Minnesota wine will be the focus of a one-day Curiosity Camp, taking place Wednesday, July 29, at the U of M St. Paul campus and at the vineyards and wineries of the St. Croix river valley.

Minnesota’s grape and wine industry is expanding rapidly and contributed $36.2 million to the state’s economy in 2007, according to a study conducted by U of M economists. Since 1995, the number of wineries has grown from seven to 26, the study found. More than 632 vineyards are planted statewide.

The Curiosity Camp will be led by Peter Hemstad, a research viticulturist at the U’s Horticultural Research Center, who has devoted over 20 years of research to developing viable Minnesota wines. Hemstad will show participants how the practice of "tweezing"—replacing the pollen-making components of grape vines with pollen combining the characteristics of Minnesota and European vines—resulted in the development of hybrid grape varieties that can be grown in Minnesota. The varieties developed by Hemstad and the U of M are in use in many Minnesota vineyards.

Following Hemstad’s presentation, Curiosity “campers” will visit the vineyards and wineries of the St. Croix river valley, including St. Croix Vineyard, of which Hemstad is part-owner. Founded in 1992, St. Croix Vineyards recently came to prominence in the wine world when their Seyval was honored with a Gold win at the 2009 International Eastern Wine Competition.

The cost of the camp is $125 plus a $10 fee to cover cost of wine. There is a reduced rate of $100 for Circle of Scholars members, University of Minnesota Alumni Association members, and University faculty, staff, and full-time students. Costs include meals and refreshments. More information and registration is available at cce.umn.edu/curiosity or by calling 612-624-4000.

Curiosity Camp, a program of the University of Minnesota College of Continuing Education, offers enriching, one-day summer programs for adults.

Through the College of Continuing Education, motivated adults enrich their personal and professional lives through learning opportunities ranging from courses, workshops, and retreats to credit certificates and bachelor’s and master’s degrees. For more information about the college, please call (612) 624-4000 or visit www.cce.umn.edu.