



All Hopped Up

Happenings from the Midwest Hops Scene

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Issue 1

Volume 1

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Our First Issue!

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *All Hopped Up*, the newsletter produced for Midwestern hop producers and consumers.

Many Midwesterners have commenced commercially producing hops on a small scale. Others are toying with the idea or may be a looking for locally grown, sustainable hops for home brewing. In all these cases, this newsletter is designed for you.

Gorst Valley Hops will be producing this monthly newsletter to help establish a high quality Midwestern hops industry. We seek input from other growers and brewers sharing their insight on all things hops. In future issues expect to find information on topics such as:

Interviews with more Midwestern brewers

Establishing an organic hop yard

Technical and How-To articles

Reminders on your hop yard work schedule

Midwestern Hop Growers Association

Education Opportunities

Featured articles on other Midwestern hop farmers

This newsletter will be distributed by e-mail, only. If you received this from a friend, you can obtain a copy by registering at www.gorstvalleyhops.com. Don't worry; we'll keep your e-mail address safe from spammers.

Happy Hopping!

James Altwies, Director Gorst Valley Hops & the rest of the GVH Staff



GVH is Looking for a Few Good Growers

Gorst Valley Hops announces the launch of its Charter Grower Program. "It's much more than the run-of-the-mill contract agreement," said James Altwies, GVH's Director and Horticulturist. "It's more of a team effort, really. GVH supplies the technical expertise and processing services and the grower provides the hops. It's a win-win situation."

The idea is simple; Gorst Valley provides the grower with technical support, design and operation of the plantation (including nutrient and pest management programs), discounted processing services like pelletizing, vacuum packaging, etc and the grower supplies the hops.

"GVH has the brewer connections and demand is high but only if the quality is there. This is one way to address consistent quality and sufficient quantity while returning the majority of the crop's value to the grower. We work with the grower to produce a salable product. Once the brewer buys the product then the value is distributed. The grower doesn't pay a penny out-of-pocket."

For more info, contact James at 608-334-8012 or james@gorstvalleyhops.com

Calendar of Events

In the Field

Emergence: Early to Late April

Weed Control: Cultivation no deeper than 2 inches.

No pre-emergent herbicides on first year rhizomes.

Planting: Right Now!!!!

Trellis Construction: Right Now!!!

Mulching: Late May after bines are up and strong

Training: May

Pruning: May-June

In the Classroom

May 30th – Midwest Hops Production Workshop, Cross Plains WI. Visit www.gorstvalleyhops.com for more details.

Got Supplies?

GVH is now stocking trellis supplies such as wire rope, hardware, and coir fiber twine. Drop us a line if you need 10 feet or 2 miles.



Spring Has Sprung

Finally, spring is here. And with spring comes the realization that all the thought and planning from winter is now ready to become reality. Trellises need building, rhizomes need planting, and irrigation must be ready to go. But is it too late to start growing this season?

If you don't have rhizomes resting in the cooler already then you are too late for this season. Your last chance at rhizomes rests with Dave Wills at Freshops in Philomath, OR. Dave generally has an inventory close-out sale in May, so send him a message.

For you first season growers, expect to see very little growth during April and early May. Those rhizome cuttings are still forming rootlets and buds are still swelling right now.

But don't be fooled. Those plants are awake and need water. Since the root system is underdeveloped it is critical that the soil remain moist but not saturated during this period. And easy on the fertilizer! Any soil nutrient amending should have been done prior to planting. High salt content from synthetic fertilizers and raw manures will burn delicate rootlets and tender shoots.

Stay diligent and record such things as shoot emergence, rainfall, and average high/low temperatures. This will help you establish the impact of your locale on production and eventually yield. Remember, no one knows your site better than you do...

By James Altwies, Gorst Valley Hops

From the Tap: Voice of the Brewer

This month's featured brew master, Mark Duchow of the Grump Troll in Mt. Horeb, WI

JAMES HAD A CHANCE TO SIT DOWN WITH MARK AND ASK A FEW QUESTIONS AND GET A FEEL FOR THIS AWARD-WINNING BREW MASTER.

GVH: How long have you been brewing?

MD: I started my professional career in 1992, but I started exploring fermentation back at the tender age of 9 making wild grape wine.

GVH: Where/what was your first brewery job?

MD: My first brewing job was back in Milwaukee at the Water Street Brewery in 1992. I started off as a keg washer and worked my way to assistant brewer, then head brewer and brew master within a year and a half.

GVH: What do you consider as your greatest brewing achievement?

MD: At this point I would say winning the Gold for the Amnesia Baltic Porter in 2008 at the World Beer Cup, the "Olympics of Beer".

GVH: When buying/using hops are you more likely to consider quality or cost first?

MD: Of course they are both important, but quality is always first, no question. I need to produce a high quality product to compete with all of the great brewers in Wisconsin

GVH: What was your biggest brewing catastrophe?

MD: I was working at Gray's Brewing Company as the head brewer in 1995. After a full day of mashing, and boiling the wort for a 20 barrel batch, (660 gallons) I had stepped on a 3 inch port at the bottom of the brew kettle that was capped off with a very loose clamp. I was just about to start the transfer from brew kettle to the fermenter and the clamp came off, I jumped on top of a nearby horizontal tank and watched as the boiling hot wort poured out of the brew kettle and into the drain. No one was hurt and my long day became a lot longer. After the clean up I started the whole process over again.

GVH: What is more important: alpha or oils?

MD: Yes.....

GVH: What varieties do you use most often?

MD: Most recently, because of the hop "crisis" I was limited to a short list of hops to choose from. I like using all types of hops, having the ability to brew a wide range of beers at the Grumpy Troll gives me the freedom to explore many different types, but I tend to focus on Nobel hops.

GVH: Favorite hop?

MD: Styraun Gold, Chinook, Hallertau

In Our Next Issue.....

Joe talks about hop chemistry

Kirby Nelson from Capital Brewery gets the hot seat

Irrigation schedules and nutrient management

Pest scouting practices

