



MEDIA RELEASE

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Craft beer industry growth fuelling demand for skilled brewers

Attracting and retaining highly-skilled brewers is the vital next step in continuing the growth trajectory of New Zealand's brewing industry, says the Brewers Guild of New Zealand.

Already a \$2.2 billion industry in this country, growth in the number of professional brewing operations has continued in response increasing thirst for Kiwi beer overseas.

That growth has put the heat on breweries to recruit and retain skilled personnel, said Brewers Guild president Emma McCashin.

"The number of professional brewing operations in New Zealand has almost trebled in the past five years, and beer exports have almost doubled.

"As the industry's growth continues to trend upward, there's definitely a pressing need and demand for more highly-skilled people throughout the value chain, starting with more professional brewers.

"There isn't necessarily a skills shortage currently but there's increasing pressure on breweries to recruit the people they need to grow their operations and meet demand for consistently excellent beer, as well as continuing to innovate and experiment."

ANZ's 2015 industry insight report showed the craft beer business had grown 40 per cent from 2014. Of New Zealand's more than 100 craft breweries, a third were either readying for or already pursuing offshore market opportunities. The thirst for Kiwi craft beer continues to boom in the United States, while demand in Asian markets is tipped to grow 300% in the next decade.

Those New Zealand breweries with export aspirations would need to expand production to take advantage of the opportunities, said Mrs McCashin. The Brewers Guild was currently investigating a number of initiatives aimed at attracting more people to the industry.

"Craft brewing in New Zealand may have started out as a cottage industry but, in the past couple of decades, it's grown into a highly sophisticated and valuable sector.

"To continue that trend and achieve the scale required by the industry, we need to get more highly-skilled people involved. We've already got some of the best brewers in the world making beer here and overseas, but we need even more of them to keep pace with growth.

“That involves finding ways to attract more people from food science, chemistry, microbiology and even engineering backgrounds.”

Given the global interest in beer and brewing, the professional opportunities were impressive, she said.

“Beer is by far the most widely consumed alcoholic beverage in the world and consumer demand for premium beers in particular is growing at a phenomenal rate. With that comes strong demand for skilled New Zealand brewers from breweries all around the world.”

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About the Brewers Guild of New Zealand

The Brewers Guild is a membership-based organisation established to grow the value and quality of New Zealand’s \$2.2 billion beer sector.

The Guild’s mission is to grow the value and quality of the New Zealand beer sector and to act with vision for the future of the New Zealand brewing industry through education, training and communication.

The Guild organises New Zealand’s most prestigious annual beer awards, the Brewers Guild of New Zealand Awards.

For more information visit <http://www.brewersguild.org.nz/>

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