Providing hops to brewers both big and small

By Melody Meyer
Marketing, Hopunion

For more than 25 years, Hopunion has been a strong proponent of microbrewers and the continual pursuit of brewing premium craft beer. Whether brewers are small scale novices just starting in the industry, or experienced experts with large scale systems, Hopunion is dedicated to fulfilling every customer's hop needs.

In 2011, Hopunion expanded their commitment to small scale brewing operations by launching a new, small packaging product line. Currently offered in four different packaging sizes (1 oz. hop pellets, 4 oz. raw hops, 1 lb. hop pellets, and 1 lb. raw hops), and featuring N2 HopPack™ Technology, Hopunion's small packaging is perfect for nano or homebrewers alike.

Each Hopunion homebrew package is carefully packed and sealed in a nitrogen flushed, light resistant, oxygen barrier N2 HopPack and then stored in a temperature controlled atmosphere to avoid heat related degradation. This ensures that every package of Hopunion hops is maintained in an ideal storage environment and that like never before, small brewing operations are receiving hops of the highest quality commercial standards.

Moving forward, Hopunion will continue to expand these small packaging products based on customer demand and need. By offering an increased array of sizes and varieties, brewers of any size will be able to purchase smaller quantities of hops -- increasing freshness and eliminating waste.

For now, Hopunion small packs can be found at homebrew shops nationwide. To locate a distributor, scan the code at right or visit the homebrewing page at hopunion.com.

Briess makes 2 popular malts full-time

The 2 smooth malts deliver a double dose of bitterless color

Not long after Blackprinzi® Malt and Midnight Wheat Malt were released as seasonal malts last year, requests to have them available year round rolled in. So that's exactly what we did. Both malts are now part of the standard Briess portfolio, which makes them available all year.

"Not only is there higher demand for these malts due to the growing popularity of Black IPA's and black lagers, but there's also a growing demand for readily available bitterless black malts," explained Vice President of Sales & Marketing Robert O'Connell.

Briess sources North American-grown wheat and hullless barley for these malts, which assures a steady source of new "locally produced" bitterless black malt for American craft brewers.

Double Darkness is the moniker given Blackprinzi® and Midnight Wheat Malts because of their unique ability to replace debittered black malt in any beer needing color but no bitter, astringent, dry flavor or aftertaste.

Debittered black malts are made by removing a great

Yeast Essentials

Seminars planned on yeast usage in early 2012

White Labs will host two special training sessions on yeast in early 2012. The Yeast Essentials seminars, which will be held prior to the Craft Brewers Conference but which are not affiliated with the conference itself, will be held at White Labs' new headquarters and production facility in San Diego.

The Pre-CBC seminar is intended for brewers going to the conference and will be held the day before the conference begins, on May 1. It is also

See "Yeast essentials," page 4

Style Matters: Tips for wood-aged beers

In each issue, CBQ spotlights a particular beer style and provides tips from an ingredient and fermentation perspective. In this issue we examine wood-aged beers.

Hop Notes:
There should be no surprise that beer has been aged in wood for thousands of years. Early brewers would ferment and store liquids in barrels made of palm wood and this tradition dates back to the Sumerians. Over time, different woods were tried as humans and brewing traveled across the lands. Eventually, oak became the material of choice for brewers, vintners, and distillers alike.

Although there are still beers fermented and stored in wood like Belgian Lambic and ales made using Burton Unions, most commercial beers are produced in stainless steel. By the 1980's stainless steel vessels were making their way into breweries and with the invention of SANKE kegs in the late 1950's wood aged beers were slowly disappearing in favor of this newer technology. By the end of the 20th century stainless steel dominated the scene as the go to choice for brewing and serving beer. Even Real Ales made in the UK, which were traditionally served out of wood, are now being served out of stainless flanks because their

See "Style Matters," page 2
What’s next for Briess’ Maltster’s Reserve Series?

Briess lengthened the seasons
Seasonal malts from Briess will be available for six months starting in 2012, up from the original three months when the Maltster's Reserve Series launched in 2009. Caracystal® Wheat Malt will be available the first half of the year, from January through June. Carabrown® Malt will be available the second half of the year, from July through December.

Watch for a new malt in 2012
Due to popular demand, Blackprinz® Malt and Midnight Wheat Malt have moved from the seasonal Maltster's Reserve Series to the standard Briess product portfolio, and are now available year round. This summer a new Maltster's Reserve Series malt will be released in their place. Watch for details.

Briess announces dates for 2012 Malt and Brew Workshop
The two-day, third annual Briess Malt & Brew Workshop is scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday, August 22-23, 2012, in Chilton, Wisconsin.

If you’re thinking of attending, please make a note on your calendar that we encourage participants to arrive on Tuesday evening, August 21.

Registration materials and an agenda will be posted on the Briess website after the beginning of the new year. We're designing the 2012 workshop to be on par with the 2011 workshop, which featured Dr. Michael Lewis and John Mallett (Belf's Brewery) as guest speakers.

In the post-workshop survey, one participant noted: “The presentations had a lot of information to absorb, and the Q&A sessions were priceless. It was a lot for two days, but that's what made it so double for a working brewer. If it were any longer then it would have been difficult to get away from work. I found something of value in each presentation.”

Sessions will be held on malting and brewing with specialty malts, a sensory session to identify flavors contributed by specialty malts and others, plus indepth tours of the iconic Briess malhouse, roasting operations and modern 500 barrel brewhouse/extraction plant.

Pre-registration will be required and will be limited to 30 participants currently working in a licensed commercial brewery or in a brewing-related capacity. The $125 registration fee includes the cost of all meals.

Transportation and lodging is not included.

Chilton is located about 90 miles north of Milwaukee, 35 miles south of Green Bay, and 35 miles southeast of Appleton.

Double darkness
deal of the husk (but not all of it) from malting barley. Since it’s the husk that picks up bitter notes during roasting, delubbered black malts contribute a certain amount of bitterness, astringent or dry flavors or aftertaste to beer.

Blackprinz® Malt and Midnight Wheat Malt are made from grains that have no such husk to pick up bitter notes during roasting.

The result is black malts that contribute deep rich browns to black tones with subtle flavor but no bitterness or astringency.

Style Matters
easier to clean and transport.

With the craft brewing industry experiencing double digit growth over the last 10 years, wood aged beers are reemerging as a way for brewers to experiment and offer distinct flavors on top of their normal fare. This is very exciting because brewers in America have not only brought back wood into the brewing process, but have made a new style of beer that is really
taken off.

Overall, the process is simple and involves making a base beer and aging it in wood for varying lengths of time. Barrel aging can be more difficult than storing in stainless steel because barrels cannot be cleaned like traditional kegs and can harbor various bacteria and wild yeast. Although inoculated barrels would be good to make sour beers, bacteria and wild yeast need to stay out of most beer styles. Therefore, barrel hygiene is important. Barrels also shrink and expand during the changing seasons and since the wood is slightly porous, evaporation does occur and beer needs to be replaced in order to prevent the beers from oxidizing and going stale, unless you are brewing an Old Ale.

Most brewers use barrels that have previously held spirits or wine as raw wood can overpower the beers. I have seen barrels used that previously held Madeira wine, Sherry, Chardonnay, Cabernet/ Merlot, and Port. On the spirit side I have seen Bourbon, Tequila, Scotch, and Gin barrels being used. This goes to show the vast range of beers that can be made with barrels and that they can range from a wits

See “Style Matters 2,” page 3
Last year’s barley harvest marked by low yield
Good 2-row quality reported in 2011

By Dave Kuske
Director of Malting Operations

The 2011 Northern Hemisphere barley crop year is complete and once again we’re seeing a volatile market due to several factors.

For those of us who had the good fortune to enjoy the days of readily available, inexpensive barley, it’s important to remember that the open barley market in the United States is a thing of the past. Barley has turned into a specialty, custom contracted crop for the production of malt for beer due mainly to increased demand for agricultural products for biofuels, weather and a declining beer market. The biggest factor affecting malting barley is decreased plantings.

2011 U.S. barley harvest

All of the U.S. barley crops have been harvested, and the total production for 2011 stands at 3,376 million metric tons. That’s the lowest on record since 1936. Idaho, which grows mainly 2-row varieties, finished 2011 with a production of 1 million metric tons, close to its 2010 crop. Quality was average to good. Montana, another mostly 2-row state, produced about 675,000 million metric tons, about 20% below last year.

North Dakota, which produces mostly 6-row varieties, was a major production disappointment. Record flooding over major barley producing regions during planting time resulted in major losses of acreage due to prevent planting situations. Prevent planting means poor field conditions prevent growers from planting past the date that would allow them to safely grow and harvest their crop. This situation, coupled with an overall declining U.S. beer market and attractive prices for wheat and corn prior to planting, resulted in record low acreage for the state.

North Dakota’s production in 2009 was 1.7 million metric tons. Its production in 2011 dropped to 356,000 metric tons. The result was so poor that North Dakota actually moved to number 3 in statewide production behind ID and MT. The result is an historically odd situation where 2-row values are nearly at parity with 2-row barley values for this crop year and for 2012 contract pricing.

On the plus side, U.S. 2-row crop quality is better than 2010.

Growing conditions in 2011 generally resulted in lower yields than 2010, but better harvest conditions resulted in a crop with lower harvest moisture and significantly less sprout damage and more sound barley. Protein levels on 2-row appear to be about 0.5 - 1.0% higher than 2010, but better germination performance should result in better overall brewhouse performance for this crop year.

Style Matters 2

Aged in gin barrels, to tripels aged in chardonnay barrels, and imperial stouts aged in bourbon barrels. When brewing, the main thing to note is that the base beer should never be overpowering by the wood character but rather be complemented by it. Aging in barrels helps to smooth our higher alcohol beers and is noted for adding flavors of vanilla, butterscotch, caramel, toffee, chocolate, and roasted notes depending on the barrels used and its previous contents.

Unfortunately, this is not a typical beer style in which hops can be recommended for. From experience though, I can say that one of the best beers I have tried in wood was an imperial IPA aged on bourbon oak for 6 months and then dry hopped. The beer was biter and hoppy like you would expect but smooth with very rounded out flavors of vanilla and oak. Just the thought of this beer makes me thirsty. Cheers to being creative and to the reemergence of wood used in American craft beers.

- Will Harrison, Interior Northwest Sales Manager, Hopunion LLC

Yeast and Fermentation Notes:

This is a hard category to provide great yeast and fermentation advice because the base beer can include almost anything including pale ales and stout. Indeed, brewers generally identify the base style and wood used when entering beers in this category. One piece of advice that could apply to a wide variety of base styles, wood types and yeast strains used for this style would be to try to prevent or at least reduce oxidation as much as possible. One way to do this is to keep a little fermentation activity going during the transfer. Plus, it provides the opportunity for something interesting to happen in the barrel.

- White Labs

Malt Notes:

Full-bodied, high-gravity beers are most commonly associated with wood aging because of their ability to stand up to the additional flavor from the wood. But American craft brewers delight in creatively applying techniques to their passion of brewing, often straying far from absolute guidelines. Indeed, there is hardly a ‘rule’ in brewing that isn’t broken by someone somewhere in the process of making a great beer.

Wood aging is no different. American brewers are quickly amassing an impressive portfolio of beer styles successfully transformed into superb wood aged beer. There are, however, some sweeping generalities or guidelines that can be made as to which wood aging techniques are used for which beer styles. These, in turn, can help you select malts best suited for your target wood aged beer flavor.

Wood adds a character all itself. Think of it as injecting a new layer or new dimension in any beer style. When creating a wood aged beer, you normally try to balance the flavors or effects of the wood with the overall beer style. The best wood aged beers will be smooth, flavorful, well-balanced and well-aged. Use malts, then, that provide the needed flavors to balance or complement without overpowering the wood character.

Start by identifying the type of wood your beer will age in. Second, determine the style of beer best suited for the wood. Third, create your grid selecting malts with flavors that are complementary to both the style of beer and wood.

Light Toasted Oak:

A light oak character as well as hints of coconut, butter, clove and fruit are imparted to beer by the use of lightly toasted oak. Pale Ales and even lighter styles and lagers could pair well with these flavors.

See “Style Matters 3,” page 7
5 new strains for 2012, including more of the funky

White Labs expanded its yeast lineup to the largest extent in 2012 in many years, adding five strains of yeast and bacteria. While many of these strains were available in the White Labs yeastbank in the past, putting them into regular production — in some cases seasonally, in other cases year-round — makes them available sooner and will generate greater publicity and interest about them. Some of the strains below are seasonal and will only be in regular production during specific months. Like for all of its strains, brewers can review availability for these strains in seconds at yeastman.com.

