

RIGOS CPA & CMA Review

November 1995
CPA Exam Cycle

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The two of the four owners of Fields Brewpub partake of their pub's specialty, Dairyman's Old Ale.

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**Beyond Essence
Magazine™**

BREWERY

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disappear down the hatches of thirsty customers just as quickly as the brewing team can crank it out.

"The first month of a new beer, people drink it like crazy," Sohigian said. "It's at that point that you get a good idea if it's really popular or not. The Dairyman's Old Ale has been pretty popular."

The brewing process begins with the careful selection of the malt grain that will give the beer its color and character. Grains like Pale, Chocolate, Crystal and CaraStar are mixed together in varying weights, depending on the heaviness and density of the microbrew.

Upon the selection of the malt grain for the Dairyman's Old Ale, Thompson begins the process of milling. It's a dusty procedure that involves the insertion of 1,500 pounds of grain into a mechanical mill that cracks the grain and sends it to the grist case, a cylindrical holding container. It is there that the grain rests until the real magic of the brewing process begins.

Using 350 gallons of preheated water from the nearby hot liquor tank, Sohigian begins the arduous process of hand-mixing the grain from the grist case into the voluminous blending confines of the mash tun. Like a one-man rowing machine, he braces

himself up against the capped cauldron and vigorously stirs its steaming contents - a process that can last up to 30 minutes.

"Mashing is the most labor-intensive part of the brewing process," Sohigian said, as he wiped the sweat from his brow. "Along with milling, everything surrounding the grain is really hard work."

It is within the cavernous mash tun that heat is used to coax the starches in the grain into the sugars that will be converted into alcohol during the fermentation process. Since the Dairyman's is a semi-sweet beer, its mash is heated at a higher temperature, which elicits a high sugar content within the final product.

"Temperature control is one of the things that separate us from individuals who do home-brewing," Sohigian said. "By using precise heat to manipulate the enzymes, we end up with a more consistent beer."

After the Dairyman's mash has settled for an hour, the liquid element is drained, and the left over 'spent' grain is removed and given to farmers for animal feed. The precious post-mash fluid is then circulated to a kettle where trace impurities are boiled off and hops are added for bitterness. More hops are added at the tail end of the boil to give the ale its distinctive aroma, or "nose."

After boiling, the sweet solution is piped through a heat exchanger, which drops the temperature

of the beer from a boil to about 70 degrees Fahrenheit. From there, the young beer travels to one of three fermentation tanks where yeast is introduced to the mix. The yeast transforms the glucose in the beverage into alcohol, which gives Dairyman's Old Ale its 6 percent kick - one of the beer's qualities that makes it a crowd favorite.

But it's not without its price. "It takes three weeks to produce, so people end up going without," Sohigian said as he tested the young brew for consistency.

"Customers understand that it's not Budweiser. We're not going to have it on tap everyday, especially after they take a run on it. That's just one of the beauties of a micro brewery," he said. When the fermentation process has run its course, the moment for distribution and consumption is at hand. Some of the lighter beers produced by Field's (Krona Golden Ale and Alexis Amber Ale) are sent through a filtration device that gives the beer its clear hue.

However, the Dairyman's, along with the other dark beers, is sent straight from the fermentation tank, through a set of slender pipes, which lend the beer some of its carbonation, to any of the eight 38-degree cooling tanks that reside above the bar tap.

"It's really convenient because it allows us to have more like six brews on tap at times even

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