

December 15, 2014

**MANITOBA GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES
CRAFT BREWERIES STRATEGY**

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**Tap Rooms on Horizon
For Manitoba: Minister Lemieux**

Building on the introduction of growler bars this fall, the Manitoba government is launching a co-ordinated strategy to develop and boost Manitoba's home-grown brewing industry, and create local jobs and opportunities in the agriculture, hospitality and tourism industries, Tourism, Culture, Heritage, Sport and Consumer Protection Minister Ron Lemieux announced today.

"It's no surprise that growlers filled with local craft beer are proving to be a big success," said Minister Lemieux. "Our producers grow all the ingredients for great beer and we know that beer tastes best when it's fresh so it only makes sense to encourage more brewing right here in Manitoba."

The first step of the Craft Breweries Strategy has been to establish an advisory committee that includes existing Manitoba brewers as well as representatives of the local hospitality industry, the minister said, adding the committee will help to identify obstacles and explore new opportunities for Manitoba-based craft brewing.

Input from an industry advisory committee will aid in developing policy and other supports to encourage growth, he said. Manitoba government departments and agencies, including Manitoba Jobs and the Economy, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives and Manitoba Tourism, Culture, Heritage, Sport and Consumer Protection, will partner with both the Liquor and Gaming Authority and Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries to identify and improve the current climate for craft brewing in Manitoba.

Minister Lemieux said one of the first items that will be referred to the advisory committee for review is the licensing of tap rooms that allow customers to enjoy their favourite craft beer on-site at the brewery. Tap rooms have become standard practice in many craft breweries and providing this service option may serve to entice more craft breweries to establish themselves in Manitoba and encourage enthusiasts to visit their local brewery to try their product, the minister said.

"To help kick start our craft breweries strategy, the Liquor and Gaming Authority of Manitoba will be looking at authorizing local brewers to set up on-site tap rooms so their customers can enjoy craft beers just steps from where it's made," said Mineral Resources Minister Dave Chomiak, minister responsible for liquor and gaming regulations.

“Tap rooms have great potential to attract visitors to our province,” said Minister Lemieux. “These facilities will further enhance our continued success of building our tourism infrastructure right here in Manitoba, where ‘Canada’s Heart Beats’.”

Craft brewing is a labour-intensive industry requiring skilled tradespeople to operate and maintain equipment and facilities. Spinoff economic development from craft beer is significant with opportunities for expansion in the agriculture, food-processing and hospitality industries. Job creation in the craft beer industry will be supported by Manitoba’s many skill-building initiatives, Minister Lemieux said.

“Half Pints appreciates having our voice included as we continue to shape the future of craft brewing in Manitoba,” said Dave Rudge, president and brewmaster, Half Pints Brewing Company. “Nothing would please us more than seeing local breweries opening up across the province, creating careers, fostering tourism and taking advantage of the change we will be a part of on this committee.”

“There has never been a better time to move forward with a provincial craft brewing strategy,” said Orest Horechko, general manager, Fort Garry Brewing Company. “Interest in locally made, fresh beer has never been higher and growing this industry benefits all Manitobans in more ways than just enjoying a great-tasting beer.”

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ATTACHED

MANITOBA CRAFT BREWERIES STRATEGY INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Robert Holmberg, vice-president, liquor operations, Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries, and chair, Craft Brewery Industry Advisory Committee
- Jim Baker, president and CEO, Manitoba Hotel Association
- Noel Bernier, president and CEO, FB Hospitality
- Bill Gould, president, WETT Sales and Distribution Inc.
- Orest Horechko, general manager, Fort Garry Brewing Co.
- Scott Jocelyn, executive director, Manitoba Restaurant and Foodservices Association
- Dwayne Marling, vice-president, Manitoba–Saskatchewan, Restaurants Canada
- David Rudge, brewmaster and president, Half Pints Brewing Company
- Darren R. Wanless, president, Wanless Geo-Point Solutions Inc.
- Lawrence Warwaruk, owner, Farmery Estate Brewery
- Kerry Wolfe, senior executive director, strategic gaming and liquor development, Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries