

# Forest City



# Brewers

Rockford, IL

Dedicated to the Art of Home Brewing

# The Barley Whispers

**Official Newsletter of the  
Forest City Brewers**

**August/September 2016 Edition**

Next meeting will be held at The Prairie Street Brewhouse

*Wednesday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016 - 7:00 PM*

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## **August Meeting Recap**

### **New People**

The club was pleased to welcome Brett and Kevin to their first Forest City Brewers meeting.

### **Mike Sears**

Reminded those present that dues are now half price through the end of the year.

Deb Machula is heading up a Beer Steward committee. Please see her if you want to get involved or have good ideas. The committee aims to explore ways to improve the stewarding during the meetings.

Screw City Beers are set for the festival. [As of the meeting] there are eight beers slated for Racine, looking for more. There is also one pass available for a volunteer.

The club will sponsor several members to get BASSET certified per Illinois regulatory requirements. [As of the meeting] there are a couple of spots left. [Training took place at Forest Hills Lane on August 22]

The club is now accepting money for the New Glarus Oktoberfest bus trip. The event is open to the public and [as of the meeting] there were 13 people already registered. The trip is Sept. 24<sup>th</sup> and cost is \$15/member and \$20/non-member.

Mike informed those present that the Olympic Tavern is doing a saison tap takeover tomorrow [August 4<sup>th</sup>] night.

### **Mike Gifford**

Giff is currently working on the best deal for the bulk grain buy. Stand by for an email.

There are extra hats and shirts available for purchase at the meeting

### **Brent Shelton**

See Brent if you would like to volunteer for the website editorial committee. The meetings for the committee will take place before/during Tasters' Guilds. We are looking for contributors, researchers, photographers, bloggers, etc.

Please fill out your information for the club's member page and send an email with a photo of yourself if you would like.

### **Other Members**

Jerry gave a presentation on cold side process and techniques.

Mike Coisman gave an update on the barrel project. The wee heavy is ready for pickup. The next beer needs to be brewed by mid-October.

Trish informed those present that club membership has grown to 99 members [as of the meeting].

Tim is forming a Brewer's Guild committee. Among the duties will be storing and keeping track of club kegs, brewing and scheduling beer for festivals and parties, host reimbursement, beer tending and quality control, attending officers' meetings.

## **September Meeting Recap**

### **New People**

The club welcomed several new people to their first Forest City Brewers meeting.

### **Eric Johnson**

Discussed the results of the Open Competition survey. While 57% of respondents voted to eliminate the competition aspect and make the open table tasting only, this represented the wishes of just 16 members (30 total respondents). Eric expressed (as a matter of personal opinion) a hesitance to eliminate the competition based on a relatively small plurality. As an alternative through 2016, submissions on the open table will be limited to (BJCP 2015) category and title only, plus any required additional information per the guidelines.

The styles for the 2017 competition are now available, minus a TBD clone style for July. [See this newsletter for the results]. The survey on which the style order was based had 39 respondents.

Start thinking about your 2017 officer positions. Eric encouraged any who may be interested in a position to consider nomination at October's meeting.

See Trish if you'd like to get in on the New Glarus Oktoberfest bus trip. [As of the meeting] there are still five seats available.

### **Mike Gifford**

The bulk grain buy is cancelled for the immediate future. The club needs to find an alternate source for grain.

Mike put out a call for additional beer for Racine and informed those present that there is still a volunteer pass available [as of the meeting].

Hats and shirts are still available for purchase in limited sizes.

### **Brent Shelton**

The new website is going to go live sometime in September. Brent is waiting to transfer the domain to his own server. Brent called again for editorial committee participants but it will be officially put in place after the domain transfer is complete.

Please fill out a member information page at the meeting if you haven't already done so.

Brent brought three styles of FCB stickers available to take. Please only take one of each per person for now as we hope to have some left for dispensation at the festivals.

### **Other Members**

Jerry moderated a question and answer session among those present.

Trish informed those present that club membership has grown to 102 members [as of the meeting].

## **Upcoming Beer Events**

### **Rockford Area Events**

#### **FCB Tasters' Guilds and locations:**

September – Der Rathskeller

If you have any ideas about new places to go for upcoming Tasters' Guilds, please let us know at the meeting.

#### **Brewers Guild Information:**

Please stay tuned for upcoming Brewers Guild dates and locations. See Tim Lundquist if you'd like to volunteer to host.

