

NGWB Grant Final Report (FY23-24)

Contract Number #18-13-333 - NWGGA – TOAST Nebraska

Grant Amount \$88,000.00

Contact Information

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Issue of Interest

The Nebraska Winery and Grape Grower Association continues to need to market Nebraska wines and grape varieties directly to Nebraska consumers. With wine consumption dropping throughout the world events like TOAST will become more and more important for bringing in new consumers and keeping current consumers engaged.

Approach to Problem

By promoting the industry as a category, we will strive to introduce consumers to wines and the events and activities of wineries and vineyards as a tourism attraction. TOAST Nebraska and Holiday TOAST Nebraska help encourage increased recognition and demand of Nebraska wine and grape related products. These events allowed each individual participating winery to brand themselves in their own tent or booth area to give guests a “taste” of what it would be like to visit their winery and it also allows the industry to market all Nebraska Wines which can increase demand and consumption of Nebraska Wines. The Nebraska Winery & Grape Growers Association continues to promote the industry by marketing to consumers by hosting the annual events TOAST Nebraska in Omaha, NE and Holiday TOAST Nebraska in Grand Island, NE.

The grant allowed for the following:

- Provided funding to promote the Holiday TOAST Nebraska Wine Festival for a fall 2023 event
- Provided funding to promote the TOAST Nebraska Wine Festival for a spring 2024 event
- Provide two central locations where attendees could taste various Nebraska Wines and encourage individuals to purchase Nebraska Wines during the events

Goals/Achievement of Goals

The goal of this project is to provide quality events where attendees can learn about the various wines that Nebraska has to offer and to provide education about the varieties that Nebraska has available.

The 2023 Holiday TOAST Nebraska Wine Festival was hosted on November 4, 2023 at Fonner Park in Grand Island, the festival welcomed 1,467 attendees, 26 artisan and food vendors, 17 wineries and

200 winery employees, vendors/volunteers, and event staff. Attendees were able to sample wines, purchase bottles of wine and vendor merchandise, participate in wine bingo, attend charcuterie demonstrations, watch the Husker Football game and enjoy live music. This event helped bring additional consumer recognition to central Nebraska and many attendees expressed their gratitude for holding the event in a more central location.

The 2024 TOAST Nebraska Wine Festival was not as successful as previous years but we are still proud of the engagement that we received from attendees. Hosted on May 17-18 at Stinson Park in Aksarben Village in Omaha, the festival welcomed attendees (2,591 tickets sold), 17 wineries and 386 winery employees, volunteers, and event staff. The centrally located park allowed for great foot traffic, day of marketing, as well as free parking, nearby hotels, and lots of attractions within walking distance – a must for an alcohol focused event. Marketing was launched in November and continued through the event. Overall general marketing efforts (Facebook & Google) had a reach of over 1.1 million Nebraskans and Midwesterners, increasing not only the opportunity for ticket sales but industry recognition as well. NWGGA also partnered with KeTV in 2024 for Spring TOAST. KeTV’s streaming service (CTV) added an additional 95,866 impressions and 2,118 site visits during their TV campaigns. These numbers were not included in the general marketing efforts. As in the past, NWGGA partnered with 50 food vendors and artisans to offer snacks, meals, and shopping to event attendees. There were multiple bands throughout each day as well as wine education sessions, wine bingo, yard games and charcuterie demonstrations.

Results, Conclusions, Lessons Learned

Despite spring TOAST lower attendance numbers, both events continue to be extremely successful. These two events are a great tool to promote and impact the Nebraska wine industry and we hope to continue to host more great TOAST events in the future. The TOAST Nebraska spring event was awarded the Best Festival by Omaha’s Choice awards in 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 and second runner-up in the 2021 Outstanding Event Award category for the Nebraska Tourism Awards. The current state of the economy and declining wine consumption did lead to a lower attendance than anticipated at the Spring festival, but we are confident that with a few adjustments next years festival will boast a higher number of attendees.

Progress Achieved According to Outcome Measures

In comparison to the most recent 2024 festival at Stinson Park in Omaha:

Tickets Sold	2021: 3,233	2022: 4,908	2023: 4,526	2024: 2,977
Average Ticket Price Sold	2021: \$39.07	2022: \$39.52	2023: \$41.89	2024: 49.19 offered VIP
Wineries and Vendors Attended	2021: 45	2022: 60	2023: 66	2024: 67

These metrics were based on the most available data from the 2024 festival.