WLP090 San Diego Super Yeast
A super clean, super-fast fermenting strain. A low-ester-producing strain that results in a balanced, neutral flavor and aroma profile. Alcohol-tolerant and very versatile for a wide variety of styles. Similar to California Ale Yeast WLP001 but it generally ferments faster.

Optimal Fermentation Temperature: 68-68°F
Attenuation: 76.8-83%+
Flocculation: Medium-High
Alcohol Tolerance: High

WLP585 Belgian Saison III
Produces beer with a high fruit ester characteristic, as well as some slight tartness. Finishes slightly malty, which balances out the esters. Also produces low levels of clove phenolics. Great yeast choice for a summer Saison that is light and easy-drinking.

Optimal Temp: 68-75°F
Flocculation: Low-Medium
Attenuation: 70-74%
Alcohol Tolerance: Medium

WLP644 Brettanomyces bruxellensis Trois
This Belgian strain, used traditionally for 100% Brettanomyces fermentations, produces a slightly tart beer with distinctive characteristics of mango and pineapple. Can also be used to produce effervescence when bottle-conditioning.

Optimal Temp: 70-85°F
Flocculation: Low
Attenuation: 85%+
Alcohol Tolerance: Medium-High

WLP665 Flemish Ale Blend
Blended culture used to produce the classic beer styles of the West Flanders region of Belgium. A proprietary blend of Saccharomyces yeasts, Brettanomyces, Lactobacillus, and Pediococcus, this culture creates a more complex, dark stone fruit characteristic than WLP655 Belgian Sour Mix.

Optimal Temp: 68-80°F
Flocculation: Low-Medium
Attenuation: 80-85%+
Alcohol Tolerance: Medium-High

WLP860 Munich Helles
This yeast helps to produce a malty, balanced traditional Munich-style lager. Clean and strong fermentor, it’s great for a variety of lager styles ranging from Helles to Rauchbiers.

Optimal Temp: 48-52°F
Flocculation: Medium
Attenuation: 68-72%
Alcohol Tolerance: Medium

Yeast essentials

From Page 1

Yeastbank news and notes: When can I really get that yeast?

By Mike White
White Labs contributor

** Yeastman in 2011 and beyond: Yeastman, White Labs’ proprietary tracking system, saw a big expansion in the past year. It is the only system we know of that allows brewers to tap into the same availability system as employees. It is kind of like when the airlines cutout the middleman and allowed travelers to view the database of available flights. For White Labs customers, it means they can view the same availability database as company employees. Although many customers prefer calling and talking to humans, the website (yeastman.com) offers them an alternative. In the past year, many changes were introduced, including allowing brewers to look up lot numbers regardless if they discarded the QC documents when they received your yeast. To view this feature, follow the links to lab reports near the top of the page. Meanwhile, White Labs introduced a new feature that allows brewers to ask for an earlier ship date if the system gives them an availability date that does not work. In short, this eliminates getting to a certain phase in the program and then having to call if you don’t like what you see. For brewery requests for the most part, lab people with direct knowledge of what’s available, and when, are answering these questions, although it has not always worked glitch-free. One thing we have found out is getting a hold of people to confirm shipping is not always easy, thus we now ask for numbers and emails where we can reach people immediately if we need to. Why even ask us for quicker dates? While the system is better and better at knowing availability, staff members have ways of filling special requests. Yeastman is being continually optimized so that it can give the same answers as humans, but until robot technology rules the earth, technology systems must be hybrids of humans and computers. And that is not all so bad.

** Classes planned: The pre-Craft Brewers Conference classes discussed beginning on the first page of CBQ are but just a few of the changes in store educational-wise for White Labs. We opened a new classroom as part of our new production facility and headquarters in 2011. The room offers great space and features video and audio technologies for enhanced educational experiences. A full list of classes for the remainder of the year will soon be posted on whitelabs.com, including beer and wine classes.

** Website changes ahead: White Labs began the process of updating its website last year but the project has hit an unfortunate roadblock. We are working on restarting the process and bringing a new site to brewers in 2012. One thing that makes the project a little complicated is that the site is very extensive as-is. It is kind of like an over-stuffed house. Part of the project will include trimming things down to what visitors really need. At least, that is one of the lessons of 2011.
Thanks for a great 2011! More great change to come

Editor's note: The following letter appeared in part to some customers at the start of 2012. It is being reprinted here so we can share news about some exciting changes in the new year with all of our customers.