#### **Garrett's Craft Beer and Wine Festival, Wednesday, September 21<sup>st</sup> at 6 PM**

Couldn't get SCBF tickets? Then try out Garrett's Restaurant and Bar as they host a tasting of over 80 wines and beers. The event will also feature food and live music. Tickets are \$25/person. See their facebook page for more information.

<https://www.facebook.com/Garretts-Restaurant-and-Bar-101829896523103/>

### **Midwest Events**

#### **Great Lakes Brew Fest – Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup> – Racine Zoo, Racine, WI**

An excellent beer festival with nice views of the lake. Unlike most other fests, this one features a Homebrew Island with beer offerings from homebrew clubs all around the region. There is no bus trip this year, but the Forest City Brewers will be there with a jockey box full of member brews. Tickets are \$50/person and they offer a \$17 designated driver pass.

<http://www.greatlakesbrewfest.com/main.html>

#### **New Glarus Oktoberfest – Saturday, September 24<sup>th</sup> – New Glarus, WI**

**\*BUS IS ALMOST FULL\*** The Forest City Brewers will again host a bus trip to the weekend-long festival of beer, food and live music. See Trish ASAP if you want to join, as seats on the bus are extremely limited. The cost is \$15/members, \$20/non-members.

<http://www.travelwisconsin.com/events/fairs-festivals/oktoberfest-39886>

#### **Dells on Tap – Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup> – Wisconsin Dells, WI**

This annual festival features Wisconsin craft beer (with some regional guests) and celebrates Wisconsin food traditions and live music as well. Tickets are \$35/person in advance.

<http://www.wisdells.com/wisconsin-dells-attraction/wisconsin-dells-on-tap.htm>

### **National Events**

Nothing to report this month.

## August Contest Results

### Open Contest

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Chris Giovingo – Imperial Stout w/ Espresso  
 2<sup>nd</sup> – Tim Lundquist – Peach Mead  
 3<sup>rd</sup> (tie) – Cory Ellis – Barrel Aged Chocolate Porter  
 3<sup>rd</sup> (tie) – Joe Mongan – American Pale Ale

### **Honorable Mention:**

Brett and Nikki Messink, Mike Bohn, Brent Shelton, Mike Belden, Blake Aper, Jerry Machula, Brandon Pierce, Alex Cando

### Style Contest – Saison

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Chris Giovingo  
 2<sup>nd</sup> – Mike Bohn  
 3<sup>rd</sup> – Blake Aper

### **Honorable Mention:**

Tim Lundquist, John Croak

## Upcoming Styles for 2016 (Categories are 2015 Guidelines)

- January – English Porter (13C)  
 February – Specialty Red IPA (21B)  
 March – Irish Red Ale (15A)  
 April – Fruit Beer (29A)  
 May – SMaSH American Pale Ale (18B)  
 June – Extract American Wheat (1D)  
 July – Spotted Cow Clone (34A)  
 August – Saison (25B)  
 September – Oatmeal Stout (16B)  
 October – Märzen (6A)  
 November – Mead (All “M” Categories)  
 December – Belgian Tripel (26C)

## Upcoming Styles for 2017

- January – Winter Seasonal (30C)  
 February – Experimental  
 March – Irish Stout (15B)  
 April – American Pale Ale (18B)  
 May – Witbier (24A)  
 June – American IPA (21A)  
 July – TBD Clone (34A)  
 August – American Wheat (1D)  
 September – California Common (19B)  
 October – Autumn Seasonal Beer (30B)  
 November – Wood-Aged Beer (33A)  
 December – American Barleywine (22C)

## **Competition Corner**

### **Area Competitions**

#### **Local**

As always, bring your beer to the club meetings for our monthly tasting competitions.

#### **Regional/National**

For details on upcoming AHA sanctioned competitions, go to:

<http://www.homebrewersassociation.org/pages/competitions/aha-bjcp-sanctioned-competition/calendar>

## **Beer in the News**

### **[Everything You Never Knew You Didn't Know About Perry](#)**

We've seen them on the open table from time to time, but do we really understand the origin of the perry? Read this interesting article to answer all your perry questions.

### **[Sewage to Brewage](#)**

For all you "greenies" out there: one competition in Oregon (where else?) required entrants to be brewed exclusively with purified wastewater. The results were apparently delicious.

### **[A Festival Fit for Glorious Leader](#)**

North Koreans got to "enjoy" their first ever beer festival this month. The selection was limited and the brew was presumably bittered with tree bark and the tears of the bourgeoisie, but I'm sure a good time was had by all (if they know what's good for them).

### **[Shades of Gray: Selling Out](#)**

The oft-debated topic of craft beers selling out to their big business counterparts can ignite passionate debate among the beer nerd community. But the good vs. evil debate may not be as black and white as it seems. This fascinating article executes a deep dive into the pros and cons of craft brewery acquisition.

## **Brewing Tips and Techniques, Science and History**

Published in this month's online issue of *Popular Mechanics*, this article explores the genetic origins of the little fungus to which we owe our craft. The text is reproduced here in its entirety, but you'll need to visit the link to see the full-sized versions of the genetic map.

Enjoy!

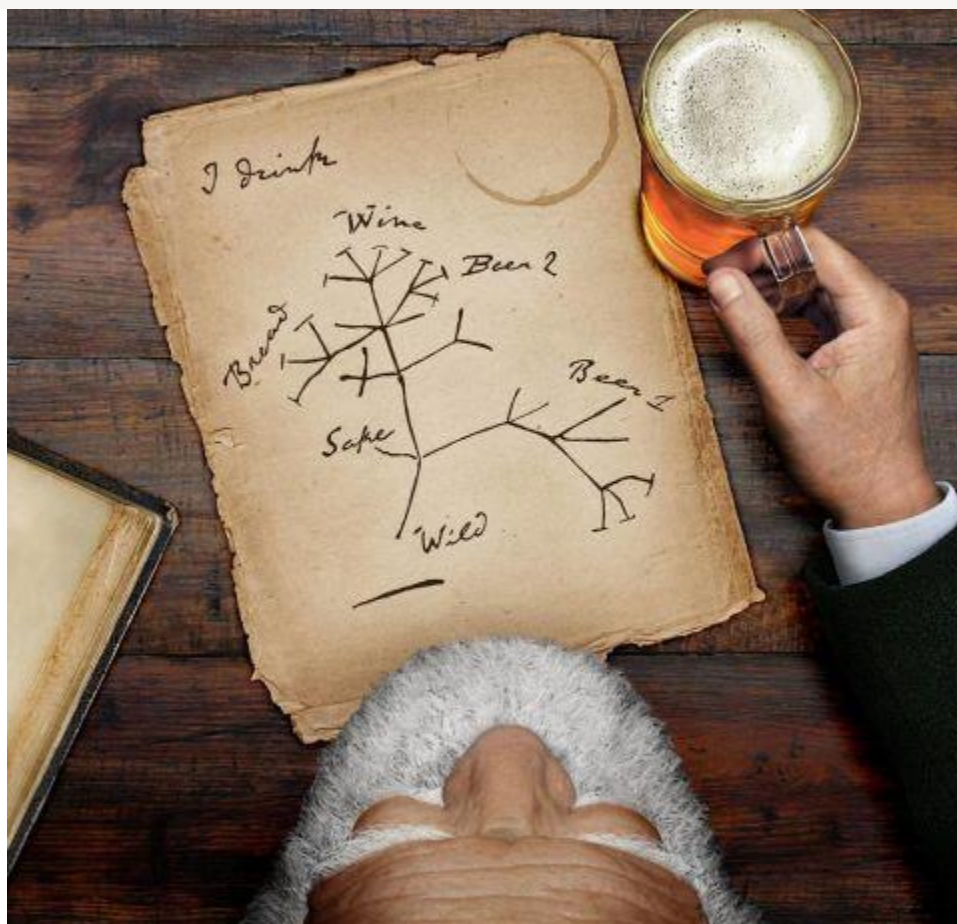
<http://www.popularmechanics.com/science/news/a22761/here-it-is-the-family-tree-of-beer/>

### **Here It Is, the Genetic Family Tree of Beer**

The genetic history of all the yeasts that make delicious suds.

By William Herkewitz

Sep 8, 2016



Cell / Kevin Verstrepen

Beer just got its first genetic family tree.

From crisp lagers to hearty pale ales to cloudy hefeweizens, beer owes much of its stunning variety to the hundreds of strains of yeast that ferment it. Now a team of geneticists has created the first family tree of those yeasts, using samples collected from nearly a hundred breweries around the world.



