

NABCA

DAILY NEWS UPDATE

Friday, September 24, 2021

www.nabca.org



TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

- WV: New state law means earlier Sunday liquor sales
- AZ: Arizona Gov. Ducey appoints new Liquor Licenses and Control director
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- Rising alcohol use among older adults
- Females in the Field—How Women in the Vineyard Make for Better Wine Business
- Covid supply woes hit alcohol in the US

NABCA NEWS

NEW COVID-19 DASHBOARDS

NABCA continues to work hard to provide members and partners timely updates on state-level policy changes made through governor issued executive orders that impact the regulation of the alcohol supply chain in response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Visit [NABCA's COVID-19 Resource](#) for policy and operational changes related to restaurants, bars, retail, government, industry and public health.

The Collection: An Alcohol Research Summary (formerly Annotated Bibliography)

A comprehensive overview of the latest scientific evidence on important topics related to alcohol policy.

Sharing Solutions E-Newsletter!

A platform for the NABCA community to share successful Implementations and lessons learned about your good work.

ADDITIONAL LINKS

Visit NABCA's website for information on:

- [Control State Agency Information](#)
- [Doing Business in Control States](#)
- [NABCA News](#)

CONTROL STATE NEWS

WV: New state law means earlier Sunday liquor sales

WSAZ

By WSAZ News Staff

September 23, 2021

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (WSAZ) – Starting this Sunday, you'll be able to buy alcohol earlier than usual, according to the West Virginia Alcohol Beverage Control Administration.

The new law, which originated with Senate Bill 2020, technically went into effect Wednesday. It means, though, that you can purchase liquor starting at 6 a.m. on Sundays, beginning this Sunday, in West Virginia.

Restaurants can also include alcohol with delivery orders, provided that food is purchased.

Christmas and Easter Sunday are still an exception to this law.

LICENSE STATE NEWS

CO: Is a new tax hike looming for Colorado breweries?

Denver Business Journal

By Ed Sealover – Senior Reporter, Denver Business Journal

September 23, 2021

Colorado brewers — as well as distillers and vintners — could face increasing excise taxes, as a prominent state senator has questioned whether

the existing low tax rates are covering the cost of enforcement of laws upon the sectors.

The Centennial State has the fourth-lowest excise tax rate for distilled spirits in the United States, according to the Tax Foundation, at \$2.28 per gallon. The same national organization lists it as having the fifth-lowest beer excise tax rate in the country at 8 cents per gallon and the 11th-lowest excise tax rate for wine at 32 cents per gallon.

Sen. Chris Hansen, a Denver Democrat and member of the powerful Joint Budget Committee, said during an Aug. 27 meeting of the Legislative Oversight Committee Concerning Tax Policy that he feels state leaders need to talk more about their “super low” excise tax rates. In a follow-up interview, Hansen specifically pointed to the tax rate on beer and, while not saying that he’s decided that he wants to try to raise it yet, questioned whether revenues even cover the cost of monitoring the industry and performing tasks related to its products such as drunk-driving enforcement.

“My hunch is that alcohol excise taxes do not cover the cost of enforcement,” Hansen said, pointing specifically to the excise tax on beer. “This is not about some massive increase. This is about making sure we have enough for inflation.”

Brewing industry leaders feared that such talk would be a lot more common in 2020, as they expected states to look to hikes in so-called “sin taxes” to make up for massive losses of sales and income tax revenue that hit many parts of the country early in the coronavirus pandemic. Instead, however, the federal government stepped in with multiple rounds of aid, helping to shore up budgets in 2020.

However, there are rumblings that a number of states may be looking once again at raising liquor excise taxes as a revenue source now that much of the federal help already has been dispersed, said Marc Sorini, general counsel for the Boulder-based Brewers Association, during a seminar at the Craft Brewers Conference that was held in Denver from Sept. 9-12.

