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Contact:

Amanda Woods, Wiggly Bridge Distillery

amanda@wigglybridgedistillery.com

(207)752-1688



DNA Analysis Confirms No Baudoinia (aka “Whiskey Fungus”) Found Near Wiggly Bridge Distillery

York, Maine – A recent DNA analysis conducted by a mycologist from the University of New Hampshire concludes that *Baudoinia compniacensis* is not present in the area surrounding Wiggly Bridge Distillery, a local family-owned maker of small-batch spirits located on Route 1 in York. The DNA analysis was conducted in June 2024 by Dr. Serita Frey, a PhD ecologist with extensive expertise in the study of fungi and the impact of humans on fungal and microbial environments. Dr. Frey conducted DNA sampling from areas within a 1.5 km radius around Wiggly Bridge Distillery. She concluded that *Baudoinia* was “not a member of the fungal communities associated with moldy surfaces found.”

Notably, Dr. Frey’s study refuted an earlier report promoted by abutters to Wiggly Bridge Distillery who have been actively opposed to the business. In particular, Dr. Frey cited the failure of the abutters’ report to use DNA sequencing to identify *Baudoinia* and singled out the flawed and unreliable use of visual identification by the testing company selected by the abutters. “Visual microscopy cannot definitively detect *Baudoinia* because many fungi look similar or even identical under the microscope,” Dr. Frey concluded.

Dr. Frey’s DNA analysis is consistent with a 2023 determination by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. The DEP investigated the site last year and concluded no permit for ethanol emissions was necessary because of the distillery’s small production size. Wiggly Bridge has also received several similar affirmative reports from York’s Code Enforcement Office.

Amanda Woods of Wiggly Bridge added that Dr. Frey’s scientific conclusions are consistent with the distillery’s local ethic and social responsibility. “Our family has been doing business in York for more than 40 years and we want to continue that investment. Unfortunately, our local business has been unfairly targeted by abutters who have been willing to distort science to try to shut us down. Thankfully, DNA sequencing has definitively shown that our business can—and should—be part of our community going forward.”

Local supporters of the distillery also are pleased with the results of proper DNA analysis. York resident Garrett Hutchins commented that “the Woods family is a longtime supporter of the York community and has always been a positive presence in town. They have continually acted in good

faith. A small York business is just trying to make room for its business to succeed, and the recent DNA analysis confirms there is no reason to interfere with its progress.”

The abutters have drafted and submitted an ordinance that poses a significant threat to Wiggly Bridge’s business, an ordinance that will be Question 12 on the November 5th ballot in York. The abutters have relied almost exclusively on the flawed visual-identification report in their complaints against Wiggly Bridge’s expansion. That application, currently pending before the York Planning Board, is within the distillery’s adjacent industrially-zoned lot.

Wiggly Bridge produces about 300 barrels of whiskey annually. “The distillery is named after the smallest suspension bridge in the world,” Woods added. “It reflects our core values—melding old-world tradition with modern-day innovation, but on a small, sustainable scale.”

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