The tree demystifies the historic spread of modern beermaking across Europe and America and outlines the relationship between yeasts used in different breweries—from Belgium's Duvel brewery to Sam Adams, Stone, and Sierra Nevada in the USA. One of the oddest takeaways from the family tree is the fact that modern brewing yeasts were domesticated in two separate lineages, and both pretty recently. The scientists [published the family tree today](#) in the journal *Cell*.

**"IT'S PRETTY FASCINATING TO THINK THAT WE STARTED DOMESTICATING THESE CREATURES BEFORE WE EVEN KNEW THAT THEY EXISTED."**

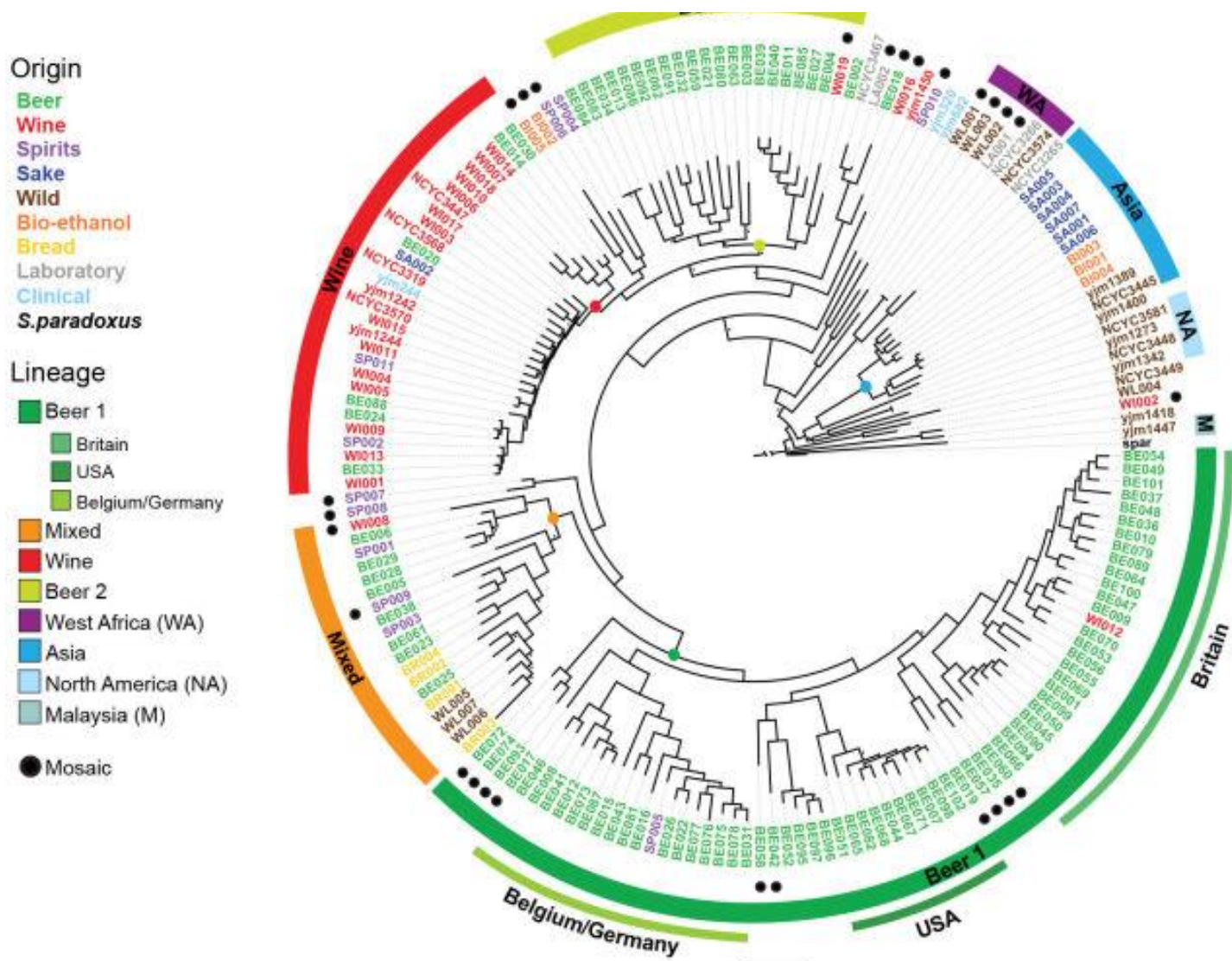
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The genetics research was led by Kevin Verstrepen, a yeast biologist at the Flanders Institute for Biotechnology and the University of Leuven, in Belgium. Verstrepen and his colleagues genetically sequenced more than 150 yeasts for the project. Most are brewers yeasts, with some wine, sake, bread, and biofuel-making yeasts thrown in to boot. Verstrepen notes that today's family tree focuses heavily on the yeast behind ales, and that his team is currently working on the genetic lineage of the yeasts behind crisper, lighter lagers.

