of those contracts. However, existing participants shall not be required to reapply, but shall be required to sign an appropriate contract in accordance with the new regulations in order to continue their participation.

(b) The fee for participation in the Logo program is as follows: Mainline, ramp, and trailblazer panels are billed an annual fee of three hundred dollars (\$300.00) per each mainline, ramp and trailblazer panel. The initial payment of the fee shall be paid prior to installation. The contract runs for one year from the date of installation. Contracts shall be renewed annually and the fee is due at the contract renewal date. Every participating business that meets program requirements has a valid contract and pays all required fees shall be automatically renewed except for provisional contracts which shall be reviewed by the Department annually prior to renewal.

(c) The business shall provide a new or renovated business panel when necessary due to damages caused by acts of vandalism, accidents, or natural causes including natural deterioration. If the Department replaces a business panel on a logo sign or removes or masks a business panel because of seasonal operation, there shall be no additional charge to the business.

(d) The fee shall be paid by check or money order and is due in advance of the period of service covered by the fee. Failure to pay a fee when due is grounds for removal of the business panels and termination of the contract.

History Note: Authority G.S. 136-89.56; 136-137; 136-139; 143B-346; 143B-348; 143B-350(f); 23 C.F.R. 750, Subpart A; 23 U.S.C. 131(f); Eff. April 1, 1982; Amended Eff. July 1, 2000; August 1, 1998; April 1, 1994; October 1, 1993; December 1, 1992; September 1, 1990; Temporary Amendment Eff. October 13, 2003; Amended Eff. February 1, 2004.

19A NCAC 02E .0222 CONTRACTS WITH THE DEPARTMENT

*History Note: Authority G.S. 136-89.56; 136-137; 136-139; 143B-346; 143B-348; 143B-350(f); 23 C.F.R. 750, Subpart A; 23 U.S.C. 131(f);
Eff. April 1, 1982;
Amended Eff. July 1, 2000; August 1, 1998; December 1, 1994; October 1, 1993; October 1, 1992, September 1, 1990;
Temporary Repeal Eff. October 13, 2003;
Repealed Eff. January 1, 2004.*

19A NCAC 02E .0223 APPEAL OF DECISION OF DIVISION ENGINEER TO SECRETARY

- (a) Any business which applies to participate in the program and is refused or any business participating in the program which has its contract terminated, signs removed or believes that the program is otherwise not being administered in accord with these Rules may appeal the decision of the Division Engineer to the Secretary. The decision of the Secretary is final.
- (b) The business which decides to appeal a decision of the Division Engineer shall so notify the appropriate engineer of his decision to appeal by certified mail, return receipt requested, within 10 days of the receipt of notice of the decision of the Engineer. The Division Engineer shall then forward the notice given to him by the business to the Secretary.
- (c) Within 20 days from the time of submitting his notice of appeal to the Division Engineer, the business shall submit to the Secretary a written appeal setting forth with particularity the facts upon which its appeal is based.
- (d) Within 30 days from the receipt of the said written appeal or within such additional time as may be agreed to between the Secretary and the business, the Secretary shall make an investigation of the said appeal. The Secretary shall then make appropriate findings of fact and conclusions pertaining to the appeal on behalf of the Department of Transportation and the findings and conclusion shall be served upon the business seeking the review by certified mail, return receipt requested.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 136-89.56; 136-137; 136-139; 143B-346; 143B-348; 143B-350(f);
23 C.F.R. 750, Subpart A; 23 U.S.C. 131(f);
Eff. April 1, 1982;
Amended Eff. October 1, 1993.*

Appendix J - NC TODS Program

SECTION .1100 – TOURIST-ORIENTED DIRECTIONAL SIGN PROGRAM

19A NCAC 02E .1101 TOURIST-ORIENTED DIRECTIONAL SIGN (TODS) PROGRAM

(a) The Tourist-Oriented Directional Sign Program, hereinafter "Program," offered by the North Carolina Department of Transportation, hereinafter "Department," provides directional signing for eligible tourist attractions located on the state non-freeway system which is located within the right-of-way at intersections as specified in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

(b) Requests for information may be directed to the State Traffic Engineer, Division of Highways, Department of Transportation, 1592 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1592.