“That [aid] is going to end, most likely in the next year,” Sorini told a crowd of brewers and brewing-industry representatives. “So, while there haven’t been as many proposed excise tax hikes as of late, I think all of you should be working with your state guilds.”

As part of its stimulus bill passed at the end of 2020, Congress included a provision making permanent a tax break passed in the 2017 Tax Cut and Jobs Act that reduced the federal excise tax from \$7 to \$3.50 on the first 60,000 barrels of beer produced by breweries making less than 2 million barrels per year and then from \$18 to \$16 on each barrel thereafter. BA President/CEO Bob Pease estimated at the CBC that will save the national craft beer industry \$84 million a year, and previous industry estimates pegged the break at \$3.5 million specifically for Colorado breweries.

Were the Colorado Legislature to seek a state excise tax hike, Hansen said he believes it can be done without asking voters, if the tax is reclassified as a fee and the revenues are tied directly to programs around the brewing industry or other liquors whose taxes are targeted.

However, it’s unclear when Hansen or others might seek to raise the issue of a potential excise tax hike, as it was not included among 10 bills the tax policy committee asked to draw up for consideration of full committee sponsorship earlier on Sept. 14 (though the bill does not have to come through the committee). The only liquor-industry bill committee members are considering right now is a measure, being pushed by Democratic Sen. Chris Kolker of Centennial, that would allow individuals who bring wine or other liquor back from overseas to not have to register it with the state of Colorado and be taxed on it.

Breweries continue to recover from a tough 2020 brought about by the coronavirus. National production of craft beer, a \$3 billion annual industry in Colorado, fell for the first time ever — by 9.2% — due primarily to months-long closings of many taprooms, restaurants and bars.

CT: New CT Law: Surcharge On Little Bottles of Alcohol Hits Oct. 1

That little “nip” will cost you a nickel more under a new law meant to incentivize towns to manage their solid waste better

Patch.com

By Rich Kirby, Patch Staff

September 23, 2021

CONNECTICUT — A five-cent surcharge on miniature alcohol bottles goes into effect in Connecticut October. 1.

The extra fee for "nips" is a provision of broader waste management legislation, passed earlier this year.

The new law requires liquor wholesalers to assess a five-cent surcharge on miniature alcohol bottles to retailers, and, in turn, consumers. The fees will be collected in a separate account, and sent back to the municipalities in which the transactions occurred.

State legislators intend for the towns to put the extra funds back to work for the environment, specially solid waste management. Such measures can include the hiring of a recycling coordinator; the installation of storm drain filters designed to block solid waste and beverage container debris; or the purchase of a mechanical street sweeper, vacuum or broom that removes litter, including such beverage containers and other debris from streets, sidewalks and abutting lawn and turf areas.

Unlike some other drink containers like bottled water or beer, the surcharge on miniature alcohol bottles does not return directly back to the consumer in the form of a bottle deposit.

Twice a year, beginning in April 2022, wholesalers will remit their payment to every municipality where any such beverage container was sold during the preceding six-month period.

AZ: Arizona Gov. Ducey appoints new Liquor Licenses and Control director

KTAR.COM

September 23, 2021

PHOENIX — Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey announced Thursday a new director for the state's Department of Liquor Licenses and Control.

Tracy Uffelman replaces John Cocca, who resigned from his post in April. Arizona Department of Public Safety Director Col. Heston Silbert has been serving as the interim director.

The resignations of both Cocca and the deputy director of the department were allegedly linked to an undercover operation at a Valley strip club in which a detective was charged with a sex crime, according to an investigation by ABC15.

Uffelman brings more than 50 years of experience to the role, according to a press release.

"His wide range of experience will serve Arizona well, especially as we implement to-go liquor services across the state," Ducey said in the release.

"I am delighted to appoint Tracy as director, and look forward to working with him to best serve our businesses and constituents."

Uffelman held numerous positions working at Alliance Beverage from 1990 to 2013, including general manager, director of sales, hotels and resorts as well as vice president of legislative and community relations, according to the release.