## DOMESTICATED MICROBES

To be sure, brewing beer is an activity as old as civilization itself. It reaches as far back [as at least the early Sumerian](#) civilization, five thousand years ago. But Verstrepen found that brewing yeasts were only truly domesticated sometime in the late 1500s or early 1600s. That's when yeasts were still unknown to humans—before Louis Pasteur discovered microbes for the first time. "It's pretty fascinating to think that we started domesticating these creatures before we even knew that they existed," Verstrepen says.

It was then, Verstrepen says, that brewing yeasts started to look genetically quite different from their feral cousins. In particular, beer yeasts lost the ability to sexually reproduce and gained genes that helped them chomp through a type of sugar called maltose that is abundant in the grainy slop prepared by brewers. "With this domestication, the yeasts started to look almost like a new species, much like how dogs don't look like wolves anymore," he says.



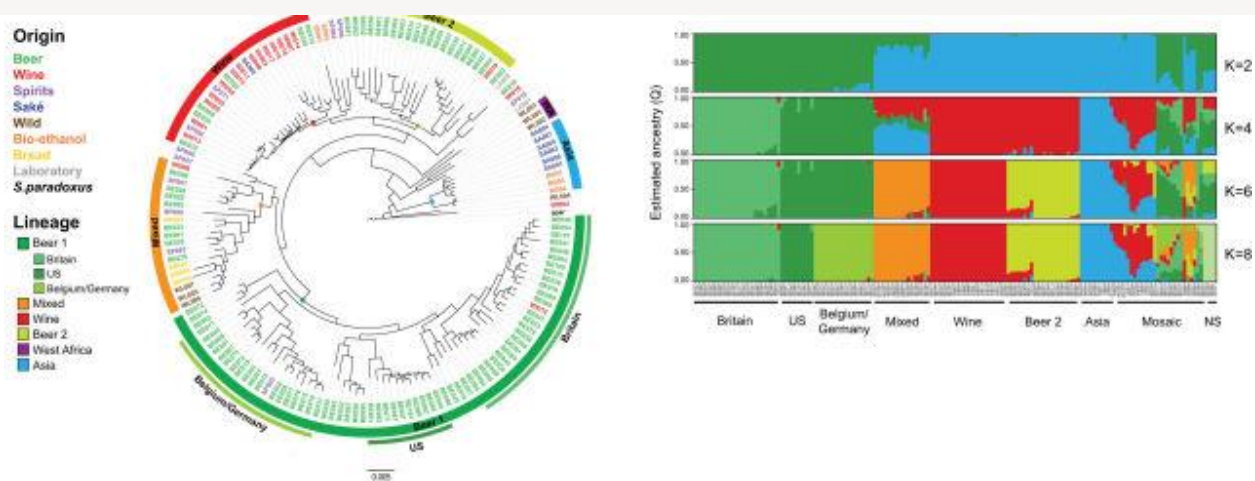
## Cell

So why did this happen in the 1500s, and not earlier? "You have to understand, for most of human history beer making happened in homes and sporadically. Because it keeps for a long time, you can imagine making beer only once a month or so," Verstrepen says. That's important, because if you're making beer sporadically, your short-lived yeasts will have to survive in the wild for generations between batches. They'll interbreed and share genes with other wild yeasts and stay feral. This is one reason why wine yeasts—which are used just once per year—look almost identical to wild yeasts even today.

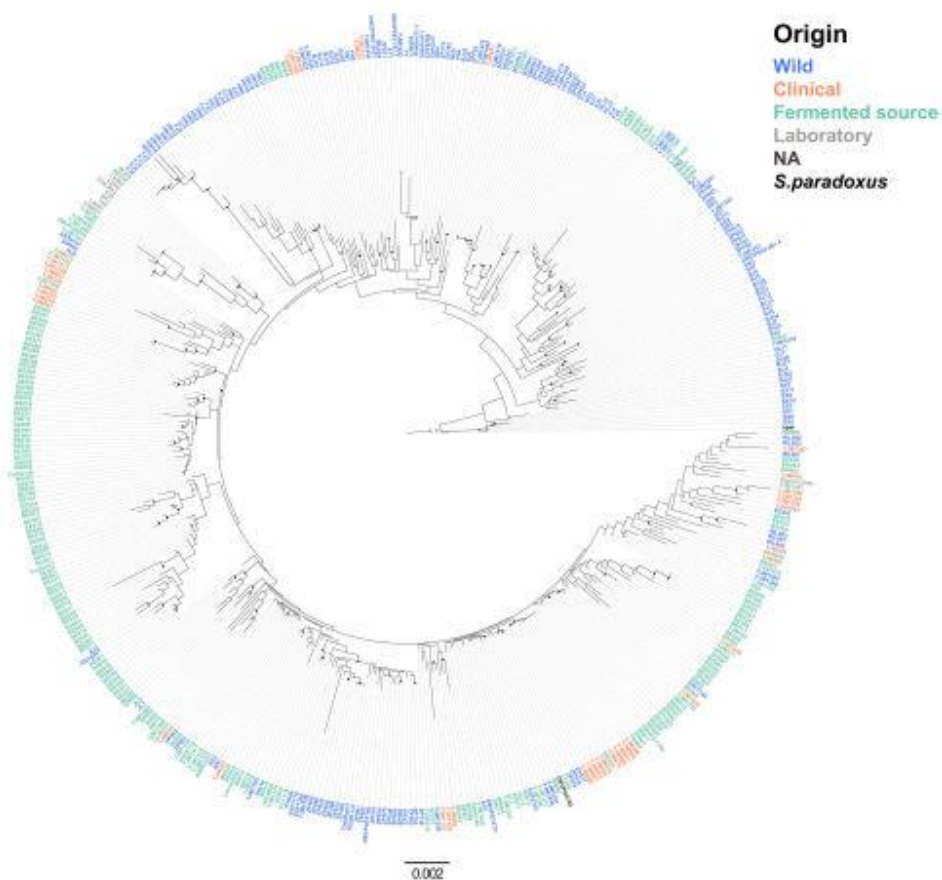
"But around the 1500's and 1600's in Europe, you start to see more commercial brewing, in towns and cities and monasteries," he says. "You have brewers continuously making beer, and practicing what's called 'backslopping', where you take sediment that forms at the end of the brewing process—which contains yeast—and inoculate your next batch with it." By this time, people had an intuitive understanding that leftover brewing waste somehow helped beer taste consistent. This is the period when brewing yeasts started to live in batches of beer for generations without returning to the wild.

## YEAST FAMILY TREE

By comparing the genetic makeup of modern yeasts the world over, Verstrepen found that the first lineage of domesticated brewing yeasts (called Beer 1) formed around this time, the turn of the 17th century. This lineage of yeasts started in breweries around Germany and Belgium. As brewers shared tips, tools, and yeast sediment, those yeast spread to breweries in the U.K., and then branched off into American breweries. Most of the yeasts used in brewing today fall under this Beer 1 lineage.



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But half a century later, around roughly 1650, another lineage of beer-making yeasts arose independently. This lineage is called Beer 2, and generally speaking these yeasts make beers with higher alcohol content. Based on these microbes' genes, scientists can tell that they evolved from yeasts found in wineries. Because this new yeast was rapidly shared among brewers across the U.K., America, and Europe, Verstrepen says it's hard to place exactly where it first arose.

It's almost impossible to distinguish which of the two lineages a yeast comes from based on the flavor alone. That's because yeasts can create such a wild menagerie of flavors that the brewing differences between even two closely related yeasts can be vast.

Although Verstrepen's team collected yeasts used in famous breweries around the world, from Sam Adams to Duvel, in the new family tree "we deliberately obfuscated which yeast came from which specific brewery, to protect the brewers," he says. That's because many brewers—especially old, longstanding institutions—still "consider their yeasts something of a top-secret ingredient."

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## **FCB Club Member Benefits as of September 2016**

- 10% discount on ingredients at Brew & Grow
- 10% discount on most items at Farmhouse
- 20% off your bill for one member and one guest at Lucha Cantina
- 20% off your entire tab at Pig Minds
- 50% off appetizers (with purchase of one beer) at The Olympic
- 50% off appetizers (with purchase of one beer) at Rockford Brewing Company (not on club night)
- 50% off food at Kryptonite until 9 PM