The 2023 Holiday TOAST Festival was held on November 4, 2023, at Fonner Park in Grand Island.

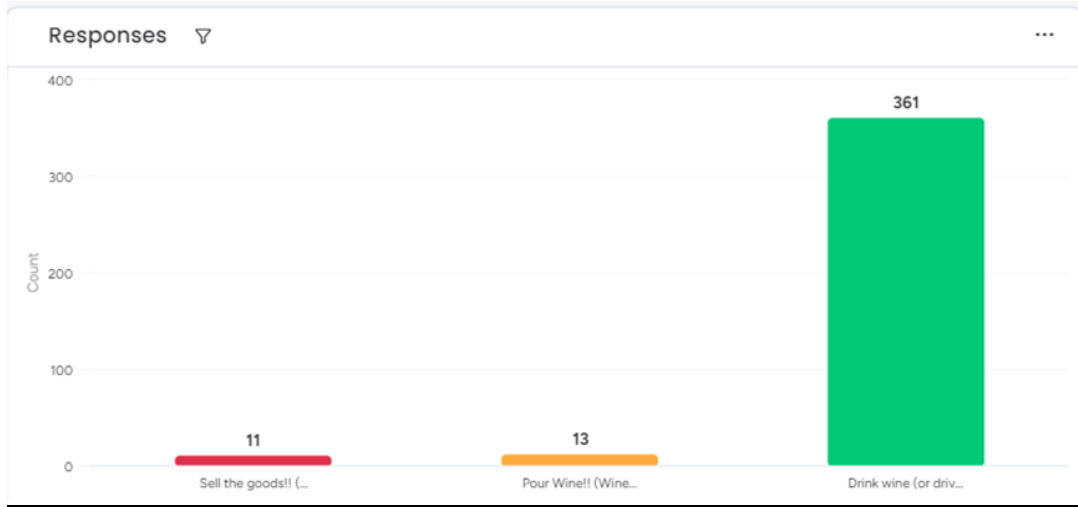
Tickets Sold	2021: 1,099	2022: 1,435	2023: 1,667
Average Ticket Price Sold	2021: \$38.81	2022: \$41.58	2023: \$44.00
Wineries and Vendors Attended	2021: 45	2022: 41	2023: 43

Financial Report

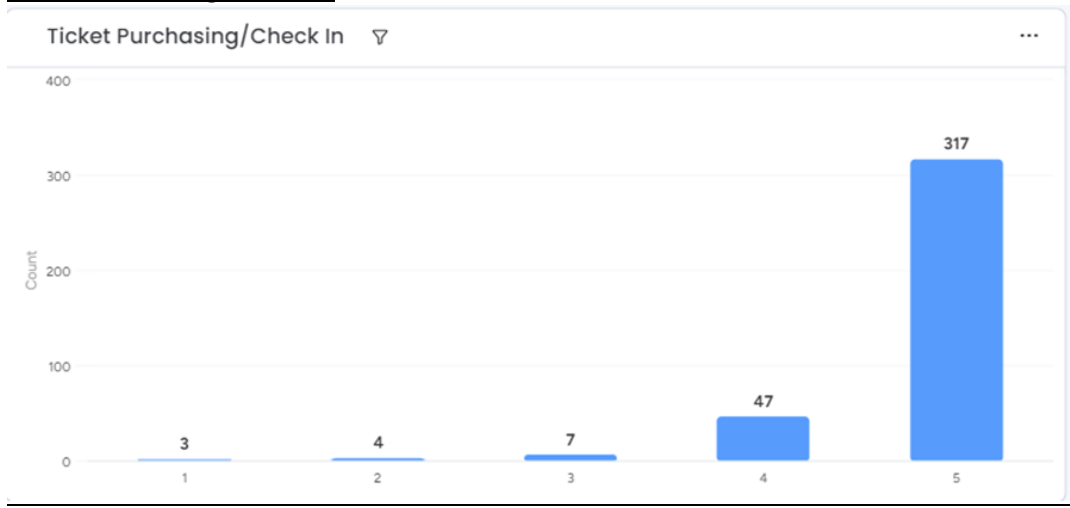
Toast	Description
\$88,000.00	<i>Grant Total</i>
\$12,343.05	Deposit/Totes/SDL/Hillcrest Rentals/App Fee/Postage/Glassware
\$25,030.50	15 Winery Reimbursements: Whiskey/Superior/SchillingBridge/Rich/Prairie/Nissen/Niobrara/Miletta/Macs/James/Front/Feather/Deer/Cellar/Capitol
\$16,311.94	Fonner Park/Roses4You/Hillcrest/Dustin West Band/Josh Hoyer Band/Katie Largent Band/Alyssa Mileage/Capitol View Wine Bucks/Miletta Wine Bucks-not paid WB
\$3,337.40	TOAST Food Bucks and Broken Arrow & Glacial Till Winery Reimbursements-not pd food vouchers
\$16,975.00	Fonner Park/Aksarben Village
NDA Pending Payments	
\$4,743.35	TOAST Printing/Totes/Middleton Elec/Tags/Event Insurance/Supplies
\$7,463.95	DCHD Event Permit, Facebook Ads, IDC Wristbands, Golf Carts, Hillcrest Décor, Kathi Mileage (CK#3567/3571/3592/3621)
\$86,205.19	<i>Total Submitted for reimbursement as of 6.4.24</i>
\$7,401.19	<i>Has not been submitted yet. Waiting for NMC check to clear</i>
-5,606.38	<i>Submitted Expenses Left Over After Grant Funds</i>