(c) Applications for participation in the program shall be accepted by the Division Engineer who is responsible for the county where the attraction is located.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 136-130; 136-140.15; 136-140.16; 136-140.17; 136-140.18; 136-140.19; 143B-346; 143B-348; 143B-350(f);
Temporary Adoption Eff. January 1, 2003;
Eff. August 1, 2004.*

19A NCAC 02E .1102 DEFINITIONS

(a) For purposes of the rules in this Section, the following definitions shall apply:

- (1) Panel - A TODS for the purpose of displaying the business identification of and directional information for eligible attractions.
- (2) Trailblazer - A TODS for the purpose of guiding tourists from the mainline intersection to the attraction.
- (3) Attraction - Classes of businesses or facilities as described in G.S. 136-140.15(b)(2) and (3).

(b) In applying the definitions of "tourist-oriented business" in G.S. 136-140.15, the following additional definition of terms shall be used:

- (1) "Substantial Portion" - as used to describe the part of a business's products or services which are of interest to tourists, shall mean at least 30 percent of the products and services are unique to tourists' interests; and
- (2) "Significant Interest" - as used to describe the actual interest that the business may have to tourists and is defined as of such unique interest to tourists, above and beyond the interest that the business's products and services may generate among residents of the immediate area, that tourists account for at least 40 percent of the total revenue of the business.

(c) In applying the definitions of "tourist-oriented facility" in G.S. 136-140.15, the following additional definition of terms shall be used:

- (1) "Major Portion" - 51 percent;
- (2) "Immediate Area" - located within a 20 mile radius of the business or facility; and
- (3) "Residing" - living in a particular place for at least four months of a given calendar year.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 136-89.56; 136-130; 136-140.15; 136-140.16; 136-140.17; 136-140.18; 136-140.19; 143B-346; 143B-348; 143B-350(f);
Temporary Adoption Eff. January 1, 2003;
Eff. August 1, 2004.*

19A NCAC 02E .1103 LOCATION OF TODS

The Department shall control the erection and maintenance of official signs giving specific information of interest to the traveling public in accordance with following criteria:

- (1) The Department shall limit the placement of TODS panels to highways other than fully controlled access highways that are either in rural unincorporated areas or in towns or cities with a population of less than 40,000.
- (2) The Department shall only erect panels at intersections (at-grade). An at-grade intersection is an intersection which is controlled by stop signs or traffic signals. Trailblazers shall be installed when an attraction is not located on a state highway and further direction is needed to guide the tourist from the intersection to the attraction.
- (3) Panels shall be located in a manner to take advantage of natural terrain and to have the least impact on the scenic environment.
- (4) A separate sign panel shall be provided on the intersection approach for each eligible attraction. Panels shall be allowed in each direction only when lateral spacing is available. The number of TODS panels shall not exceed a total of six per approach with only one attraction name on each TODS panel.

- (5) The center of the mainline TODS intersection shall not be more than five driving miles from the eligible attraction and shall not be placed where prohibited by local ordinance.
- (6) If an attraction is not directly on a State highway, it is eligible for TODS panels only if both of the following requirements are met:
 - (a) It is located on a street that directly connects with a state maintained road.
 - (b) It is located so that only one TODS Trailblazer, placed on a state maintained road, will lead the tourist to the attraction.
- (7) Sign panels shall not be placed immediately in advance of the attraction if its on-premise advertising signs are readily visible from the highway.
- (8) TODS panels shall be located at least 200 feet in advance of the main intersection. Signs shall be spaced at least 200 feet apart and at least 200 feet from other traffic control devices. TODS panels shall not be located more than one-half (0.5) mile from the center of the main intersection and shall not be placed in the signing sequence for any other prior intersections.
- (9) Existing warning, regulatory, guide or other official highway signs shall take precedence over TODS.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 136-89.56; 136-130; 136-140.15; 136-140.16; 136-140.17; 136-140.18; 136-140.17; 136-140.18; 136-140.19; 143B-346; 143B-348; 143B-350(f);
Temporary Adoption Eff. January 1, 2003;
Eff. August 1, 2004.*

