

Today's explosion in Craft Breweries in America is part of the new food and beverage production community that highly values quality ingredients as well as the support of local farmers. How do we use the very best ingredients and also buy from local providers?

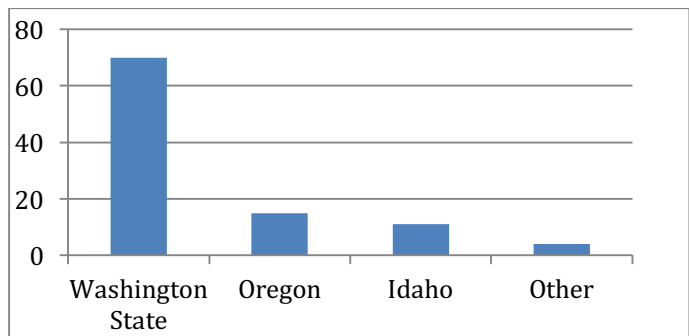
Quality Beer Comes From Quality Ingredients

North America offers a wonderful hops growing climate, if centralized in the Pacific Northwest. This farm region has a hops growing tradition dating back to the late 1800's. Bonner's Ferry, Idaho is home to Elk Mountain Farm, the world's largest contiguous hop farm. Ideal growing conditions and highly skilled producers means that beer-makers all over the world procure this crop annually, as it is recognized as some of the finest hops in the world. The majority of the American hop harvest continues to be found on family owned and operated farms. As a craft beer-maker, should I use the best available ingredients, or the best locally available ingredients from nearby farm communities? When choosing your hops, remember that American hops have likely come from a family farm, and supporting that farmer is a valuable endeavor, whether that farm is 50 miles or 1500 miles from your brewery.

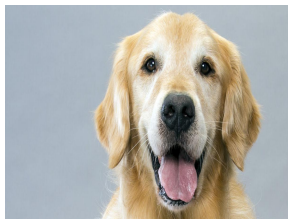
What Does Sustainability Really Mean?

By definition, sustainability means the preservation of biodiversity, of natural ecosystems and the effective planned activity that maintains these systems for the long term, while integrating with human societies and the needs of their peoples. At Hops and Grain, we believe that good planets are hard to find! We do our part to take care of this one through recycling and contributing 1% of our profits to local environmental non-profits. We don't forget the human side of this complicated equation either. By supporting local growers and other vendors, and the people of the community we serve, we weave us all together to ensure a sustainable brewery.

"Craft Brewers should use the best ingredients for their beer! We look at sustainability differently – use local ingredients that are of highest quality, and go outside of your local area for other top quality ingredients." Josh Hare, Founder



North American Hops Harvest



Suzy, our resident Golden Retriever, pointed out that we had good ingredients left-over after the brewery process. We make all of our hand-crafted ales and lagers with the highest-quality malted grains. She saw a wonderful opportunity to make something from these otherwise useless grains. There is still plenty of fiber, protein and other nutrients left over so we mix them with some whole wheat flour, cinnamon, eggs and few other tasty ingredients and bake away! Once she approves, we package them up for you. That's sustainability – Golden-Retriever style

Make Great Beer And They Will Come!

Without a clearly defined purpose, navigating the ups and downs of owning your own brewery can be daunting at best. Our decision to perform beyond what people may expect has helped us to become a truly great company. For more than four years, we have been lucky enough to make a large number of friends in the craft beer world, and of course we have been warmly embraced by the good citizens of Austin, TX. As we continue our efforts to build a community driven, sustainable business, we will make great beer that we love for a city that we love!

Conclusion

Sustainability is more than “buy local” or Reduce, Recycle and Reuse.” It is that and more! It is the thoughtful use of a long term plan, the engagement of your community, support for local farms and other vendors, and it is making great product by using the finest ingredients. This mosaic defines sustainability at Hops and Grain.

About the Author:



Josh Hare is the Founder and Owner of Hops and Grain Brewery in Austin, TX. He welcomes you and your dog for beer tastings and community building! Please reach him at: tours@hopsandgrain.com

Footnotes:

<http://www.mensjournal.com/food-drink/drinks/20-things-you-didnt-know-about-hops-20140909>

<http://www.craftbeer.com/the-beverage/history-of-beer/craft-beer-today>

http://www.usahops.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=hop_info