White Labs would like you for a great 2011! We could not have done it without your continued commitment and support. Our goal is to become the best yeast production company in the world, and every decision we make is guided by that goal.

The year 2011 was dominated by our laboratory and headquarters move to 9498 Candida Street, three miles from our old Trade Street location. We are now operating 100% in the new facility, and by the end of 2011 we were able to start to increase yeast production. Yeast production increased by 20%, and we expect to increase 100% by the end of 2012. This means more yeast for you!

In 2012 we will add:
• Five new yeast strains moved to full-time availability! (Actually six when considering WLP090 San Diego Super Yeast, which went full-time at the end of 2011). This is our largest increase in strains in 5 years. Most of the strains were moved according to your requests; thank you for your feedback.
• Four brand-new Platinum seasonal strains, plus one more re-released Platinum strain.
• More yeast production. We never want to be out of yeast that you have ordered.
• New upgrades to Yeastman.com, making online ordering even easier. Yeastman.com communicates with our laboratory production tracking software, so it has real-time information on yeast availability and progress within White Labs.
• White Labs Tasting Room grand opening is June 15, 2012. The tasting room will be open to the public, and will allow for visitors to come to White Labs, tour our facility, and try beers made with different yeast strains. What beers will we serve? See the next bullet point!
• White Labs Brewing Co. is open early 2012. White Labs is in the process of licensing our own brewery, which will allow us to brew small batches of beer and serve it in the tasting room. White Labs will not have particular brands, only experimental beers, and the beer will not be sold off site. Flavors will vary depending on the experiments. Besides the beer alone, we will provide tastings with a complete analysis of the beers, providing such data alcohol, flavor compounds, diacetyl, IBUs, number of bacteria and wild yeast, if any, and calories, among other data. We will be a brewery that is not seeking to make certain beers. There will be no single White Labs Pale Ale. Instead there may be a dozen on tap made with different yeasts, for instance.
• We want to experiment and share those experiments in our tasting room. We hope customers will enjoy this unique experience.

Nano product
What yeast will we use at White Labs Brewing Co.? Perhaps anything in the refrigerator. As for size, we may use our new yeast product aimed at the nano brewery movement. We began selling a 1/2 bbl pitch of yeast this year because our nano customers told us other sizes were too large. We wanted to provide yeast with a product that has the same level of testing and care that we put into all of our yeast batches, including detailed QC analysis and data.

Chris White is President of White Labs Inc. He has a Ph.D in biochemistry from the University of California, San Diego. Feel free to write him at cwhite@whitelabs.com about this column.
Bagby bags third Alpha King crown

Gary McGrath
Vice President of Sales and Marketing

In what turned out to be the biggest Alpha King contest to date, Pizza Port’s brewer extraordinary Jeff Bagby secured his third Alpha King title at the 13th annual Alpha King contest sponsored by Hopunion, Brewing News Publications and Three Floyds Brewing Company.

Once again, the 2011 contest was held during the Great American Beer Festival, at Falling Rock Tap House in Denver, CO. The crowd was lined up early in anticipation of awarding one of the most highly coveted prizes handed out during the busy GABF event.

Each year, a very lucky team of brewers and veteran beer writers sip the hoppy hopefuls in search of the holy grail of well-balanced and drinkable, yet highly hopped ales. The only rules of engagement are the beers must be brewed by, and available for purchase through, a commercial brewery; there is a maximum of three entries per licensed brewery and no barley wines.

With a record setting 107 entries from more than 70 breweries, the competition was fierce. In the end, the judges awarded the crown to Jeff Bagby of Pizza Port Carlsbad in Carlsbad, CA - a three-peat winner!

Jeff’s Poor Man’s Double IPA was judged number one and was described as an intriguing blend of bold citrus and pine flavors. The 2011 runner-up was Matt Bynildson of Firestone Walker Brewing Co. in Paso Robles, CA with Double Jack Imperial IPA.

Taking home the bronze was Dave Colt of Sun King Brewing Co. in Indianapolis, IN with Cream Dream IV: A New Hop Imperial IPA.