2024 TOAST Attendee Survey Results

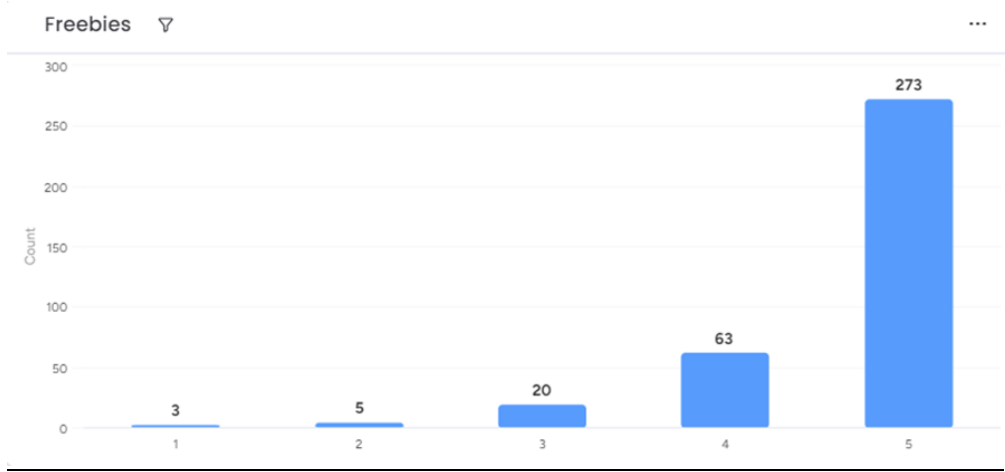
Responses - 385



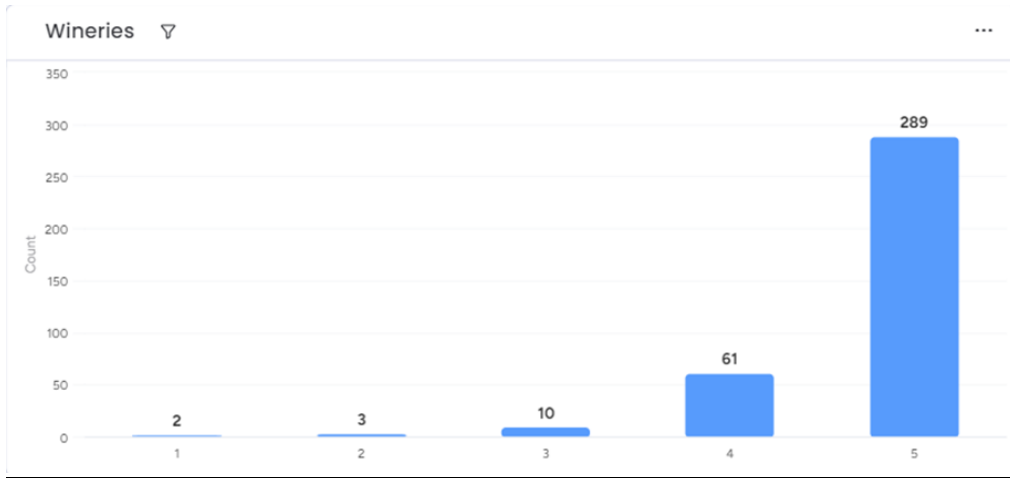
Ticket Purchasing/Check In



