BREWERS GUILD OF NEW ZEALAND

BREWERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND

Brewing
in New Zealand

The brewing industry contributed

$3.58B to New Zealand's GDP

accounting for 0.9% of the total GDP

Beer-related tax revenue amounted to **$1.7B**

with excise and GST making up **52%** of this

Employment impact supports

35,200 JOBS

which is 1.3% of total NZ employment

30% of breweries currently export

with 16% intending to start within two years

Australian markets account for **70%**

of New Zealand beer exports

Over **60%** of breweries engage in tourism, with nearly

80% offering taprooms for unique visitor experiences

85% of brewers engage in

community contributions

Low-carb beers on the rise, growing from **15%** in 2023 to **18%** in 2024 of total beer sales

Overall lagers dominate the market at 64% of total volume

New Zealand Brewing Industry: Driving Growth, Community, and Tourism

The New Zealand brewing industry is a powerhouse of economic activity, community engagement, and tourism integration.

An Economic Force

The industry contributes **NZD 3.58 billion to the country's annual GDP, representing 0.9% of the total national GDP** with **52%** coming from excise duties and GST, highlighting the industry's importance to government revenue. Total employment impact of the brewery industry in 2023 is estimated to support **35,200 jobs**. This equates to **1.3% of total employment in New Zealand**. Approximately one third of the jobs are created to the point where beer is ready to leave the brewer, and two-third are created in the downstream value chain.

$1.7bn of taxes (income, business, GST, excises) are collected by the government each year, based on the GDP impact the beer brewing industry creates in New Zealand. 19% percent ($326 million) is paid by the breweries and all organisations contributing their inputs; a further 29% ($488 million) is paid by the organisations downstream from the breweries. The remaining 52% ($881 million) of revenue is collected through GST and excise duties. This is made up of **$430 million in GST; $385 million of excise on New Zealand produced beer and $66 million of excise imposed on imported beer**.

Regional Production Seeing Growth

Auckland dominates the brewing landscape, contributing **42% of the GDP impact** and **40% of beer-related employment**. The region is home to **88% of beer production**, with large-scale brewers like Lion, DB, and Asahi driving much of this output. Alongside Wellington, Auckland is also a hub for exporting breweries, with **60% of Auckland-based brewers** currently exporting their products. This regional success showcases the industry's ability to drive economic growth and create opportunities across the country.

However, the brewing industry's impact extends far beyond Auckland, with smaller regions playing a crucial role in providing diverse and unique experiences. For example, **Canterbury** and **Wellington** each contribute **12% of beer-related employment**, highlighting their importance as key brewing hubs. In **Waikato**, breweries are thriving, with the region contributing **$263 million** to GDP and supporting over **2,700 jobs**.

Smaller regions are also making their mark. **Otago**, home to some of New Zealand's most iconic craft breweries, contributes **$188 million** to GDP and supports nearly **2,000 jobs**. Meanwhile, **Southern Lakes** and **Bay of Plenty** are emerging as important players, with breweries in these regions engaging in tourism and community initiatives. Over in **Taranaki** the area has seen a surge in brewing activity, with all brewers in the region intending to start exporting within the next two years, showcasing the potential for growth in smaller markets.

Our tastes are changing

As markets mature and economies change, the beer industry often sees changes to popular styles or varieties. The last year has been no different. A continued surge in the popularity of low carbohydrate beers has seen them move to the most popular style. **From 15% in 2023 to 18% of total beer sales in 2024**. This has in part driven the growth of lager beer over other styles which have all seen a slight decline. **With lagers making up 64%** of the entire beer market. In the craft sub segment, we see that **Hazy's** are still strong. With continued growth from **21% – 23% of total craft beer sales from 2023 – 2024**.

Expanding Global Reach

The industry is making waves internationally, with **30% of breweries** currently exporting their products and **16% planning to start within the next two years**. Australia is the largest market, accounting for **70% of New Zealand's beer exports**, reflecting the strong demand for Kiwi beer across the Tasman. Other key export destinations include the Cook Islands, China, and the United States, with most exports concentrated in the Asia-Pacific region due to the proximity and freshness requirements of beer.

Brewers Making a Difference

Community is at the core of the brewing industry, with **85% of brewers** actively engaged in local initiatives. These contributions range from sponsorships and fundraising to charitable donations and community events. This commitment to community engagement highlights the industry's role in supporting local causes and fostering strong community ties.

Breweries and Tourism: A Winning Combination

The industry is also a key player in tourism, with over **60% of breweries** involved in tourism activities. Nearly **80% of breweries** offer taprooms, providing unique experiences that attract both local and international visitors. These taprooms not only serve as a point of sale but also enhance New Zealand's tourism offering by providing a taste of local culture and craftsmanship.

Challenges and Opportunities

While the industry thrives, it faces challenges such as supply chain constraints, particularly with key inputs like barley and CO_2. The closure of the Marsden Point oil refinery has led to a reliance on imported CO_2, increasing production costs. However, the industry continues to innovate, with many breweries capturing CO_2 from the fermentation process and exploring alternative gases like nitrogen. Not only being a solution to a supply problem but a focus on more sustainable activities, which is matched across the board with focus on water use reduction and waste minimisation.

Consumer preferences are also shifting, with a growing demand for low and no-alcohol beers. The volume of low and no-alcohol beer consumed has increased by **750%** since 2019, reflecting changing attitudes toward health and wellness. At the same time, high-alcohol beers (over 5% ABV) more common with craft and premium beers have seen a **15% increase** in popularity, indicating a diverse and evolving market.

Looking Ahead

The New Zealand brewing industry continues to be a vital part of the economy, driving growth, employment, and community engagement while expanding its reach through exports and tourism. With a strong focus on innovation, sustainability, and community, the industry is well-positioned to thrive in the years to come.

Brewing in New Zealand