For those of you looking to contend for the crown in 2012, registration forms will be released in the spring. Questions can be directed to alphaking@hopunion.com.

In the meantime...all hail King Jeff!

What’s not to like about hops?

By Melody Meyer
Marketing, Hopunion

“Out with the old, in with the new!”
It is a familiar phrase that we have all heard and often associate with radical ideas and imminent change.

At Hopunion, it seems to be the mantra of our marketing department. Unlike ever before, we are reconsidering traditional advertising methods and expanding our reach in the digital world to connect with customers on a more personal, immediate level.

We are living in a world where more than 50% of the population is under 30 years old and learning more from iPads than actual textbooks. As a result, social media has become an cornerstone of communication, transcending physical, cultural and emotional boundaries.

In fact, social media has become so big that if Facebook were a country, it would be the 3rd largest nation in the world. For businesses, this means that thousands upon thousands of customers are merely a click away.

In an effort to harness the opportunities of digital marketing and increase our level of customer service, Hopunion has recently launched a new website, including social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Our website can still be located at www.hopunion.com, however the content and interface have drastically changed.

Our Facebook account is located at www.facebook.com/hopunion, while Twitter can be utilized via @Hopunion.

We invite you to visit our new website, “like” us on Facebook, or Tweet your thoughts about hops.

Through these avenues, we will communicate industry updates, product launches, news and events (such as Hops and Brew School or Alpha King) and much more. Over time, we hope to make hopunion.com the hub for all your informational needs.

Zythos™ begins to develop a niche

Mike Seestadt
Northwest Regional Sales Manager

As many of you know, the 2011 hop harvest delivered shortages for several specific IPA and Pale Ale style hop varieties.

When news of the potential shortages broke earlier last spring, Hopunion and Alpha Analyts immediately began brainstorming alternatives and developing temporary solutions to extend brewers’ IPA and Pale Ale style inventory. Zythos™, Hopunion’s newest proprietary pellet blend, became the ultimate solution – highlighting the brewing values and aroma characteristics you expect in your premium craft brews and containing only publically available varieties.

Over the past few years, global demand for IPA style hop varieties has skyrocketed. Hopunion and each of its growers are diligently working to expand production and exceed demand, however cool spring weather and low yielding baby hops continue to create shortages.

As a result, the IPA fueled American brewing scene is in a scenario similar to a goldfish that eagerly jumps out of the water only to find itself gasping for air.

To prevent similar circumstances from happening in the future, Hopunion is proactively expanding production and developing temporary brewing alternatives, while simultaneously restricting contract options for specific hop varieties. While Zythos cannot replace our most popular proprietary varieties, brewers throughout the nation have found that it can be used to help supplement and extend current inventories.

Alex Mull, Director of Operations at Founders Brewing in Grand Rapids, Michigan had the following comments regarding their experience with Zythos:

“At Founders we have a typical vetting process for all of our hops that go into our beers. We have been trying to use different hops to make up for the shortages that we are currently facing and particularly the problem with the Amarillo® shortage. We built a beer around Amarillo® and now had to look to something else since Amarillo® became nearly unavailable. Zythos filled a nice niche for that beer. ... At the end of the day we are looking to make the best beer we can. We love the hop [Zythos] and hope that it comes back again for years to come.”

Similar to other hop blends, like the coveted Falconer’s Flight® release of 2010, Zythos has unexpectedly began carving a niche as a suitable hop that can stand alone in great IPA and Pale Ale brews.

Zythos is scheduled to be available for 2011, however once other limited availability crops begin to meet production demands, it is scheduled to go away just as quietly as a harsh memory of the current crisis.

That being said, the success that Zythos has seen in the marketplace has raised questions as to what the future holds. Addressing the future of Zythos™, Don Bryant, President and CEO of Hopunion, explains:

“Similar to Falconers Flight in scarcity, be sure to get in touch with Zythos while it is here and embrace it for what it is. Zythos was developed out of necessity and necessity drives creativity that would not normally be in place.

Enjoy Zythos for what it is and realize that the characteristic notes that are typical of many great IPA hops, a la Amarillo, are sometimes here one day and gone tomorrow.

