



Official Newsletter of Forest City
Brewers
August Edition

Next Meeting will be held at **Prairie Street Brewing
Company**

Wednesday, September 4th, 2024 @ 7:00 PM

HOW TO CONTACT FOREST CITY BREWERS

[Homepage: Forest City Brewers](#)

forestcitybrewers@gmail.com

[Facebook: Forest City Brewers](#)

Forest City Brewers

Welcome to the Forest City Brewers!!

Forest City Brewers is a social group of home-brewers and craft beer enthusiasts in the Northern Illinois area, that meet regularly in Rockford, IL. Our club strives to help out our fellow brewers to create better beers and cultivate appreciation of the science and culture of beer through education.

August Meeting Notes

Tasters Guild will be at Oasis in August. All these are on the FCB website calendar, Check the FCB website or Facebook for any last-minute additions to the schedule.

Great Taste of the Midwest, was held on August 10th and well attended by Forest City Brewers', I believe everyone that went had a great time.

CHAOS HomeBrew fest is August 24th. FCB will be represented by a few brewer's and a beer brewed with Blue Lake Hops entered into the contest. Good Luck!!

Upcoming Competition Styles

September 19B – California Common

The California common is brewed with lager yeast but fermented at ale fermentation temperatures. There is a noticeable degree of toasted malt and/or caramel-like malt character in flavor and often in aroma. Often referred to as "steam beer" and made famous by San Francisco's Anchor Brewing Company.

October 26B – Belgian Dubbel

The Belgian-style dubbel ranges from brown to very dark in color. They have a malty sweetness and can have cocoa and caramel aromas and flavors. Hop bitterness is medium-low to medium. Yeast-generated fruity esters (especially banana) can be apparent. "Dubbel" meaning "double," this beer is still not so big in intensity as to surpass the Belgian-style quadrupel that is often considered its sibling.

Monthly Style Table Competition

August Style Table – Vienna Lager

1st Place Tie

Ryan Bergmann
Lesley Davis

August Open Table

1st Place – 3-way Tie

Dave Benson – Gran Cru Imperial Blonde Ale
Mark Davis – Black IPA
Scott Walker – American Pale Ale

2nd Place – 2-way Tie

Joe Coldwate – Brown IPA
Andy Swindell – American Wheat

Current Point Standings

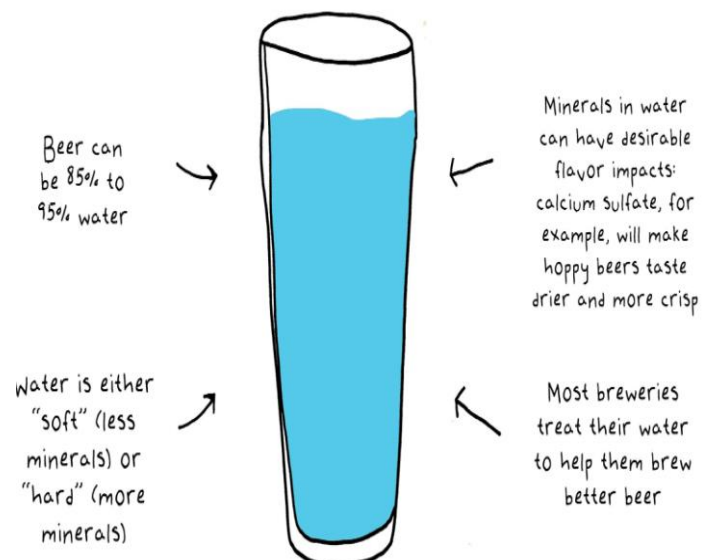
<https://forestcitybrewers.us/index.php/contest-points/>

Link: 2021 BJCP Style Guidelines

*Please remember to preregister your beers for the Brewer of the Year contest by registering your beer thru the Forest City Brewers web page.

