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BEER

An American Agricultural Product



merica's brewing industry has been an important customer of America's farmers

since our country's very earliest days. Beer was the staple beverage of the Pilgrims on the Mayflower. English colonists at Jamestown and the Dutch at New Amsterdam brewed beer. William Penn established a brewery soon after founding the Quaker settlement in Pennsylvania. Samuel Adams, known as "the father of the American Revolution," managed a family-owned brewery in Boston. And, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson made beer for their tenants, friends and neighbors from grain grown on their Virginia estates.

History of Beer

The history of beer dates back more than 8,000 years to ancient Babylonia where brewing was practiced in the home side-by-side with baking and cooking. Archeologists have discovered that the ancient Assyrians, Egyptians, Chinese, Incas, Greeks and Romans all brewed beer. An Assyrian tablet from 2,000 B.C. tells that beer was among the provisions taken onboard Noah's Ark. As civilization spread throughout Europe, people began calling beer "liquid bread," because the ingredients (grain, water and yeast) and the processes in making bread and brewing beer



are so similar. The words "brewing" and "bread" have the same German word-root origin.

Important Farm Customer

However, the story of the American brewing industry is far more than just a historical account. It is the story



of an industry that has long been a steady and important customer for the American farmer. American brewers purchase more than \$860 million in U.S. farm products each year, supporting 18,700 U.S. farm jobs. More than 4 million acres of U.S. farmland grow the

ingredients for U.S. - made beer. Some 37,000 workers are employed by American brewers. They enjoy a high standard of living from wages and benefits.

Quality Ingredients

The story of beer begins with grain — the choicest barley from farms in California, Montana, the Dakotas, Minnesota, Wisconsin and other Midwestern and West Coast states. Before being used, however, the barley must be converted into malt by giving it just the right amounts of moisture and warmth to make the grain kernels germinate. The starch-bearing portion of the kernel becomes more mellow and its ability to affect the chemical changes during the brewing process is greatly increased. In addition, taste and aroma-forming substances are more readily extracted after malting. Brewers purchased more than 138 million bushels of malted barley worth some \$500 million last year. Corn from the "corn-belt" states, rice from California, Texas and Louisiana, or other cereal starch grains and corn sweeteners worth more than \$280 million are also purchased and used by brewers. Some \$80 million worth of hops are purchased from farmers in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. Hops are used to give beer its rich aroma and delicate bitterness. Tree farmers who sell lumber to the paperboard and pallet industries also benefit

from the brewers' huge purchases of pallets and packaging materials.

Making Beer

The process of making beer begins with mixing the malted barley with pure heated water in the mash tub until the kernels separate. In the meantime, other starch grains (most often corn grits or rice) are boiled in huge cookers, then added to the mash and brewing water in the mash tub. The enzymes released from the malted barley convert the cereal starches into maltose sugar. Yeast, added later in the process, will convert the sugar into carbon dioxide and alcohol. The mash mixture is next sent to the lauder tub where strainers and filters remove the empty barley hulls and bits of corn or rice. These spent grains, still rich in protein, are sold to farmers for livestock feed. The clear liquid, called "wort," is now sent to the giant copper brewing kettles. Here the brewmaster will flavor the brew with hops. The kind and amount of hops, the temperature and brewing time all affect the flavor and color of the beer and are carefully regulated by the brewmaster for the particular brand of beer he is brewing.

The beer is then piped to the fermentation tanks where yeast is added. Following fermentation, the beer is piped to huge stainless steel storage tanks for aging before being packaged in cans, bottles or kegs.

Big Employer

Some 87,300 workers are employed by beer distributors who ensure that quality is maintained in the process of getting the beer from brewers to the thousands of retail outlets. Almost the minute beer leaves the brewery, excise taxes are electronically transmitted to state and federal treasuries. Last year, more than \$4.5 billion in state and federal taxes were paid by consumers as part of the price of their favorite beer. America's beer drinkers pay some two to three times more taxes on beer than they do for most other consumer goods.

Some 80 million adult Americans enjoy drinking beer each year; two out of three American families serve beer in their homes.

The American brewing industry is important to the nation's economy, and an important customer for America's farmers. Brewers are proud to be partners with farmers.

Beer—the beverage of moderation.



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