



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT HELPS OPEN DOORS TO ARBOR TRAILS WINERY**

**Nebraska City, Neb.**, June 18, 2004 – Southeast Nebraska Alternative Crops Association (SENACA), Non-Stock Cooperative held a Grand Opening today in Nebraska City for Arbor Trails Winery. A symbolic funding check for an USDA Rural Development \$96,355 grant was presented to SENACA. These monies assisted with the working capital needed for personnel, office equipment, marketing, inventory, and general costs associated with operating the winery.

“I would like to thank USDA Rural Development for the funding we received that helped to get the winery operating,” stated Al Peterson, president of SENACA. “Additionally a thank you goes to Stephanie Shrader who wrote our business plan that has served as a very successful road map.”

Arbor Trails Winery is the first cooperatively owned winery in Nebraska and the second in the United States. Based in a rural schoolhouse and strategically placed on a high-traffic tourist corridor site, the winery will be handy for tourists to stop in for a taste of wines crafted from the fruits of southeast Nebraska grape growers. The winery will also feature Nebraska made products such as cheeses from the University of Nebraska Dairy Store and giftware made by local residents. Arbor Trails Winery is near the outlet mall and the Lewis and Clark Center on Highway 2.

SENACA is an agricultural cooperative comprised of grape growers in southeast Nebraska formed specifically to create a grower-owned winery that returns value-added profits to its producers. The grapes will be processed into wine and sold directly by Arbor Trails Winery from its tasting room thus eliminating distribution costs. SENACA’s goal is to efficiently operate a 6,000 gallon maximum capacity cooperatively owned winery in Nebraska City and at present are two-thirds of the ways to meeting goal.

SENACA will bring revenue to its producer-members by producing a market for their grapes, returning value-added profits to its producer-members and by providing a marketing mechanism focusing on both local market and tourism for retail sale of their wine. The winery also provides increased employment for the local community.

For information on the Value-Added Agricultural Product Market Development Grant program contact Cliff Kumm at (402) 223-3125, [cliff.kumm@ne.usda.gov](mailto:cliff.kumm@ne.usda.gov), 201 N. 25<sup>th</sup> Street Beatrice, Neb. 68310.

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