

9th August 2019



PRESS RELEASE: BRITISH HOP HARVEST 2019

The Great British Hop Harvest:

The British Hop harvest is dramatic, noisy, frenetic and does not last very long. In just a few weeks British hop farms will have completed the harvest of one of our oldest, most romantic, most fabulously aromatic British crops. British Hops are grown in two significant regions - Herefordshire & Worcestershire and Kent, Surrey, Sussex & Hampshire.

During harvest the whole hop bines are taken out of the hopyards to a "picking" machine, which strips the hop, bine, separates the hop from the leaf and conveys the hops into the kilns where they are dried before being conditioned and baled.

September is the month when the hop growing year culminates: from stringing the hop yard in March, training the hop plant in April, through the summer months of pest & disease protection, to ensuring that the hops are ready to harvest in September. This year's weather conditions have been perfect for hops. With a warm summer and regular showers, the British hop industry has been lucky not to be affected by extreme weather conditions seen in continental Europe that has meant that there is an excellent crop ready to harvest, with wonderful aroma and flavor notes.

Hop picking is an old process: British Hops have been grown by farmers for over 500 years and were harvested by hand until the 1960's. Since then the process has been mechanised. The picking process is full of wonderful hop aromas: orange, lemon, spice, mint, grass, molasses, blackcurrant, tangerine, summer fruits, pear, summer flowers, apricot and black pepper. It's noisy, dramatic and unforgettable.

British Hops of the Future:

British Hops are one of only a few crops in the UK to have their own British grower-funded breeding programme, and it was a world-first, dating back to 1906. From aroma hop crosses made in 2011, 2012 & 2013 there are over 60 new British Hop varieties coming through the programme that have been assessed during the last 5 years – there is no doubt that at least 3 will be market leading aroma hops of the future. These new hops will be exclusively assessed and marketed through hop merchant Charles Faram Ltd over the next few years.

British Hop Science of the Future:

The British Hop breeding programme is always seeking new aroma hops and hops of note. With objectives as broad as pest and disease resistance, climate change resilience, new unknown flavours and perfect agronomic traits - the British hop breeding programme has a lot to achieve. Traditional plant breeding methods deliver new varieties in 10 to 15 years, but with current ongoing projects, this could be significantly reduced in the next few years.

The British Hop Association together with Reading University and the East Malling Research Centre have recruited a PhD student, Klara Hadju, who is one year into a three year project researching molecular marker assisted breeding techniques with the British hop breeding programme. This research will allow new varieties to enter the market quicker which means the industry can be more receptive to market demand.

British Hop Association

Registered Address: c/o Larkings LLP, Cornwallis House, Pudding Lane, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1NH
VAT Registration Number: GB 683 3890 95



What's so special about British Hops? It's all about our unique terroir* and low myrcene:

British craft brewers often rave about new world American and New Zealand hops. American and New Zealand craft brewers rave about British Hops. These overseas brewers are now seeking delicate, complex hop aromas to create drinkable session beers. And it is the unique terroir of British Hops with lower levels of myrcene that makes British Hops the perfect hop to brew a drinkable session beer.

All British Hops share the same wonderful “terroir”* – great soils and a unique mild maritime climate with even rainfall throughout the year. British Hops use the natural resources available, which means that very few hops are irrigated. It is this special and sustainable terroir that produces British hops delicate and complex aromas and makes them perfect for brewing the best session beers in the world.

For British craft brewers seeking the high notes in British Hops the key varieties are:

- Jester® – intense grapefruit and tropical fruit notes
- Olicana® – mango, grapefruit and passionfruit flavours
- Admiral – cooked marmalade, orangey citrus
- Bramling Cross – blackcurrant, spicy lemon
- UK Cascade – lychees, floral, grapefruit
- Endeavour (a British daughter of Cascade) – citrus, summer fruits
- Target – sage, spice, citrus

On farm trial, we have some very exciting new varieties coming through that are hitting the high notes too. For a full list of British Hop varieties: <http://www.britishhops.org.uk/british-hop-varieties/>

The facts about British Hops are:

- There are over 33 commercially grown British Aroma Hop varieties in the UK.
- The UK Grows over 1000 hectares of hops.
- British Hops represent 1.5% of world hop production.
- The UK is the only country to have focused so strongly on disease resistance, making British Hops both environmentally friendly and inevitably more appealing.
- The low trellis hop growing system was developed in the UK

**Terroir: The factors that affect terroir are the soil, geography, geology, topography and climate. The term is derived from the French “terre” meaning “land” and the concept of terroir has come from the French wine industry.*

- End -

Note to Editors:

To visit a farm during the British Hop harvest or for more information:

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www.britishhops.org.uk

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