<https://forestcitybrewers.us/index.php/pre-register/>

Water's Role in Beer



UPCOMING EVENTS

UPCOMING TASTERS GUILD

August - Tasters Guild will be at Oasis on
August 21st 6:30 – 9 pm.

September Tasters Guild will be at 8th Ward

UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS

C.H.A.O.S. Homebrew Festival

When: August 24th, 2024 2 – 7 pm

Where: C.H.A.O.S. Club

2417 W Hubbard St, Chicago, IL

<https://www.facebook.com/CHAOSBrewClub>



Screw City Beer Festival

When: September 7th, 2024 12 – 4 pm

Where: River Front Lot @ Riverview Ice House

200 North Water Street Rockford, IL 61107

Looking for interested Brewer's to sign-up to bring a
beer to serve

[Screw City Beer Festival](#)



Pretzel City Brew Fest

When: September 28th, 2024 1 – 5 pm

Where: 1 W. Spring St.

Freeport, IL 61032

Looking for interested Brewer's to sign-up to bring a
beer to serve

TASTERS GUILD



July's Tasters guild was held at Barnstormer Distillery, on Wednesday July 24th. It is located at 6969 S Main St, Rockford, IL 61102

Special Thanks to Addie and Tim Ford for hosting us for the evening and giving us a great tour of the Distillery!!!!!!

Thanks to everyone that made this a great night to gather, consume fabulous concoctions, share some beers and share some great stories.



This month's Tasters guild will be held at Oasis Micro Pub on Wednesday August 21st, 6:30pm – 9pm. It is located at 901 E State St, Rockford, IL

26 draught lines with the finest micro brews and craft beers available in the Rockford area

Hope to see all of you there.

NEW FOREST CITY DISCOUNT

We have a new **DISCOUNT** being offered by Welders Supply Company located 3485 Brick Dr, Rockford, IL 779-208-4055

Forest City Brewers is being offered the opportunity to participate in Co2 tank **exchanges**. If you need Co2 Monday-Friday 7:30 AM till 4:30 PM, please stop by and give them a try.

- 5lb and 20lb tanks always available
- 2.5lb and 10lb tanks, please call-in advance to verify availability
- Co2 tanks are exchange only
- Just mention you are a member of "Forest City Brewers"
- Cash On Delivery – Pay when you exchange / pick-up

Here are the rates we are being provided for Co2;
2.5lb food grade cylinder exchange - \$10.41
5lb food grade cylinder exchange - \$12.50
10lb food grade cylinder exchange- \$14.00
20lb food grade cylinder exchange - \$20.00

Here are the rates for Nitrogen;
20Cf 75%Nit/25%Co2 cylinder exchange - \$12.00
150 Al 75Nit/25Co2 cylinder exchange - \$30.00
90Cf Nitrogen cylinder exchange - \$26.00
150Cf Nitrogen cylinder exchange - \$34.00

[Welders Supply Rockford Map Location](#)



Mike Bohn's Pineapple Wheat Tapping at Urban Forest

Earlier this year, we had the inaugural Urban Forest Homebrew Invitational, where the winning beer would go on to be brewed and put on tap by Urban Forest. Urban Forest ended up picking 2 winners/beers to put on tap, Lesley Davis and Mike Bohn. Lesley brewed a milk stout that was put on tap early this year and highly successful. Now it's time for Mike's beer. Mike brewed his beer with Urban Forest recently and shared it with the club (and others) whom got to try it on Wednesday, July 31st.

Introducing 'Piña CoLoco', Urban Forest's 2nd collaboration beer with Mike Bohn. A light and effervescent Wheat beer with Toasted Coconut, Raw Coconut & Pineapple.

Pineapple aroma greets you as you go for that 1st sip, then it's balanced sweetness up front fading into subtle yet lingering Coconut. Teleport yourself to the Caribbean sip by sip. If you close your eyes you can almost hear the waves lapping against the sand.



How Are Hop Pellets Made?