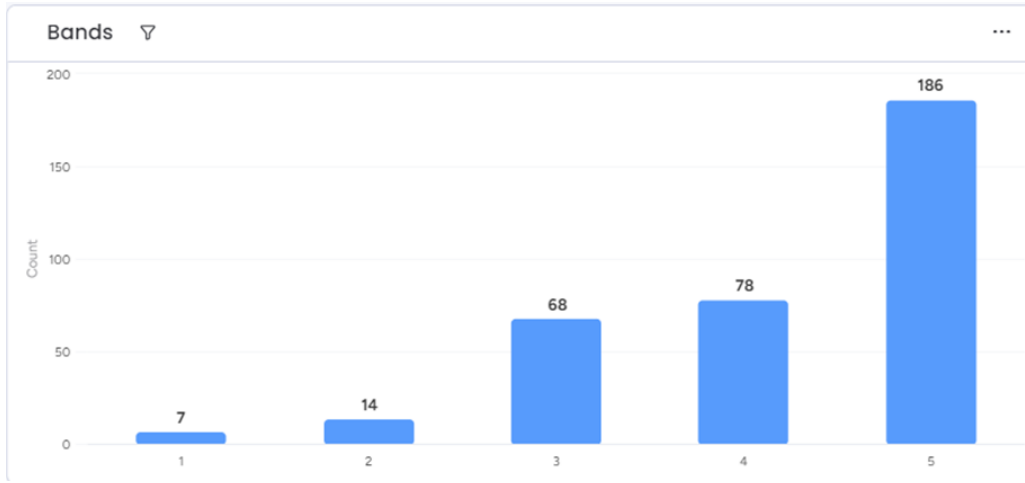
Info Desk/Freebies



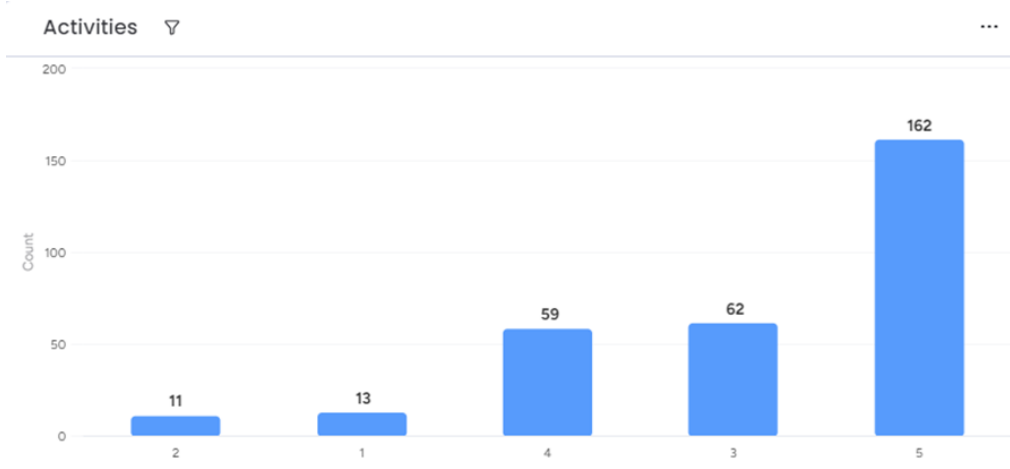
Wineries



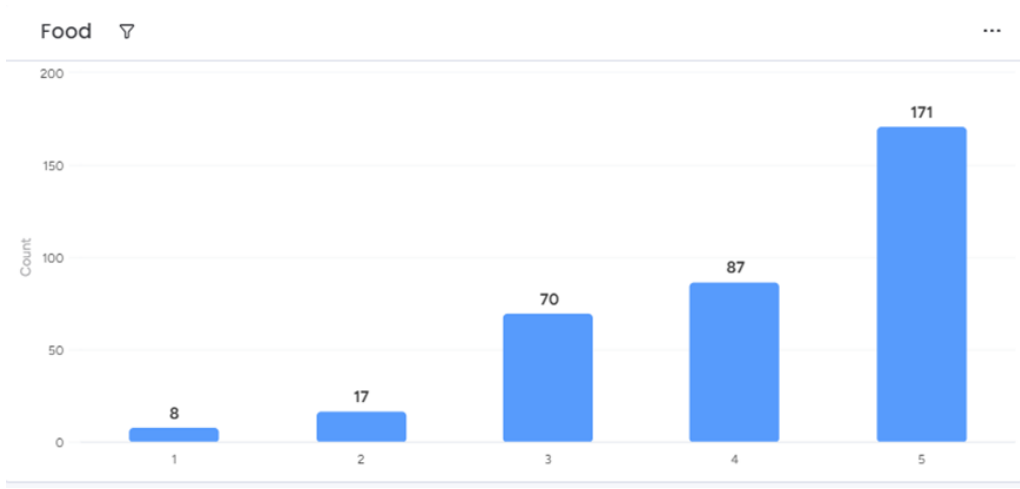
Bands



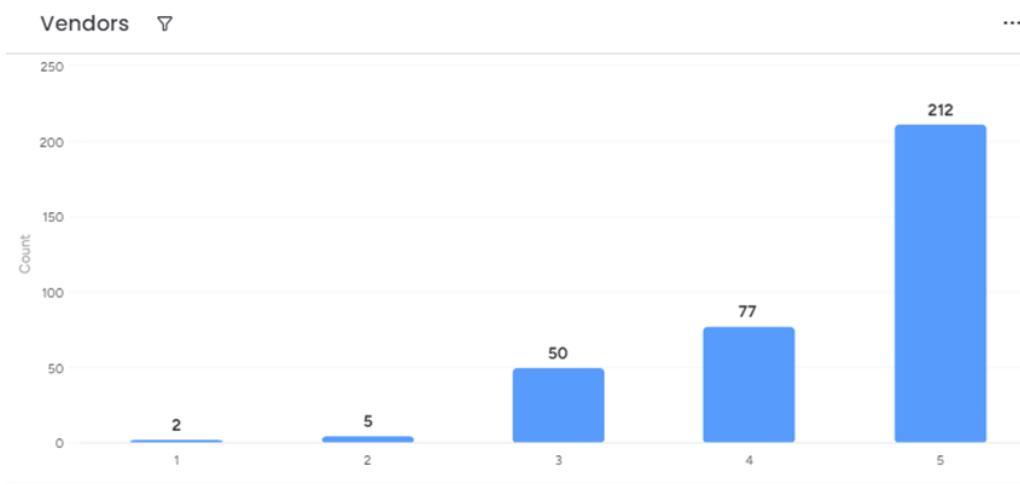
