

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STATE OF WISCONSIN LICENSES MADISON-AREA HOPS PROCESSOR

Gorst Valley Hops, a Mazomanie, Wisconsin-based company that is reintroducing high-quality hops production to the state, has earned its food processing plant license from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP).

Wisconsin law requires all food processing plants to obtain a license for manufacturing or preparing food for sale. Gorst Valley Hops received its food processing plant license Sept. 28, 2011.

According to DATCP, the company is the first licensed hops processing facility in the Midwest. Gorst Valley Hops staff now will begin processing hops from the 2011 harvest. Pelletized hops will be available in approximately mid-October.

Through a unique charter grower program, Gorst Valley Hops provides 11 varieties of pelletized or leaf-variety hops to several craft brewers throughout the country, as well as home brewers and local brewing supply stores.

Gorst Valley Hops director and horticulturist James Altwies says the license means more than simply complying with Wisconsin food-processing regulations. "Hops are a food product," he says. "We have a quality food-processing facility. For our customers, the license means peace of mind and confidence in our high-quality product."

The Gorst Valley Hops charter grower program gives small-scale hops growers the education, tools and support they need to develop successful, sustainable hops-production operations. Growers tend, harvest and dry their hops and deliver them to the Gorst Valley Hops processing center. There, staff scientists use American Society of Brewing Chemists and United States Department of Agriculture sampling and testing protocols to conduct rigorous analyses. They reject hops that do not meet standards.

In addition to state-of-the-art tools for chemical analysis, the Gorst Valley Hops food processing facility includes hammer-milling and densification, or pelletizing, equipment. Staff vacuum-package cured hop pellets in gas-barrier bags and label each bag with tracking information that enables customers to trace the hops to the fields in which they were grown. The vacuum-sealed hops remain in cold storage until they reach Gorst Valley Hops customers.

It is this level of detail, attention and expertise that sets Gorst Valley Hops—and its community of growers—apart, says Altwies. "We don't take shortcuts, and we don't

sacrifice quality for the sake of a sale,” he says. “We work with craft and home brewers alike to help them use our hops to their best advantage.”

Learn more about Gorst Valley Hops at www.gorstvalleyhops.com or like the company on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GorstValleyHops.

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