Prior to that, he was the western regional manager for William Grant and Sons from 1991 to 2001, a family-owned company that sells whisky and other spirits to almost 200 markets.

"It is an honor to serve the state of Arizona as director of the Department of Liquor, and I am grateful to Governor Ducey for appointing me to this role," Uffelman said in the release.

"Our team will work hard to foster economic growth, expand opportunities for businesses of all sizes and Arizonans, and protect public safety."

Uffelman became a partner of TBK Partnership LLC. after his time with Alliance Beverage, according to the release.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

United Kingdom: Study: Wine is only alcoholic drink with health benefits — and it may just be the grapes

KTVU

By Kelly Hayes

September 23, 2021

New research out of the United Kingdom seems to suggest that wine is the only alcoholic drink that can be beneficial for health — and it may only be due to the powerful antioxidants found in grapes.

Some studies have suggested that low-to-moderate amounts of alcohol can actually decrease the risk of mortality and cardiovascular disease. But the team behind the new research says such studies have been "riddled with errors."

A team at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge, England, aimed to look at different alcoholic drinks, like beer, cider, champagne, white and red wine and spirits, and various health outcomes among those who consumed.

The team, lead by Dr. Rudolph Schutte, analyzed data of more than 500,000 people in the U.K. over a seven-year period.

They found that low-level consumption of beer, cider and spirits was associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular events, coronary heart disease, stroke, cancer, and overall mortality.

The only health benefit that Schutte's team discovered was a decreased risk of coronary heart disease through the consumption of wine. But Schutte believes the benefits obtained from wine and champagne are actually thanks to polyphenols, which are antioxidants found naturally in the grapes, and not necessarily through the alcohol itself.

A similar finding was also observed in alcohol-free wine, the researchers said.

"There is an undeniable protective beneficial relationship between coronary heart disease and consumption of both red and white wine. However, this is only seen with coronary heart disease and none of the other cardiovascular diseases," Schutte said in a statement.

"This relationship is also seen for alcohol-free wine, so it suggests the benefits are thanks to the polyphenols in the wine rather than the alcohol. Researchers commonly use coronary heart disease as a standard measure for health and this is one of the reasons we see so many studies claiming the health benefits of 'alcohol,'" he continued.

The study was published in the journal "Clinical Nutrition" and the findings were also presented on Sept. 8 at the British Science Festival in Chelmsford, England.

Previous studies into alcohol and health "have identified a J-shaped curve, indicating that low levels of alcohol consumption can be beneficial," the research team said. But Schutte's team believes these studies are incorrectly making comparisons with non-drinkers — who may be choosing to avoid alcohol because they already have health issues.

"Our findings do not support the notion that alcohol from any drink type is beneficial to health," the study concludes. "Consuming low levels of beer/cider and spirits already associated with an increased risk for all health outcomes, while wine showed opposite protective relationships only with ischemic heart disease."

The research comes amid warnings from health officials about increased alcohol consumption during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Americans drink more alcohol now than they did 100 years ago

Drinking in America is not only on the rise, but at a higher level now than when the substance was banned a century ago.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that adults who choose to drink do so in moderation, determined to be one drink or less on a day for women or two drinks or less for men.

However, there is strong scientific evidence that even drinking within these recommended limits may increase the overall risk of certain cancers and some forms of cardiovascular disease, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

New Zealand: Alcohol And Pregnancy Don't Mix

Press Release

MidCentral District Health Board

September 24, 2021

MidCentral DHB is reminding women, partners, friends and whānau of the harmful impact that alcohol can have on unborn babies during pregnancy.

September, the ninth month of the year, is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder awareness month.

Martin Macmaster, Health Promoter at MidCentral DHB's Public Health Service, said babies exposed to alcohol before birth could encounter a range of problems, such as low birth weight, heart defects and behavioural and intellectual disabilities.

About 1800 births in New Zealand are affected by alcohol each year, Macmaster said.

"Because alcohol passes freely through the placenta, it is at the same concentration as the

mother's blood, but the fetus cannot process alcohol in the same way.

"A safe level of alcohol consumption during pregnancy has not been established, nor any safe time to drink while pregnant."

Twenty three per cent of woman reported drinking during their first trimester and 13 per cent continued drinking after the first three months.

"All of us – partners, whānau, friends and health professionals – can support women to be alcohol-free during pregnancy to give babies their best shot at healthy, happy lives.

"We can discourage alcohol at home or events – join in going dry and ensure there are non-alcoholic alternatives and no pressure to drink.

"Alcohol is one drink a baby doesn't need and we all want babies to be the best they can be."

Canada: NB Liquor, Cannabis NB Appoint New President And CEO

91.9 The Bend

By Tim Herd, Moncton, NB, Canada

September 23, 2021

NB Liquor (ANBL) and Cannabis NB (CNB) have a new president and CEO.

The board of directors appointed Lori Stickles to the role.

A statement from ANBL read, "Lori is an accomplished Executive Leader with extensive, proven strategic and financial leadership experience. She is a trusted business advisor who fosters corporate improvement, organizational change, and positive workplace culture through a personable and collaborative leadership style. Lori was also very instrumental in the success of Cannabis NB last year."

The statement added, "She has led by example and her areas of expertise, including strategic leadership, effective communication, financial management, enterprise risk management, driving results, as well as working through COVID-19 and managing the TEAM through the pandemic have been readily apparent."

Stickles joined ANBL/CNB in 2018 as the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer.

Europe: Public health monitoring of cannabis use in Europe: prevalence of use, cannabis potency, and treatment rates

The Lancet Regional Health (Europe)

Jakob Manthey, Tom P Freeman, Carolin Kilian,

Hugo López-Pelayo, Jürgen Rehm

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ABSTRACT

Background

Cannabis is one of the most widely used substances worldwide. Heavy use is associated with an increased risk of cannabis use disorders, psychotic disorders, acute cognitive impairment, traffic injuries, respiratory problems, worse pregnancy outcomes, and there are indications for genotoxic and epigenotoxic adverse effects. International regulation of medical and non-medical cannabis use is changing rapidly and substantially, highlighting the importance of robust public health monitoring. This study aimed to describe the trends of key public health indicators in European Union (27 member states + UK, Norway and Turkey) for the period 2010 to 2019, their public health implications, and to identify the steps required to improve current practice in monitoring of cannabis use and harm in Europe.

Methods

Data on four key cannabis indicators (prevalence of use, prevalence of cannabis use disorder [CUD], treatment rates, and potency of cannabis products) in Europe were extracted from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction and the Global Burden of Disease study. For prevalence of use and CUD, the first and last available estimate in each country were compared. For treatment rates and cannabis potency, linear regression models were conducted.

Findings

Between 2010 and 2019, past-month prevalence of cannabis use increased by 27% in European adults (from 3.1 to 3.9%), with most pronounced relative increases observed among 35-64 year-olds. In 13 out of 26 countries, over 20% of all past-month users reported high-risk use patterns. The

rate of treatment entry for cannabis problems per 100,000 adults increased from 27.0 (95% CI: 17.2 to 36.8) to 35.1 (95% CI: 23.6 to 46.7) and has mostly plateaued since 2015. Modest increases in potency were found in herbal cannabis (from 6.9% to 10.6% THC) while median THC values tripled in cannabis resin (from 7.6% to 24.1% THC).

Interpretation

In the past decade, cannabis use, treatment rates and potency levels have increased in Europe highlighting major concerns about the public health impact of cannabis use. Continued monitoring and efforts to improve data quality and reporting, including indicators of high-risk use and cannabis-attributable harm, will be necessary to evaluate the health impact of international changes in cannabis regulation.

Funding

This study received no specific funding.

PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

Rising alcohol use among older adults

Harvard Health Publishing
By Dawn Sugarman, PhD, Contributor, and Shelly Greenfield, MD, MPH, Contributor
September 24, 2021

As the baby boomer generation moves into retirement age, it is expected that by the year 2034, older adults (ages 65 and up) will outnumber children in the United States for the first time in history. As the population ages, demand for healthcare will increase, and rising rates of alcohol use in older adults may create additional challenges to an already burdened healthcare system.

Trends in alcohol use in older adults

Alcohol use in older adults has been trending upward over the years, particularly among women. One epidemiologic survey determined that in the United States between 2001 and 2013, among people 65 and older, the rate of alcohol use disorder increased 107%. The University of Michigan's 2021 National Poll on Healthy Aging found that although the majority of older adults surveyed were drinking alcohol at low to moderate levels, there was a subset of older adults exceeding the recommended guidelines for alcohol use. In particular, 20% of

respondents drank alcohol four or more times per week; 27% reported having six or more drinks on at least one occasion in the past year; and 7% reported alcohol-related blackouts.

Negative effects of alcohol use in older adults

Drinking too much alcohol can have negative physical and mental health consequences, including heart and liver problems, memory issues, mood disorders, as well as an increased risk of cancer and a weakened immune system. In addition, age-related changes in the body place older adults who drink alcohol at additional risk. Older adults have increased sensitivity to the effects of alcohol because they typically metabolize alcohol more slowly. Lean body mass also declines with age, and with less muscle to absorb alcohol, older adults feel the effects of alcohol more quickly, even with consumption of lower amounts of alcohol than when they were younger. Older women are at higher risk of these effects compared with older men. Combined with other physical changes in the body due to age, older adults who drink alcohol are susceptible to falls, bone fractures, and other unintentional injuries. Given that many older adults are taking multiple prescription medications, another important concern for this age group is the dangerous and sometimes fatal consequence of mixing medications with alcohol.

Older adults' alcohol use and the COVID-19 pandemic

When you establish a charitable gift annuity to benefit HMS, your gift will provide you and/or a loved one with a fixed income for life while supporting our mission to improve health and well-being for all.

Emerging evidence indicates that individuals in the United States and globally are increasing their alcohol use in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Research that has examined older adults' alcohol use during the early phases of the pandemic has generally found that compared to younger adults, older adults report smaller increases in alcohol use. However, a national survey study and a study of social media users both found that older adults reporting depression and anxiety symptoms during the pandemic were more likely to increase their alcohol use than those without these symptoms.

Tips and resources for older adults

- If you drink alcohol, follow the 2020–2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans: men should consume no more than two standard drinks in a day, and women should consume no more than one standard drink in a day. A standard drink is defined as having 14 grams of alcohol, which is generally contained in 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of spirits. These dietary guidelines are for those without any other contraindications; individuals who are taking medications that interact with alcohol, or those who are managing a medical or mental health condition that can be made worse by drinking, should avoid drinking alcohol entirely.
- If you have depression, anxiety, or another mental health condition, consider not drinking alcohol, as it can worsen these symptoms. Similarly, if you have problems with sleep you should avoid alcohol, as it can disrupt sleep.
- If you would like to learn more about your own drinking, visit the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism's (NIAAA) Rethinking Drinking site.
- To learn out more about treatment options for alcohol use disorder, visit NIAAA's Treatment Navigator Website.
- Avoid social isolation. If physical distancing is necessary due to COVID-19 safety precautions, reach out to friends and family via phone, video, or in outdoor settings.
- If you are feeling overwhelmed by depression, anxiety, or loneliness, seek professional help.
- For a list of additional healthy aging resources, visit the US Department of Health and Human Services website.

INDUSTRY NEWS

Females in the Field—How Women in the Vineyard Make for Better Wine Business

Wine Industry Advisor
By Editor
September 23, 2021

A lot of ink has been spilled—with good reason—on the dearth of women in positions of power at wineries.

Despite numerous studies asserting that women are better tasters of wine than men, they have a long way to go before they'll be able to make, distribute, or sell wine at the same rate men do.

According to a study conducted by Wonder Women of Wine and the Wine Nerd, it may take more than a decade; according to Women Winemakers, of the 4,200 bonded wineries in California, just 14 percent reported having a woman as their lead winemaker in 2020.

It's a real problem, and one that is getting more and more attention. What is still flying under the radar, however, is the lack of females in the field; or if they do make it onto a picking crew, it's typically a one-and-done situation with no room for growth on the other side of harvest.

"When I started the hiring process to bring on a new cellar master, I interviewed men and women," says William Allen, winemaker at Sonoma's Two Shepherds Winery, which produces about 3,500 cases of wine annually. "I was shocked by some of the stories I heard from women. Many of the women I interviewed had graduated from enology programs and gone onto work harvests at well-known wineries. But when harvest was over, they found there wasn't a job for them. Or if there was, it was an offer that would have pushed them into the lab, or the tasting room."

For Allen, that transformed his hiring plan. "I decided to focus on bringing in women across the board at the winery," he says. "I have them working in the cellar and the harvest, and honestly, it has been a great experience for everyone. In addition to having great palates, many of the women I work with have better attention to detail, which is key at harvest time."

Women at Every Level

It's unclear whether, like Allen, Rob Astrin was making what he considered to be an ethically sound and politically progressive business decision when packing Adelsheim Vineyard with women. But the fact is, that's where things stand, and he says he's thrilled "by the amazing team of women," including winemaker Gina Hennen and vineyard manager Kelli Gregory, along with her assistant, Danielle Zarro at the Willamette Valley winery.

For Gregory, 35, the issue of gender is a nonstarter.

“It’s so interesting, but I was just following my passion for plants, science, and soil, and the wine industry clicked for me,” she says. “I had no idea what a male-dominated industry it was. In graduate school and when I first started out, I was surrounded by women who are legends in the industry, including Leigh Bartholomew and Patty Skinkis.”

But while Gregory was (blissfully) unaware enough to aggressively pursue her dreams without worrying if she’d be taken seriously, she acknowledges how she has occasionally been received in the field.

“Working with and overseeing a crew of 10 men alongside Danielle has been an eye-opener,” she says. “I will say that, culturally speaking, many of the people I work with are not used to having a female boss, and someone who’s younger than them. But I find that if they are treated with respect (because they have deep knowledge and experience and should be) you can earn their respect.”

Workers aren’t the only ones who push back either, she says: Other vineyard managers she works with on non-estate vineyards were initially dubious.

“But once people see how you work, and your results, those doubts dissipate,” she says. “As far as I know, Danielle and I are the only female manager and assistant manager team in Oregon. But I’m seeing more female vineyard managers and women working in the fields every season.”

Like Gregory, Renee Graves, whose official title at Ketcham Estate is “director of happiness,” is baffled by the dearth of women in wine in general, especially in the field.

“We have a team of women making the wine, in the cellar and in the vineyard,” Graves says. “I have never understood why there aren’t more women in the field. We work with John Grace in Healdsburg who helps us with seasonal harvest workers, and he has mostly ladies on his crew. They come in with this amazing attention to detail, tying vines to wires after pruning with such precision. During picking time, a lot of the women focus on picking leaves out of bins, and their smaller hands make faster work of it.”

Seeing Is Believing

At Fabboli Cellars in Leesburg, VA, with 30 acres under vine and about 7,000 cases in annual production, co-owner Doug Fabboli says he cut his

teeth on winemaking in California working for women.

“That definitely clued me in to what an asset women can be in the vineyard and the cellar,” Fabboli says. “My current vineyard manager, Celia, is phenomenal. Her brother was our manager for years, but he had to go back to Mexico. She came on and you could tell that the crew had doubts, but she had the field skills, and, more importantly, the leadership skills, to overcome them. Now, we have mostly women, seven women and one guy year-round. She is so detail oriented, and you need that with dropping fruit, pruning and leaf pulling. Sure, there’s a lot of heavy work in the vineyard, but I find the women are fully capable of handling it.”

Another Virginia vintner, who prefers not to be identified to protect the identity of his crew members, says any doubts and biases he had were overturned quickly when he saw what his female team members could do.

“We have the team working on our estate vineyard, but we are also part of a cooperative union of growers and we share the team,” he says. “There was definitely a lot of doubt in the beginning, but we all agree that the lead woman we have is an enormous asset, and is often the fastest and the best on the entire team. Her work ethic is an understatement, and she has incredible loyalty and pride in craftsmanship.”

There will always be a place for men in the field. They bring their own set of skill sets, strengths, and experiences. But by bringing more women into the vineyard, our industry is expanding that breadth of talent and innovation for the betterment of the vines, the wines and wine business.

Three craft beer industry trends heading into 2022

Craft Brewing Business
By Jim McCune
September 23, 2021

More than 7,000 beer-loving folks from all around the globe, descended on the Mile High City of Denver, Colorado this month, for the Craft Brewers Conference (CBC). While the CBC typically enjoys more than double this year’s attendance, it’s understandable with Covid-19 concerns, this year’s

budgetary limitations, and traveler concerns, regarding Covid variants, vaccination cards, and required masks – many had to choose to sit this event out.

For myself and my team, our excitement to travel and see clients and friends outweighed any apprehension. And just like that, our 2-year travel hiatus was broken as we left New York for our tenth consecutive CBC. While there, we got to speak with a lot of breweries (socially distanced, of course), and here are our top three takeaways:

1. Year of the Brand Refresh

The pandemic forced breweries to pivot or perish. The quarantine provided much-needed downtime for brewers to examine their current branding, messaging, design, and positioning. Many breweries are discovering it's a good time to redefine their core brand, and bring their marketing, sales and packaging into better alignment with their post-Covid strategic goals.

The sheer volume of 8,700+ breweries operating in the USA creates an incredible level of competition, and with 1,200 more breweries "in planning", the demand is ever-increasing. The competition is not only mounting from within the beer industry either, but also the massive surge of new alcoholic canned beverages. Hard seltzer, tea, soda, cider, spritzers, wine, THC, and ready-to-drink cocktails are providing an overwhelming amount of choice to the consumer, sub-dividing tastes and creating new preferences, all of which means marketing individual brands is more difficult than ever.

To overcome these marketing hurdles, breweries need to experiment with new marketing channels and new content in order to break through the incredibly dense clutter facing consumers in the adult beverage space today.

2. Contactless technology is here to stay

The post-pandemic era pushed breweries to accommodate shifting in-person consumer behavior with critical new needs like adding outdoor seating, controlling indoor seating limits, ordering food and drink online, and providing contactless payment.

Breweries had to become tech-savvy quickly by adapting their websites and taprooms with new hospitality technologies to meet ever-changing local

and state ordinances, and to make their customers feel safe, comfortable, and enjoy their visit.

Everything from specially designed point-of-sale software to smart kegs, to NFC business cards are now being employed. Brewery technology, and the important data it yields, has become critical to informed brewery navigation, and growth.

Marketers need to embrace the new on-premises dynamics and show in their materials the ways these new technologies and processes are helping make the customer experience faster, safer, and better.

3. Direct-To-Consumer (DTC) is here, but staying power unclear

Convenience is still one of the most important consumer factors for purchase, but delivering beer in America since Prohibition is still tricky with a very strict Three Tier legal system.

Over the past few years, the DTC space for online sales and delivery for alcohol was already growing. Companies like Drizly and Tavour who hold specialized alcohol distribution licenses were able to aggregate beers from breweries across the country and move these beers across state lines directly to online buyers who ordinarily would not have access to them.