Let's talk about hop pellets, those little nuggets that give your beer its signature bitterness and aroma and start with a history lesson. Hop pellets, believe it or not, are a relatively new kid on the block. They were introduced in the 1970s, a time when bell-bottoms were in vogue and disco was the rage. But unlike those questionable fashion choices, hop pellets have stood the test of time.

So, how are these tiny powerhouses made? The process begins with the harvesting of fresh hops. This is a delicate operation, usually done by hand to ensure the hops are picked at their peak. Picture a field of green, the air filled with the intoxicating aroma of hops, as skilled workers carefully pluck the ripe cones from the bines.

Once harvested, the hops are then dried. This is a crucial step, as it reduces the moisture content from about 80% to around 10%. Imagine a giant food dehydrator, but instead of fruit, it's filled with hops. The drying process helps to preserve the hops and intensify their flavor.

Next, the dried hops are ground into a fine powder. This isn't your average kitchen grinder we're talking about. It's a specialized mill that ensures the hops are ground to the perfect consistency. The result is a powder that's rich in alpha acids and essential oils - the key ingredients that give your beer its unique flavor and aroma.

The final step is the pelletization. The hop powder is fed into a pellet mill, where it's compressed under high pressure into the familiar cylindrical shape. Picture a Play-Doh fun factory, but instead of colorful dough, it's hop powder being extruded. The pellets are then cooled and packaged, ready to be shipped to breweries and homebrewers like you.

Now, let's talk about the pros and cons. Fresh hops, they're like that high school sweetheart - first love, unforgettable, but a bit high maintenance. They need to be used quickly after harvest, and they take up a lot of space. On the other hand, hop pellets are like the reliable partner you can always count on. They're easy to store, have a longer shelf life, and provide a more consistent flavor.

Like everything in life, hop pellets aren't without their quirks. One of the main gripes some brewers have is that they can sometimes impart a grassy flavor to your beer. This typically happens when they're not used correctly. Over-boiling or using an excessive amount can lead to this unwanted flavor. It's like adding too much salt to your soup.

Another potential downside is that hop pellets lack the romantic appeal of fresh hops. Fresh hops have a certain allure to them. They're vibrant, aromatic, and visually appealing. There's something about tossing those fresh, green cones into your brew that just feels right. It's a sensory experience - the feel of the hops in your hands, the smell wafting up from the brew kettle.

Hop pellets, on the other hand, are a bit more utilitarian. They're compact, uniform, and, let's face it, not as pretty to look at. They don't offer the same tactile experience as fresh hops. But remember, brewing isn't just about the aesthetics. It's about creating a delicious beer that you can be proud of, which leads to another big advantage. Because they are easy to store and available in small quantities, you can get very creative in combining different types of hop pellets for evermore complex and nuanced flavors. To do this with fresh hops, you'd need a very fast airplane and a lot of free time.

So, while hop pellets might not have the same romantic appeal as fresh hops, they more than make up for it with their convenience and consistency. And let's face it, they don't have the same romantic appeal as fresh hops. But hey, we're here for the beer, not the romance, right?

Storing hop pellets is a breeze. Keep them in a cool, dark place, preferably in an airtight container. Your refrigerator is a perfect spot. As for their shelf life, hop pellets can last up to two years if stored properly. That's a lot of brews, my friend!

Now, let's get down to the nitty-gritty. How do you use these little green gems? It's simple. You add them to your brew during the boiling process. The heat releases the alpha acids, which give your beer its bitterness, and the essential oils, which provide the aroma.

So, there you have it, brewmaster. A crash course in hop pellets. They may not have the glamour of fresh hops, but they're reliable, easy to use, and they've got a long shelf life. And let's face it, in the end, it's all about the beer. So, go ahead, give hop pellets a shot. Your taste buds, and your beer-loving friends, will thank you.

Remember, brewing is an art, and you're the artist. So, experiment, explore, and most importantly, enjoy the process. After all, it's not just about the destination (though a delicious pint of beer is a pretty great one), it's about the journey.

Happy brewing!