Hopunion has set their flag on doing whatever is possible to meet the evolving needs of the market and the craft brewing world. Zythos is another great example of our desire to help brewers make world class beer.”
Featured hops — Australian/New Zealand

By Scott Bryant
Western Regional Sales Manager, Hopunion

Anyone who enjoys a great beer nowadays can vouch for the extinction of the phrase "just give me a beer." In the past few years, brewing technology, innovative recipes, and the availability of a much wider range of brewing ingredients has led to a new culture and niche of beer enthusiasts. With nearly seven-hundred craft breweries in planning scheduled to open shop next year, it is no secret that there is a huge demand for unique and innovative beers.

As brewers and consumers alike look for ingredients and styles that are new, different, and stand out amongst the sea of traditional beers, it sometimes becomes apparent that the perfect ingredients can't be found domestically and that artisan brewers must take their search abroad. This realization is greatly demonstrated within the usage of hops in beer.

Hops are found in many growing regions including the United States, Germany, France, Belgium, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and even Australia. Unlike the other countries listed, hop varieties from Australia are not as commonly seen and/or used in the US, although they have helped to develop many new styles over the past few decades.

Within the last five years, the boom of IPA's and other hop-forward beers has caused the usage of hops with "citrus" and "floral" characteristics to skyrocket.

By having a 'second harvest' that is the opposite of Germany and the U.S., Hopunion can now provide fresh hops for the entire year

South, New Zealand hop farms are known for delivering high quality, "spray free" hop varieties. These New Zealand varieties have been delivering a "2nd harvest" to brewers worldwide for more than 150 years, and more than ever, are offering enticing aroma characteristics (such as orange marmalade, citrus and a hop "punch") that provide brewers with unprecedented options during every month of the year.

For the 2012 crop, Hopunion will be sourcing a vast array of New Zealand hops to help fill some of the domestic IPA shortages. New aroma varieties will include, New Zealand Cascade, Motueka, Riwaka and Pacifica. We will also feature high alpha varieties such as Green Bullet, Pacific Gem, Pacific Jade, Southern Cross and Super Alpha in addition to the more known dual purpose varieties of Nelson Sauvin and Hallertau Aroma. Together, these varieties will provide brewers with unparalleled brewing options and allow both traditional and hop laden brewing styles to evolve even further than before.

Like New Zealand, Australian hop varieties will be important for the 2012 crop. Used as a hop growing region since the 1800’s, and having a very similar agricultural climate to New Zealand, Australia has developed some varieties found only in their region, while also cultivating variations of a few hop varieties grown in other regions around the world. Some Australian varieties such as Pride of Ringwood (as used in Foster’s), Super Pride and Stella contain a very high alpha acid content and are mainly used for bittering, while others, such as Galaxy, Summer, Southern Hallertau and Southern Sauv are sought after for their distinct aromatic qualities.

Galaxy is one hop that has passed the test among American brewers with flying colors. Gaining its popularity in the U.S. only recently, Australian Galaxy is a low-alpha, dual purpose variety with aroma qualities that combine citrus and passion fruit. Along the same lines, the Australian Summer variety, also known as "Summer Saison," has demonstrated its worthiness through its unique aromatic qualities. Displaying notes of apricot, melon and citrus, Summer is a great variety to satisfy the needs of all the "citrusy and fruity" style hop-heads. Southern Hallertau and Southern Sauv, on the other hand, were cultivated as high-quality alternatives to their Eastern counterparts, with a bit of an Australian spin. Southern Hallertau is a slightly less spiny version of German Hallertau, yet it contains a more prevalent citrus character and a nice mix of floral aromas. Southern Sauv is also a very close substitute to the famous Sazerac cultivar, containing herbal, spicy and resinous notes.

In order to support brewer innovation and help keep the ever-evolving flavor and aroma spectrum flowing throughout the craft industry, Hopunion will be sourcing any available hop varieties from both Australia and New Zealand for the 2012 crop - on. By having a "second harvest" that is the opposite of Germany and the U.S., Hopunion can now provide fresh hops for the entire year.

To find more information on all of our hop varieties, please scan the following code or download the Hop Variety Handbook by visiting the "Hops" page at www.hopunion.com.

Style Matters 3

Base malts will appropriately account for the majority of your recipe, but hints of Bonlander® (Munich) Malt (10º L) or a very small amount of Rye or Light Carahell Malt will add subtle flavor and complexity. If you’re thinking of aging a beer along the lines of a Black Lager or Dark Wheat, Midnight Wheat Malt (550º L) or Blackpint® (500º L) malts are bitterless black malts that will add color but no bitterness, astringent, dry flavors or aftertaste and allow the subtle wood characters to come through.

