Deschutes Brewery ranks 6th nationally in exploding craft beer segment

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Craft Beer Segment is the One to Watch as Fastest Growing in the Alcohol Beverage Industry; Four Oregon Breweries make Top 50 List

In 2006, while sales of large domestic brewers still lagged behind their 2004 peak, the craft beer segment continued to explode. Scan data from Information Resources Inc. shows craft beer with a 17.8% increase in supermarket sales for 2006--more growth than any other alcohol beverage category in the supermarket sales channel.

Deschutes Brewery ranks 6th in US for the Brewers Association's Top 50 craft brewers - the fastest growing segment in the alcohol beverage industryThe Brewers Association, which tabulates industry growth data, reports that in 2006 77.7% of the craft beer produced was made from the top 50 craft brewing companies. Additionally, 34 out of the top 50 brewing companies in the U.S. meet the Brewers Associationâ€™s definition of a craft brewer.

â€œBeer made by small, independent and traditional breweries is definitely an American success story,â€• states Paul Gatza, Director of the Brewers Association. â€œThereâ€™s a change in lifestyle going on. People are trading up and that is what is creating such strong demand for craft beer.â€•

With just under 1400 small breweries, the segment eclipsed 6.7 million barrels in 2006. The fastest growing craft beer sector in 2006 was microbreweries (those under 15,000 barrels a year). Sales were up 16%, showing customer support for local breweries. Total craft beer industry sales have grown 31.5% over the last 3 years, and early 2007 indicators point toward accelerating sales growth.

â€œIf you Google craft beer youâ€™ll see more press coverage than ever before. This is because beers from craft breweries provide diversity and flavor and thatâ€™s what people want,â€• stated Julia Herz, a spokesperson for the Brewers Association.

Twenty-two states are represented in the top 50 brewing companies list, according to the Brewers Association. California hosts (7) top breweries. Colorado has (5) and Oregon and Wisconsin each host (4) top

producers.

In Oregon, Deschutes Brewery of Bend ranks 6th, Full Sail Brewing of Hood River is 10th, Rogue Ales of Newport comes in 22nd, and McMenamins of Portland is 40th.

The remainder of the top 50 operate from New York (3), Pennsylvania (3), Vermont (3), Washington (3), Illinois (2), Massachusetts (2), Minnesota (2), Missouri (2), Alaska (1) , Louisiana (1), Maine (1), Michigan (1), Montana (1), Ohio (1) and Texas (1). Complete listings of the top 50 craft brewing companies by state and top 50 overall brewing companies are available online.

The definition of craft beer as stated by the Brewers Association: An American craft brewer is small, independent and traditional. Craft beer comes only from a craft brewer. Small = annual production of beer less than 2 million barrels. Beer production is attributed to a brewer according to the rules of alternating proprietorships. Flavored malt beverages are not considered beer for purposes of this definition. Independent = Less than 25% of the craft brewery is owned or controlled (or equivalent economic interest) by an alcoholic beverage industry member who is not themselves a craft brewer. Traditional = A brewer who has either an all malt flagship (the beer which represents the greatest volume among that brewers brands) or has at least 50% of its volume in either all malt beers or in beers which use adjuncts to enhance rather than lighten flavor.

Deschutes Brewery ranks 6th nationally in exploding craft beer segment by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources