

## Missouri Regional Cuisines Project

**Pilot Project**  
 ■ Mississippi River Hills  
 ■ Illinois Expansion of Pilot  
 ■ Major Water Bodies

**Proposed Projects**  
 ■ Old Trails Region  
 ■ Missouri River Valley  
 ■ Overlap Areas



The Missouri Regional Cuisines Project is currently active in three regions in the state. The main office at the University of Missouri campus works to leverage resources for all of the regions and facilitate their interaction with university and state agency partners.

Cartography by Nathan Mattox  
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### What is the Missouri Regional Cuisines Project?

The Missouri Regional Cuisines Project, based in the Institute for Continental Climate Viticulture and Enology (ICCVE) at MU, helps promote and market Missouri wine and food products using distinct labels of origin based on ecological regions of the state. Labels of origin have been used for centuries in European countries to identify food and wine products based on the region in which they are produced — allowing the consumer to distinguish among the unique tastes and attributes of products from different areas.

This identification of Missouri products with distinct landscapes and regions means greater recognition and economic opportunities for our state's agricultural producers and rural communities



**Dorothy and Al Hemmen, of Hemmen Winery in Brazeau, Mo., are among the many participants in the Mississippi River Hills Region pilot project.**

### Mississippi River Hills Region selected as pilot project in 2003

A pilot area, named the Mississippi River Hills Region, was selected along the Mississippi River in eastern Missouri where the project was launched in 2003. Local groups in the region, including wineries, vegetable and fruit producers, owners of restaurants and bed and breakfasts, along with local government and economic development officials are collaborating to document the unique food history of their region and use it to promote regional agritourism. A regional tourism map is now available online to promote tourism in this region: [extension.missouri.edu/cuisines](http://extension.missouri.edu/cuisines).

Promoting  
 Missouri's  
 culinary heritage



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Exploring and preserving the special places  
 and products of rural Missouri

University of Missouri



# The Missouri Regional Cuisines Project — promoting Missouri's culinary heritage

## How does the project work with communities?

The project organizes local groups to take charge of setting their own goals for their project and for their own food sector's involvement. Based on a region's unique food offerings and venues, the project will market these with a regionally based agritourism map guiding tourism to locations where local products are featured. Marketing outside of the region will also be done, for example, by placing more regional foods in urban restaurants in St. Louis and Kansas City. Once organized, regional produce growers, vintners and tourism and hospitality representatives meet regularly to discuss ideas for increasing visitors to their region.



A primary goal for each Missouri Regional Cuisines region is to develop a label of origin for locally produced products (primarily wine and foods), and corresponding standards of quality for the label.

## Who are the partners in the Missouri Regional Cuisines Project?

Dr. Elizabeth Barham, University of Missouri, leads the project, with participation from several other university departments and disciplines:

- Department of Geography
- Hotel and Restaurant Management Program
- Missouri Folk Arts Program
- University of Missouri Extension

### Additional partners:

- Missouri Department of Agriculture
- Missouri Department of Conservation
- Missouri Division of Tourism
- Missouri River Communities Network
- missouriwine.org

Interest in rural tourism is exploding across the country just as rural areas are coming to grips with potential cuts to agricultural subsidies. There is movement on long-standing trade disputes between the U.S. and the European Union. For the first time, American regions will be able to register their regional names with the EU and protect the intellectual property value of their products for export in all EU countries. There is opportunity to help build rural economies by targeting their production to high quality products for domestic and international consumption, and at the same time promote the tourism appeal of the regions offering these same products. The Missouri Regional Cuisines Project is the leading force that can assist and guide regions as they undertake promoting their unique regional identities.

## Are there other projects like this in the U.S.?

The Missouri Regional Cuisines Project is the only program of its kind designed to promote sustainable rural development through the study, labeling and marketing of food products based on distinct regional labels of origin that reflect both the ecology of an area and the local know-how of its people.

## Project goals

- Promote sustainable rural development.
- Foster an appreciation for regional rural identity.
- Increase local cooperation among producers, marketers and community entities.
- Develop new economic opportunities for rural regions faced with globalizing markets.



**Fine wines, local cuisine and places of interest to tourists help create a unique regional identity — one of the key focus areas of the Missouri Regional Cuisines Project. Success in promoting and marketing a region's unique food offerings and venues will help stimulate the regional economy.**



**Dr. Elizabeth Barham, leads the Missouri Regional Cuisines Project.**

Dr. Barham is internationally known for her research on labels of origin as catalysts for rural development, revitalization and tourism. Her research on regional wine and food labeling in France, Spain, Portugal and Quebec led to the Mississippi River Hills pilot project for American-style appellations. Barham is a rural sociologist specializing in food, agriculture and globalization. She is based in the Institute for Continental Climate Viticulture and Enology at the University of Missouri. In 2004, she was knighted by the French government for her contributions to the field of agriculture.

