Case Study:
Villarino vineyard and winery

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Overview of case study

- Social sustainability
- Economic sustainability
- Environmental sustainability/organic practices
- Recommendations
- Involvement in sustainable practices beyond Uruguay
Family-owned vineyard for more than 100 years
Dante Villarino, 34, is the agronomist of the operations
Father and a sister (four siblings) run the winery
Four permanent employees; 15 temporary employees for harvest
Dante Villarino and father
Economic sustainability

- Long business history suggests sustainability
- 350,000 liters of wine per year, at $4 a bottle retail
- Distribution: Fuel costs may impact family’s ability to deliver wine
- Agritourism: Winery not regularly open for tourists, sales
Villarino Winery
About the vineyard

- 20-hectare operation, partly conventional and partly organic
- Varietals: Merlot, Syrah, Muscatel and Tannat (or Ariaga)
- Organic vineyard is all Merlot; no economic premium for organic wine
About tannat

- Tannat is Uruguay’s signature wine grape
- Brought to country from southwest France in 1870s
- Tannat = “tannins”
- Tannat is often blended with other varietals (Merlot, Syrah) to temper tannins
- Wine production can also produce a smoother tannat
Environmental sustainability

- Weed control
- External inputs
- Natural resources
- Pest control
- Disease control
- Fertility
- Equipment
- Biodiversity
Organic vineyard
Organic grapes
Fungal damage
Establish vineyards as conventional, transition to organic
Explore copper sulfate alternatives
Invest in technical support
Explore opportunities for agritourism
Activities since Uruguay

- Consumer education task force, created by value-added group
- Work on agents’ columns, recipes for The Produce Lady
- Attended regional meeting (Greenville) of CEFS farm to fork initiative
- Will present report from Community Outreach and Marketing WIT at Farm to Fork Summit