

Brewing and the environment

Beer in Europe is getting greener. The first ever report on the environmental performance of the European brewing sector shows that Europe's brewers continue to use fewer natural resources and produce less waste.

The report shows that the brewing sector is actively supporting the EU's drive towards sustainable consumption and production and efficiency, thereby meeting the concerns of consumers and policymakers alike.

Brewers rely on high-quality ingredients and will continue to be environmentally responsible by 'reducing, reusing, recycling' as they support the EU 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

“For thousands of years Europe's brewers have relied on the highest quality ingredients of natural origin to brew beer. This report highlights the steps we are taking to protect these important resources, improve our environmental performance and ensure that brewers can continue to produce high quality beers in the many years to come.”

Alberto Da Ponte

President of The Brewers of Europe



The Environmental Performance of the European Brewing Sector

Presenting a May 2012 report



The Brewers of Europe
Rue Caroly 23-25
B-1050 Brussels

T + 32 (0)2 551 18 10
F + 32 (0)2 660 94 02

www.brewersofeurope.org
info@brewersofeurope.org

© Published May 2012



About the report

This report presents the environmental performance of the brewing sector across 30 European countries and is illustrated by several prominent case studies.

It demonstrates the tangible improvements that brewers have continued to make in the last few years across several key areas such as: water, energy and greenhouse gases, secondary products, waste and wastewater, and packaging.

We are proud to launch the report during the European Commission's Green Week 2012, whose theme is water, the key resource for brewing Europe's forty thousand beers.

Europe's brewers will use this as a platform for continued improvements in the sector's work, building a sustainable future for Europe's three and a half thousand breweries, looking after our environment and protecting the important resources that go towards producing the wide range of high-quality beers on offer to Europe's consumers.

The full report can be downloaded at:

<http://www.brewersofeurope.org>

Natural origin

Beer relies on a supply of the highest quality ingredients nature has to offer, including water, which makes up more than 90% of beer.

- 125,000 EU farmers' livelihoods depend on supplying beer's ingredients.
- Europe grows 50% of the world's hops and around 20% of Europe's barley is used for beer.

Efficiency

Brewers continue to make efficiency savings, using significantly less water and energy whilst also making greater use of "green" energies. Just over the period 2008-2010:

- 4.5% less water and 3.8% less energy was used per litre of beer produced.
- CO₂ emissions decreased by 7.1%.

Reduced waste

Packaging is essential to provide safe and fresh delivery of beer to the consumer. Brewers reduce waste by focusing on reusable packaging, recycling, light weighting and increasing the use of recycled materials in newly made packaging.

Wastewater treatment plants have also helped brewers to reduce wastewater by 6.9% just in the period 2008-2010.

Secondary products

Whilst beer is the main product, brewers have a long tradition of looking for the best application of other valuable products from the brewing process.

- An average of over 15kg of brewers' grains per hectolitre of beer produced is used as animal feed.
- Collection of biogas, which can be used in breweries to produce green energy, increased by 7.0% in the period 2008-2010.

Conclusions

Europe's breweries highly depend on the environment for resources, both in terms of quality and quantity.

What the full report, and particularly the case studies, show is that the brewing sector has a very high environmental awareness and beer is getting greener.

Through the investments made in new equipment and the further spread of these best practises, it is also clear that Europe's brewers will continue to improve their performance in the future.