



# Growing the Hop Yard/Brewery Relationship

**Stephanie Jaworski – Old 4<sup>th</sup> Hop Yard**

**Ron Brennan – Old 4<sup>th</sup> Hop Yard**

**Jeff McCauley – Beau's All Natural Brewery**

# **Company Background**

# Old 4<sup>th</sup> Hop Yard



- **Stephanie Jaworski**

*Profession*

- **Tribologist**

- **Ron Brennan**

*Previous Profession*

- **Broadcaster**
- **Computer QA**



- Located in Williamstown, Ontario, halfway between Ottawa and Montreal.
- Established in 2010
- Achieved organic certification in 2013 and have been doubling in size every year.
- 4 acres in production with infrastructure ready for total of 8 acres for the 2016 growing season.
- Currently the largest hop yard in Eastern Ontario and the 2nd largest certified organic hop yard in Canada.

# Beau's All Natural Brewing Company



## Jeff McCauley – Purchasing Manager

- Beau's is located in Vankleek Hill, ON
- Doors opened July 1, 2006
- Co Founded by father and son Tim and Steve Beaudesne
- Local, family run, independently owned
- Award-winning – over 75 awards for brewing, packaging design, and business practices
- 100% certified organic – brewery and beers released
- Growing – over 150 employees; sales in ON, QC, and NY – expanding across Canada in 2016. Beau's is now one of the largest craft breweries in Canada.

# Getting Started

# How Old 4<sup>th</sup> Hop Yard came to be

- Ron laid off from a software company
- First child was born
- How to earn money using our land AND work closer to home
- Limited land so needed a high value crop
- At a Beaus Brewery tour we learned all their hops were imported
- We thought it would be 'Cool'

# Challenges to starting a relationship with a Brewery

- Very little product from young plants or small acreage – hard for the brewery to use
- Format – wet, whole leaf, pelletized - each has disadvantages and advantages
- How to get the brewery's attention
  - they are BUSY!
  - everyone says they want to grow hops for them!
- What varieties to grow – what brewers want versus what grows well
- Supplying a quality product to instil confidence

# How Beau's Sources Hops

- Hops used in many different ways in beer – mainly for aroma and bitterness
- Organic vs Local: Decision to make when we started
- Hops can taste very different depending on where they are grown
- For Beau's: Must be 100% certified organic and in pellet form (other breweries may not have these requirements)
- Decision making factors for purchase: local business?, quality, price, organic certification status, commitment to sustainability, availability (this year and beyond), does flavour profile fit our recipes?



# **Old 4<sup>th</sup> and Beau's: Working Together**

# **Why Old 4<sup>th</sup> chose to be exclusive to Beau's**

- Long term ties to the area – like us
- Our focus from the onset was to supply local.
- They were the closest brewery to us
- Being Certified Organic fit our approach
- Beaus was one of 2 Ontario Craft Breweries with certified organic products (at that time)

# **Why Old 4<sup>th</sup> chose to be exclusive to Beau's (cont'd)**

- Highly regarded and a very successful brewery.
- Reciprocal interest in building a long term relationship
- Allows us to concentrate on growing versus sales and marketing.

# Why did Beau's choose to work with Old 4<sup>th</sup>?

- Local business
- Came to us prepared – knew a lot about Beau's and knew a lot about hops
- Continued education – gained additional expertise – we grew together in hop knowledge
- Quality excellent, competitive pricing, open to changing up varieties where it made sense based on our demand
- Ron and Steph are awesome people! Craft beer has a friendly, family vibe and that is what we get from Old 4th

# Results

# How the relationship has benefited Old 4th

- Old 4th Hop Yard is in a long term relationship with Beau's Brewery
- Can focus on investing and expanding the hop yard with confidence
- Patient with growth expansion
- We don't need to expand at a riskier pace

# How the relationship has benefited Old 4th

- We have an active partner – Beau's is truly interested in what we do
- Has allowed us to become very familiar with brewers needs and plans
- Helps promote and support local industry
- Brewers are encouraged to visit and inspect the farm
- Teamed up with a winning organization from which we can learn

# Benefits of Working With Old 4<sup>th</sup> for Beau's / Results

- Beau's uses over 12,000kg's of organic pellet hops per year. With increased demand in rapidly growing industry, we need all the sources we can get!
- Old 4<sup>th</sup> has set the standard for what we expect out of a local hop partner
- It is a win-win when it comes time for both of us to write grant applications for future expansion – we can both show that we are helping to grow and support local agriculture businesses
- We get great quality local organic hops at a fair price
- PR/Marketing: Great messaging. Customers want to know where the ingredients in their food (beverage) come from



# Benefits of Working With Old 4<sup>th</sup> for Beau's / Results

- Education: Annual trips by our brewing team to the hop farm – learn from Old 4<sup>th</sup>
- The relationship with Old 4<sup>th</sup> has invigorated our entire growing brewery – annual harvest day party is a highlight of the year for us and puts all of our staff in touch with one of our closest suppliers and the local agriculture community
- Traceability – very easy to trace back local sources vs using ingredients from elsewhere
- Supply Contract – very important step for us and ensures supply/stability moving forward

# Challenges / Future

- It is probably more challenging to work with a brewery of our size vs. a start up or small brewery for a hop farmer
- Expanded hop production = ability to highlight specific beer releases featuring local hops
- Experience leads to grower/brewer consultation on what hops are needed / what hops are growing well
- Leverage the relationship: Marketing/Events/PR/Grant Applications
- Leverage Knowledge: We need more growers!

# Thank you!

- Audience Questions