However, since the pandemic, many states have temporarily lifted restrictions on a brewery's ability to ship beer directly to their consumer. This has allowed breweries to take online orders that can be picked up "curbside" at the brewery or delivered directly to the customer locally.

Marketers need to incorporate DTC as a larger component of their marketing activity, but one that is flexible as the long-term legislature on Direct-To-Consumer is blurry and could expire.

DAILY NEWS

Covid supply woes hit alcohol in the US

Medical Xpress
September 24, 2021

First it was computer chips, and now spirits: Global supply chain woes are shaping up as the party pooper in some parts of the United States.

In Pennsylvania, authorities have limited the sale of certain brands to two bottles per person per day since September 17, due to persistent disruptions in the supply chain and a shortage of products, the state alcohol commission said.

The limits apply to stores selling alcoholic beverages, as well as bars and restaurants in states like Pennsylvania, which have a monopoly on the sale of some types of alcohol.

"We regularly impose bottle limits on products for which we know demand will exceed supply in order to distribute the product as fairly as possible," said Shawn Kelly, press secretary for the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board.

On the list of 43 products with sales limits are brands of bourbon, whiskey, champagne, cognac and tequila.

According to US media, several states such as Vermont, Ohio, New Jersey and Alabama are experiencing difficulties, some since July, while several studies have shown an increase in alcohol consumption since the beginning of the pandemic.

Mac Gipson, the Alabama Alcoholic Beverage Control administrator, said that the problem was "partly a global supply chain issue," with shortages of glass in some places and bottle caps in others.

American producers were also facing labor shortages, delivery problems and increased demand from restaurants and bars that were reopening at the same time after the end of restrictions caused by the pandemic.

There have also been problems with transatlantic transport and disembarkation at US ports.

"It is not a shortage of alcohol but of (some) brands," said Wendy Knight, deputy commissioner of the Vermont Department of Liquor and Lottery.

"For example, even though we are out of Bacardi (a light Rum) we still have 21 other rum offerings, including products from local distillers," she said.

The American Alcohol-Free Spirits Association (AAFSA) Facilitates International Non-Alcoholic Spirits Producers to Sell in the United States (excerpt)

Yahoo! Finance
Newsfile Corp.
September 23, 2021

First in the industry to cater exclusively to alcohol-free spirits industry members and assist foreign producers interested in selling their non-alcoholic spirits in the United States.

Melbourne, Florida--(Newsfile Corp. - September 23, 2021) - As the first non-alcoholic spirits-focused organization, AAFSA is on a mission to make Americans healthy and happy. Its primary goal is to smoothly introduce an extensive selection of non-alcoholic spirits from around the world in the American markets.

AAFSA offers a simplified solution to all foreign non-alcoholic spirits producers to offer their products for sale in the American markets. An opportunity to expand and present their unique products to a growing health-conscious positive culture conveniently and profitably.

While the demand for alcohol-free spirits in the United States grows driven by health trends, a potential market demand arises for various quality alcohol-free spirits. To enter the United States Market, one must comply with the high-quality standards set by the American Food and Drug Administration (FDA). These quality standards ensure only the best products enter the U.S. markets.

AAFSA-The American Alcohol Free Spirits Association will guide international beverages companies through the entire FDA registration process, and with the product labeling in accordance with US Legislation to enter the US Market.

According to the Food and Drug Administration

- Food Imported must meet the same laws and regulations as the food produced in the United States.
- It must be safe and contain no prohibited ingredients.
- Labeling and packaging must be informative and truthful.
- Labeling information in English or Spanish in Puerto Rico.

- All Imported food is to be considered interstate commerce.

AAFSA can help meet these requirements and provide support and guidance through a community of professionals dedicated to alcohol-free spirits.

Alcohol-free spirits producers, brand owners, suppliers, and retailers from all over the world are all welcome to join.

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