Activities



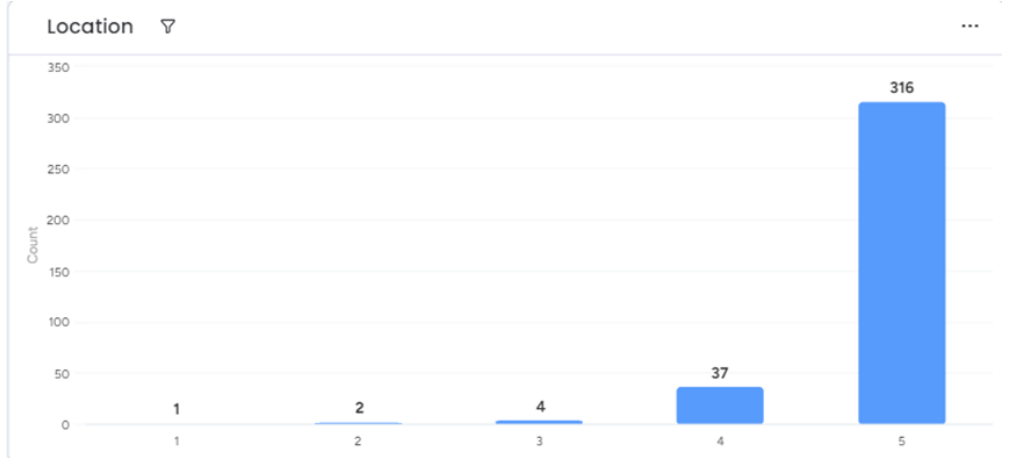
Food



Vendors



Location



Overall Event

Overall Event ▾

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