



## \*December 2019 Newsletter\*

### ~What are you waiting for?

In just a few short weeks, the New Year's ball will drop and lo, we will be in the doldrums of January and February - otherwise known as the "holiday hangover". What do you put in those fermenters during the hangover?

Now is the time to experiment and brew those ideas you have been mulling over the past six months. Let's work together on a Riverbend grain bill that will inspire your brewers and customers. Imagine that fresh malt aroma drifting up from your mash, lingering in the chilly air of your brewhouse. Imagine the potential of southern grown, handcrafted malts in your grain bill. Give me a call to collaborate and flex those creative muscles. Did I mention that we offer custom floor-malted barley?



### ~2019 Predictions: How did we do?

Back in January, we put together a list of predictions for the year. How accurate was the crystal ball?

- 1) *American Single Malt Whiskey will be formally defined and recognized by the TTB.* A work in progress. The commission has over 120 members and a formal definition has been developed. No approval from the TTB at this point.

- 2) *Hazy IPA will continue to flourish.* Yep. This style is stronger than ever. *But this will be the year of the Lager.* Not quite yet but there are definitely signs that lagers are picking up steam. Many of our brewery customers are making a big push in 2020 for their light lagers.



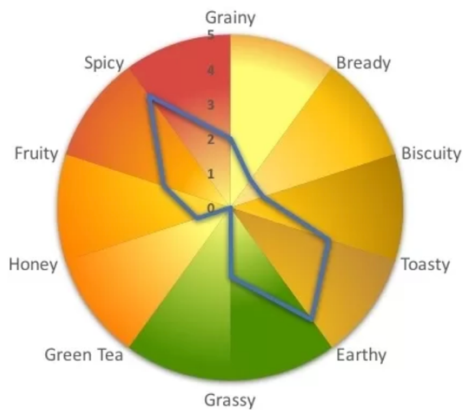
- 3) *The majority of new breweries will opt for an “own premise” model.* Nailed this one. And not only that, even older established breweries are pivoting to this model and growing their business by opening satellite locations.
- 4) *Big Breweries will look to price to maintain volume and distribution.* Yes, this is definitely happening. It is shocking to see more breweries offering \$15.00 15-Packs in stores and \$13.00 12-Packs. Expect to see more of this going forward.
- 5) *2019 will be the year of the craft maltster.* We can't speak for all of the other maltsters out there, but for Riverbend, it was an incredible year. Awareness of craft malt has grown exponentially and adoption is becoming much more widespread, but still not mainstream.
- 6) *Hard Seltzers will be released in earnest this year.* Bingo. I had a conversation with a chain grocery store buyer recently and he said that he is swimming in boozy-water offerings and trying to find room on the shelf. He also said that they are greatly expanding this space to take advantage of category momentum which is coming at the expense of beer and cider shelf space. Here to stay or the Zima of tomorrow? I think it's here to stay.
- 7) *Unicorn imagery on beer labels will hit a saturation point.* The most controversial of my predictions. I would say I nailed this one. For the first time in the past three years, unicorn imagery on beer labels was in single-digit decline. Time will tell if we see a relapse into ironic rainbows and mythical horses.

## ~Ingredient Spotlight: Carolina Rye~

Carolina Rye was one of our first specialty malt projects back in 2012. After the first run we quickly understood why maltsters always grumble about working with this grain. It packed tightly in the steep (think coffee grounds!), matted heavily on the floor, and required more attention to clean. After the first taste, our frustration melted away because we knew we had something special to offer!

We have sourced high-quality Wrens Abruzzi from the same farm in Eagle Springs, NC since this product launched. Abruzzi rye has been in the south since the Civil War and you can trace the roots back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century in Italy. Pretty wild, right?

The kernels are smaller than German or Canada varieties, but the cracked peppercorn notes are more intense and it has a touch of citrus oil in the finish. Over the years, this product has made its way into plenty of RyePA's, whiskeys, and lagers.



Extract FG: 83.7%

Protein: 13.9%

S/T Ratio: 67.8

Alpha Amylase: 49.3

DP: 159

Color: 5.7 SRM



## ~What's Brewing? Featuring Brent Manning~

Back when we first opened, I brewed a lot of “multi-grain” recipes to explore the concept of a 100% local grain bill. These experiments were inspired by beers like Ommegang's Scythe and Sickle, a Belgian style Harvest Ale made with oats, wheat, and rye. The mouthfeel benefited from the oats and wheat as you would expect. The phenolic character of the yeast played well with the spiciness of the rye. Combine these elements with just the right amount of noble hop bitterness and you have a supremely satisfying beer. The sessionable ABV of 5.8% made cemented this one as a “go-to” beer for me while it was available. Check out my take on this long-retired beauty below...

## **Holiday Harvest Ale**

### *Grain Bill:*

*58% Riverbend Southern Select  
10% Riverbend Heritage  
10% Riverbend Hull and Oats  
10% Riverbend Appalachian Wheat  
10% Riverbend Carolina Rye  
2% Carafa II (color adjustment)*

*Mash at 152F for 60 minutes.*

*Target O.G. 1.060*

*Color: 15 SRM*

### *Hop/Spice Schedule:*

*Kent Goldings @ 60 min (~25 IBU)  
Kent Goldings @ 5 min (~5 IBU)*

### *Yeast:*

*WLP575 Belgian-style Ale Yeast Blend  
Ferment @ 72F to encourage development of esters and phenolics.*

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## **~Thanks for a great year~**

2019 marked our first full year of operation at our new facility in south Asheville. We released more new products than ever before including Cumberland Corn Malt, Streaker Malted Naked Oats, Vienna Malt, Base Camp Extra Pale, and Hull & Oats. The response to our custom malt program has been incredible and has allowed us to collaborate more closely with our customers to craft truly unique ingredients for distinctive beers.

We are so thankful to have such loyal supporters. It is your passion that fuels our malt house!





## ~About Riverbend Malt~

Riverbend Malt House, founded in 2010 and headquartered in Asheville, NC, is one of the original craft malting facilities in the US. Utilizing grain sourced from local, family owned farmers, Riverbend malt fuels high quality, unique beverages produced by hundreds of North America's finest craft breweries and distilleries. For a Product Catalog or Pricing, please reach out to [matt@riverbendmalt.com](mailto:matt@riverbendmalt.com). We offer same day shipping on orders received before Noon, Monday – Thursday. Pre-Milling is available for an additional charge and additional lead time.

Cheers!

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