

BLACK MARKET BREWS

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An introductory guide
to
home brewing for fun and profit

by **Kevin Dean**
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CONTENTS

I. What is Homebrewing

- A. Ale and Lager
- B. Wine/Cider
- C. Mead
- D. Liquor

II. Why is homebrewing important to Agorists?

- A. Corporate protectionism
- B. Taxation
- C. Age Discrimination
- D. Savings
- E. Variety
- F. Trade commodity

III. “The Very Basics”

- A. Equipment
- B. A simple recipe
- C. Patience!

IV. Where to go from here.

- A. Books
- B. Internet Forua
- C. Homebrew Clubs
- D. Social Networks



I. What is Homebrewing?

Brewing is a tradition that stems back thousands of years. Some anthropologists suggest that it was beer, and not bread, that led to the birth of agriculture.

Homebrewing is the art and hobby of creating alcoholic beverages at home. Alcohol is produced by fermentation, or the chemical break down of sugars by yeasts and bacteria. More commonly, the term homebrewing means “beer brewing” but most homebrewers today branch out and brew several or all of the possible beverages at home.

A. The first type of brews are ales and lagers. Ales and lagers are both beers, consisting of malted barley or wheat, yeast, water and the ripened buds of a plant called hops, a genetic cousin of cannabis. The malted barley provides flavor and sugars needed for the yeast to consume and produce alcohol. Water is added to extract these sugars as well as dissolve acids in the hops to provide the bitter flavor. Hops also act as a mild preservative, suppressing bacteria growth and preventing spoilage.

B. Secondly, we have wines and ciders. In wines and ciders, a fruit juice is used as the base of the beverage, and no hops are used. Modern homebrewers may use store-bought juices or grow and collect juice from their own freshly grown and pressed fruit.

C. Mead is the third type of beverage commonly produced by homebrewers today. Mead is a beverage that consists of water, honey and yeast. Sometimes flavors (such as fruit) are added and this beverage is called a “melomel”.

D. The fourth and final type of homebrewing is the production of spirits or liquors. The information and community around home distillation is significantly smaller than the beer-based homebrew community. The main reason for this is that home distillation is forbidden by every nation state except New Zealand. Distilling involves removing water and other impurities from fermented beverage to produce a much higher alcohol content.

II. Why is homebrewing important to Agorists?

Homebrewing is important to agorists and other advocates of liberty for a multitude of reasons in addition to the reasons typically motivating people to brew their own.

A. In most Western countries, the production of alcohol is heavily regulated by people within various governments. The professed reason for this is almost always “consumer safety”, but in reality it allows revenue departments to more accurately track production for taxation purposes. The New Hampshire Governor John Lynch cites “prevention of underage drinking [...] and greater awareness about the dangers of alcohol abuse” in the NH Liquor Commission’s fiscal report for 2008 (Source: www.nh.gov/liquor/2008annualreport.pdf). Additionally, established alcohol production and distribution companies use their favored position with the state to drive out competition and create barriers to entry within the industry.

B. Governments around the world tax alcohol and alcohol is usually among one of the most heavily taxed items produced, sold and exchanged. Some governments themselves have a monopoly on the sale of alcohol, further adding to the possible revenue generated by the control and sale of alcoholic beverages. As counter-economic activists, agorist homebrewers may find that depriving government agents of revenue through alcohol sales is benefit enough to begin homebrewing. Additionally, anyone who objects to the use of funds for government purposes might find the same position valuable, even if they do not see the value in counter-economic exchanges.

C. The New Hampshire Liquor Commission boasts about their 75th year in existence and claim a record-setting income of \$470 million dollars during 2007. Without this monopoly on alcohol sales, this income would be diffused throughout the economy rather than funding state functions such as government schooling or drug prohibition.

D. As well as taxation and restriction of who may sell and transport

Facebook, where brewers all over the world can share their experience and help each other out. Specific to liberty activists, social networks like **Anarch.me**, and **Fr33Agents.net** each have a group dedicated to homebrewing. In any of these groups, you can find homebrew advice as well as a community that understands freedom and how they relate to each other. Local brew clubs afford the opportunity for barter, purchase of used or do-it-yourself equipment, trade and critique or recipes, training, and outreach. While learning more about brewing, an Agorist can at the same time, share his/her knowledge of a voluntary society and introduce new people to the counter economy.



A G O R A

7. Put lid and airlock on primary, store in a cool, dark place for 7 Days.
8. Transfer to secondary, put back in cool dark place for another 14 days.
9. Boil 1 cup water with 3/4 cup honey, add to bottling bucket (7.5 Gallon food grade plastic bucket, used as a primary fermenter with spigot attached).
10. Transfer cider from secondary to bottling bucket, and stir lightly to mix in honey mixture.
11. Bottle Cider. The different types of bottles require different sealing methods.
12. Wait at least 2 weeks to allow for carbonation to develop.
13. Drink, or age 6 Months to a year.