19A NCAC 02E .1104 ELIGIBILITY FOR PROGRAM

- (a) An attraction is eligible to participate in the Program if it meets the criteria in G.S. 136-140-16.
- (b) The maximum distance that an attraction shall be located from the intersection containing TODS panels is five miles. Said distance shall be measured from the center of the intersection coincident with the centerline of a non-controlled access highway route or its median, along the roadways to the respective attraction. The point to be measured to for each attraction is a point on the roadway that leads to the main entrance to the attraction that is perpendicular to the corner of the nearest wall of the attraction to the intersection. The wall to be measured to shall be that of the main building or office. Walls of sheds (concession stands, storage buildings, separate restrooms,) whether or not attached to the main building shall not be used for the purposes of measuring. If the office (main building) of an attraction is located more than two-tenths (0.2) mile from a public road on a private road or drive, the distance to the office along the said drive or road shall be included in the overall distance measured to determine whether or not the attraction qualifies for TODS signing. The office shall be presumed to be at the place where the services are provided.
- (c) Interested parties may show that they meet the definition of "tourist-oriented business" or tourist oriented facility" in either of two ways:
 - (1) An applicant shall certify, through the use of scientific independent surveys, business records, bank records, tax returns, or any other documents which would be admissible in a court proceeding that the applicant or facility meets each aspect of the definition of "tourist oriented business" or the definition of "tourist oriented facility." The applicant has an affirmative burden to provide documentation in support of its showing; or
 - (2) An applicant may show that it is one of the following, which are presumed to be "tourist oriented businesses" or "tourist oriented facilities."
 - (A) Amusement Park: a permanent area open to the general public including at least three of the following activities: roller coasters, entertainment rides, games, swimming, concerts, and exhibitions;
 - (B) Cultural Center: a facility for cultural events including museums, outdoor theaters, or facilities that exhibit antiques or items painted or crafted by local artists;
 - (C) Facility Tour Location: a facility such as a factory, institution or a plant which conducts tours at least four times daily on a regularly scheduled year-round basis;
 - (D) Historic Site or District: a structure or area listed on the national or state historic register. An historic site must be open to the public at least three months out of each year. Historic districts shall provide the public with a single, central location, such as a self-serve kiosk, welcome center or history museum where motorists can obtain information regarding the district;
 - (E) Recreation area: an attraction which provides tourists with opportunities such as golfing (excluding miniature golf, driving ranges, chip and putt areas, and indoor golf) horseback riding, surfing, bicycling, boating, fishing, picnicking, hiking or rafting and where, either at the attraction or within 10 miles, all necessary equipment can be rented;
 - (F) Natural Phenomenon: a naturally occurring area which is of interest to the general public, such as a waterfall or cavern;

- (G) Zoological/Botanical Parks and Farms: a facility in which living animals or plants are kept and exhibited to the public; and
- (H) Agricultural Facility: a facility that provides tours, on-site samples of agricultural products, or produce stands.

(d) "Tourist oriented businesses" or "tourist oriented facilities" shall be businesses or facilities that are a destination for tourists and must provide products or services that meet tourists' primary needs or interests. Shopping malls, furniture stores, drug stores, movie theaters, community business districts, appliance stores, automobile or truck dealerships or garages, houses of worship, real estate offices, livestock sales facilities, sand and gravel facilities, grocery stores, gas or vehicle service stations, bars, lounges, adult establishments, adult video, book, or novelty stores, medical facilities, and restaurants are not considered either "tourist oriented businesses" or "tourist oriented facilities."

*History Note: Authority G.S. 136-89.56; 136-130; 136-140.15; 136-140.16; 136-140.17; 136-140.18; 136-140.19; 143B-346; 143B-348; 143B-350(f);
Temporary Adoption Eff. January 1, 2003;
Eff. August 1, 2004.*

19A NCAC 02E .1105 COMPOSITION OF SIGNS

- (a) No TODS panel shall be displayed which would mislead or misinform the traveling public.
- (b) Any messages that interfere with, imitate, or resemble any official warning or regulatory traffic sign, signal or similar device are prohibited.
- (c) Each specific TODS panel shall include only information that is related to that specific attraction.
- (d) TODS panel and trailblazer designs shall be in conformance with the standards as specified in the MUTCD and approved by the Department prior to fabrication and shipment.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 136-89.56; 136-130; 136-140.15; 136-140.16; 136-140.17; 136-140.18; 136-140.19; 143B-346; 143B-348; 143B-350(f);
Temporary Adoption Eff. January 1, 2003;
Eff. August 1, 2004.*

19A NCAC 02E .1106 FEES

- (a) The annual fee for each TODS panel or Trailblazer shall be two hundred dollars (\$200.00).
- (b) All participating businesses shall pay the annual fee prior to installation of the TODS panel(s).
- (c) The annual fee shall be paid by check or money order and is due in advance of the period of service covered by said fee. Failure to pay a fee when due is grounds for removal of the TODS panel and termination of the contract.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 136-89.56; 136-130; 136-140.15; 136-140.16; 136-140.17; 136-140.18; 136-140.19; 143B-348; 143B-350(f);
Temporary Adoption Eff. January 1, 2003;
Eff. August 1, 2004.*