Medium Toasted Oak:

Sweet vanilla, honey, maple and slight spice notes from the wood pair nicely with the more complex nutty flavors of Victory® Malt and the complex flavors of dark caramel malts such as CL20 and Extra Special. The smoky character of this wood can be emphasized through the addition of small amounts of smoked malt (1%).

Heavy Toast Oak:

These woods will contribute more intense woody to toast flavors to your beer, depending upon how dark they are. Think Bock, Belgian Ale, Oktoberfest or Mild or Old Ale. As is the case when brewing these beers, start with a heaey base malt like Pale Ale or even a blend of Pale Ale and Bonlander® (Munich) Malt which will hold up to the flavor of the wood. Then add smaller amounts of richer flavored specialties like Victory® (Biscuit) Malt, Special Roast Malt, Extra Special Malt, Cararboh® Chocolate or Caracrystal® Wheat Malt.

Wine barrel:

Additional fruit, tannin and mild acidity along with mild oak to strong oak characters come from wine barrel aging. These flavors are best complemented by sweet caramel malts and lighter colored kilned specialty malts like Bonlander®.

Bourbon, Whiskey:

One of the objectives of wood aging is to add flavors from secondary fermentation by acid producing bacteria or yeasts. This technique can be applied on top of or in conjunction with any of the other wood aging techniques and can thus apply to any beer style. In general, though, a sour or Brett beer's acidity can be balanced by the sweet characters of caramel malts. Often times lighter caramel malts are used for this purpose to provide body and a rich, clean sweetness.

Brandy Barrels:

Brandy barrels can impart sweet fruit and plum like characters along with wood character and brandy notes. They pair well with all the flavors from kilned, roasted caramel and specially roasted malts. The subtle flavors may, however, be masked by the heavily flavored dark roasted malts. If choosing a darker beer style use darker, smoother specialty malts like Midnight Wheat or Blackpint®.

See “Style matters 4,” page 8
Beer for Boobs goes big

Beer for Boobs, White Labs’ walking team for the Susan G. Komen 3-day, 60-mile walk, raised over $27,000 in the fight against breast cancer.

The training for and completing the 60-mile walk was hard, but the ladies will not let blisters or sore muscles get in the way of fighting cancer.

The team raised funds by holding pint night events at several breweries and even had a booth at this year’s GABF.

The fundraising continues in early 2012 as the ladies promote their pink beer “Boob Check” at a few San Diego locations.

Beer for Boobs would like to thank their shirt/hoodie sponsors — Hopunion, Green Flash, Ballast Point, Lost Abbey, Pizza Port, Northwestern Mutual, Maui Brewing Company, Briess Malt & Ingredients, & Samuel Adams. Pint glass sponsors: Fredericksburg Brewing Company, Green Flash, Northwestern Mutual, and Sudwerk Brewery. Can cooler sponsors: Coronado Brewing Company, Green Flash, and Brown’s Brewing. Hat sponsor: Digital Media Giant. Also a big shout out to Bootlegger’s Brewery and The Bruery for holding some amazing pint nights and their generous beer donations.

Please contact Lisa White at her email lisa@whitelabs.com if you are interested in becoming a sponsor, want to hold a pint night at your brewery, or would like to have pink beer and the team at your next festival. Help us “Tap the Cure” against cancer. Visit the team at www.beerforboobs.org.

White Labs shorts

Welcome Kenzie!

Kenzie Kuehnle joins White Labs as director of sales and marketing. He has many years of experience in sales and distribution and has worked for companies such as Joint Juice and Coors. More about Kenzie will follow in coming issues of CBQ.

Classes for 2012

Many classes are planned for the new White Labs training facility besides the Yeast Essentials classes profiled on page 1. Other plans include the first wine fermentation training seminar, the third annual distilling workshop, and other courses in beer and fermentation. Check listings at whitelabs.com.

Style Matters 4

From Page 7
darker than our standard Chocolate Malt, but also exceptionally smooth and adds rich, smooth chocolate notes. Black Malt will deliver color without bitter, astringent flavors.

— Briess Malt & Ingredients Co.