IV. Where to go from here.

This recipe is just an introduction to homebrewing, there is a whole world to explore, and many great resources available to help along the way. From books and internet forums, to social networks and local homebrew clubs, homebrewers will gladly share their knowledge to those new to the craft. A few of the best books are John Palmer's *How to Brew* (Available online for free at <http://www.HowToBrew.com>), Charlie Papazians *The Complete Joy of Homebrewing*, and Stephen Snyder's *The Brewmaster's Bible*. These books provide the foundation for a decent homebrewers library. Another great place to find advice, recipes and equipment reviews are internet forums such as **Homebrew Chatter** (<http://www.homebrewchatter.com/>). Additionally, local home brew suppliers will often provide information for brewers of every experience level. There are several homebrew related groups on MySpace and

alcohol, many governments restrict who may consume alcohol. In the United States, the legal age to consume alcohol is a ridiculously high 21 years largely due to financial incentives offered to the state for compliance. New Hampshire RSA 175:1 I, for instance, defines "adult" as "any individual, 21 years of age or older" (Source: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/XIII/175/175-1.htm>). On the contrary, the ingredients of most homebrewing recipes are actually food products (frequently tax-exempt) and perfectly legal to purchase by anyone of any age.

E. For the homebrewer, most varieties of a beverage are producible locally, where as for an established brewery or distributor, the cost of importing a specific style may dramatically increase price of the end product. While most domestic varieties of beer are produced in such large quantities that the economy of scale still makes it cheaper, those who like "imports" may find substantial savings producing their own. In some areas there are even bans on the importation and sale of beer or wine above a certain percent of alcohol. The state of New Hampshire defines "specialty beer" as any beer between 6 and 12%, prohibiting the sale of arguably one of the best craft beers, Dogfish Head 90 Minute IPA, to any non-government retailer. Some municipalities even restrict the size container the beverage may be sold in. The net effect of this - diminished consumer choice.

F. Finally, for the die-hard advocates of counter-economics, homebrewing creates a product that is highly desired, easily transported, easily stored and consumable. As a trade good, alcohol is well positioned. There are several examples of alcohol actually acting as a form of currency during times of economic turmoil for exactly these reasons (Source: Muller, Edward K. "World Book Encyclopedia." *The Whiskey Rebellion*, Volume 21, 2006, pp. 282.)

III. “The Very Basics”

The basics of homebrewing are very simple indeed, but they can be expanded on at each step to yield different results to flavor, efficiency, color, drinkability and other traits. The intention of this article is to give a brief overview of the basics. Experienced homebrewers may cringe at the simplicity at which this is presented but for someone curious and not willing to make a serious investment in time or equipment, this next section will explain the equipment and process needed to make a simple batch of cider.

Basic equipment needed to brew beer, cider or wine includes a kettle capable of boiling two gallons of water, a spoon to stir, a large thermometer, enough bottles to hold 5 gallons (48-52 12 oz bottles), a bucket, bottle, or carboy for fermentation, and an airlock. Some additional tools that thought not critical, but make brewing significantly easier, or cheaper, are a capper or corker, so you don't have to buy special resalable bottles; an auto-siphon, making transferring between fermenters easier, improving clarity and flavor; a spigot for plastic fermenter, this makes bottling much easier; a bottle filler, to reduce spills when bottling. In addition to all the equipment, it is important to have water, ingredients and sanitizer on hand.

A Simple Recipe

B. Cider is one of the easiest fermented beverages to brew, and requires almost no special equipment or ingredients. It can also be made almost anywhere using only local ingredients, in fact it is often made using only natural yeast and pressed cider, this recipe is slightly more complex, allowing more control and producing more reliable results. Ingredients for this batch can be purchased at any well-stocked homebrew supply store or through an online homebrew store. (I highly recommend Austin Home Brew (<http://www.austinhomebrew.com/>)). This recipe will produce a carbonated dry cider that is drinkable after 5 weeks, but ages well for a more developed flavor.

Cider



Ingredients:
5 Gallons of Cold
Pasteurized Local
Pressed Cider
(No preservatives)

2 Lbs. Local Honey
1 teaspoon Pectic Enzyme
1 teaspoon Yeast Nutrient
1 teaspoon Acid Blend
1 packet Red Star Dry
Champagne Yeast.
3/4 Cup Local Honey
10 Lb. Bag of Ice
1 Lb. Rock Salt

1. Simmer 2 gallons of cider for 45 minutes, stirring in 2 Lbs. of Honey
2. Put Remaining Cider in Fridge.
3. Create a cold bath by partially fill sink with Ice, Rock Salt, and water.
4. Reduce Temp to roughly 80 degrees, by placing kettle in cold bath, refreshing when water in sink gets warm.
5. In a 7.5 Gallon food grade plastic bucket (primary) mix the Pectic Enzyme, Yeast Nutrient, and Acid Blend with the refrigerated cider.
6. Add the 80 Degree Cider to the primary, add yeast, and stir to aerate.