19A NCAC 02E .1107 CONTRACTS WITH THE DEPARTMENT

- (a) The Department shall perform all installation, maintenance, removal and replacement of TODS panel(s).
- (b) Applications shall be submitted to the Division Engineer for the Division in which the attraction is located, and must include a layout of the proposed TODS.
- (c) Upon approval of the application for participation in the TODS program, the applicant must agree to submit the required annual fee within 30 days of notification.
- (d) No TODS panel shall be displayed which, in the opinion of the Department, is unsightly, badly faded, or in a state of dilapidation. The Department shall remove, replace, or mask any such TODS panel. Ordinary maintenance services shall be performed by the Department.
- (e) The Department shall remove the TODS panel upon failure to pay the annual fee or for violation of any provision of the rules in this Section and the TODS panel shall be removed.
- (f) When a TODS panel is removed, it shall be taken to the Division Traffic Services Shop of the Division in which the attraction is located. The participant shall be notified in writing of such removal and given 30 days in which to retrieve his sign. After 30 days, the TODS panel shall become the property of the Department and shall be disposed of as the Department shall see fit.
- (g) Should the Department determine that trailblazing to an attraction is desirable as described in 19A NCAC 02E .1103(6), it shall be done in conformance with the standards for a TODS trailblazer as defined in 19A NCAC 02E .1102(2). The participant

shall furnish trailblazing signs required by the Department. In such trailblazer installations, only one TODS trailblazer shall be used per each TODS intersection signed.

(h) Should an attraction qualify for TODS signage at two intersections, the TODS panel shall be erected at the nearest intersection. If the participant desires signing at the second intersection also, it may be so signed provided it does not prevent another attraction from being signed.

(i) An attraction under construction shall not be allowed to apply for participation in the program if its participation would prevent an existing open attraction applicant from participating, unless the open attraction has turned down a previous opportunity offered by the Department to participate in the program as provided in the program. After approval of an application, an attraction under construction shall be allowed priority participation over another eligible attraction that opens for business prior to the time specified for opening in the application by the attraction under construction.

(j) The closest interested eligible attractions at an intersection up to a total of six TODS panels per approach to submit signed contracts shall be allowed TODS panels at that approach. Should the number of attractions at an approach increase to more than the maximum number of TODS panels allowed at that approach and a closer interested eligible participant requests installation of its TODS panels, the farthest qualifying participant shall be removed at the renewal date. Program participants may renew their respective contracts annually provided the attraction maintains program eligibility. An attraction with more than one sign displayed on any intersection approach leg shall have the additional sign(s) removed at the end of a contract period when other eligible attractions apply for space on that approach.

(k) An attraction which has been closed for remodeling or repair shall be granted one year to complete the construction, renovation, or restoration, provided the annual fee is paid and the same type of qualifying service is provided after reopening, even if under a different business name.

(l) Should a participating attraction cease to be in compliance with G.S. 136-140.16 and the rules in this Section, the Division Engineer shall notify the participant that it shall be given 30 days to bring the attraction into compliance or its TODS panel(s) shall be removed. If the attraction is removed and later applies for reinstatement, this request shall be handled in the same manner as a request from a new applicant. When a participating attraction is determined not to be in compliance with G.S. 136-140.16 and the rules in this Section for a second time within two years of the first determination of non-compliance, its TODS panel(s) shall be permanently removed. If an attraction under construction is not open on the specified date in the agreement, the participant shall be given 30 days notification to request the TODS panel installation or forfeit its panel. Future applications shall be treated in the same manner as a new applicant.

(m) The transfer of ownership of an attraction for which an agreement has been lawfully executed shall not affect the validity of the agreement for the TODS agreement provided that the appropriate Division Engineer is given notice in writing of the transfer of ownership within 30 days of the actual transfer and the application is updated.

(n) The Department shall not maintain waiting lists for the program.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 136-89.56; 136-130; 136-140.15; 136-140.16; 136-140.17; 136-140.18; 136-140.19; 143B-346; 143B-348; 143B-350(f);
Temporary Adoption Eff. January 1, 2003;
Eff. August 1, 2004.*

19A NCAC 02E .1108 APPEAL OF DECISION

(a) Any applicant who is refused, or any participating attraction which has its contract terminated and signs removed, that believes the program is not being administered in accord with the rules in this Section, may appeal the decision of the Division Engineer to the Secretary of the Department of Transportation. The decision of the Secretary is final.

(b) The applicant or participant shall notify the Division Engineer of his decision to appeal by certified mail, return receipt requested, within 10 days of the receipt of the decision.

(c) Within 20 days from the time of submitting his notice of appeal, the applicant or participant shall submit to the Secretary a written appeal setting forth with particularity the facts upon which its appeal is based.

(d) Within 30 days from the receipt of the written appeal or within such additional time as may be agreed to between the Secretary and the appealing party, the Secretary shall make an investigation of the appeal. The Secretary shall then make findings of fact and conclusions pertaining to the appeal on behalf of the Department and the findings and conclusions shall be served upon the appealing party by certified mail, return receipt requested.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 136-89.56; 136-130; 136-140.15; 136-140.16; 136-140.17; 136-140.18; 136-140.19; 143B-346; 143B-348; 143B-350(f);
Temporary Adoption Eff. January 1, 2003;
Eff. August 1, 2004.*

Appendix K - NC TODS Clarification

CLARIFICATIONS - ELIGIBILITY

General

The hours of operation must be posted on a permanent, on-premise sign located conspicuously at or near the entrance to the facility.

NCDOT Specific clarifications to items listed in 19A NCAC 02E .1104 ELIGIBILITY FOR PROGRAM

All administrative code requirements are enforced in addition to these clarifications.

(2)(C) Facility Tour Location: Tour times for a Manufacturing Facility or Production Facility that would offer tours of a production process, must be posted on a permanent on-premise sign located conspicuously at or near the entrance to the facility. Tours must be:

- 1) Directed by knowledgeable employee (tour guide) of the business;
- 2) Educational, informative, and entertaining in nature; and
- 3) Of sufficient length to clearly describe the materials, equipment, and processes used in the manufacturing facility (minimum 15 minutes).

(2)(D) Historic Site or District: Tour times for "Historic Site" must be posted on a permanent on-premise sign located conspicuously at or near the entrance to the facility.

Tours must be:

- 1) Directed by a knowledgeable employee (tour guide) of the business
- 2) Educational and informative
- 3) Of sufficient length to clearly describe the historical significance of the site (building/property)
- 4) Tours shall be given of the entire structure or area listed on the national or state historic register, including all floors of multilevel historic homes, buildings, or structures or other historic building or sites on the property.

(2)(E) Recreation area: All equipment, etc., necessary for the activity must be available on site (for rent or at no cost to the customer). For hiking and biking, trails must be signed and properly marked. To qualify as a recreation area, a golf course must be open to the public and must offer tee times to the public within thirty (30) minutes of arrival without requiring prior appointment. On-premise sign(s) at the entrance (from the public road and from any subsequent drive) to any recreational facility, including a golf course, specifying "open to the public" or "public welcome" must be in place unless it is obvious to the TODS/Logo Coordinator or State Programs Engineer that it is a public attraction.

A leisure or recreation activity area may be indoors (in a facility); however, the primary purpose of the facility must be to provide the leisure or recreation activity to the public.

(2)(H) Agricultural Facility: To be considered for TODS, "Agricultural Facilities" (other than a regional farmer's market or produce stand) must have an actual working farm (or vineyard) on the same site as the facility to which motorists are directed. A guided tour must be provided of the farm or vineyard, as well as of any production processes used by the facility. Tour times (or "Tours Available Upon Request") must be posted on a permanent on-premise sign located conspicuously at or near the entrance to the facility.

Tours must be:

- 1) Directed by knowledgeable employee (tour guide) of the business;
- 2) Educational, informative, and entertaining in nature;
- 3) Of sufficient length to clearly describe the materials, equipment, and processes used in the production of agricultural products by the facility (minimum 15 minutes); and

4) Conducted regularly [a minimum of two (2) regularly scheduled tours during each day the facility is open to the public] during open business hours; or in the absence of regular tour times, upon customer request [within thirty (30) minutes of request].

If the agricultural facility is a regional farmer's market, it must be frequently visited by customers from outside the area (at least 20 miles away) and be comprised of at least 25,000 SF of covered and/or enclosed area for selling a variety of agricultural products throughout the year.

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