



General Facts & Information

What is Epiphany Craft Malt?

- Epiphany is a small-batch malthouse in Durham, N.C. that connects regional farmers with brewers to create a sense of place in their craft beers. ([Click here](#) for a video overview.)
- Epiphany is owned by founder Sebastian Wolfrum, a former brewer from Germany. ([Click here](#) for Sebastian's take on the connection between brewing and the land.)
- Founded in 2015, Epiphany was the first modern pneumatic malting operation in North Carolina. (Meaning that we manipulate air during the process.) Up until 2017, we were the largest such operation east of the Mississippi.
- We are a small business with four full-time employees. ([Click here](#) for our manager of operations' insight on what drew her to craft malting.)
- We create 19 different kinds of malt. We also create custom malts for brewers.
- We sell malt all over the Southeast. Aside from North Carolina, we have customers in Florida, Delaware, Tennessee, and Alabama.

What is malt?

- Malt is the most important ingredient in beer. It is usually created from high-quality barley, but can be made from other grains.
- Malting is the process that breaks down the sugars in grain seeds and modifies them so they are fit for brewing. There are four basic steps to making malt:
 - Steeping — The barley seeds are soaked in water to start the germination process.
 - Germination (5 to 7 days) — The seeds are allowed to germinate. As the grain begins to sprout, the seed's composition changes so that the sugars inside can be fermented.
 - Kilning — The seeds are dried to stop germination and pull the moisture out. This is the step where the color, flavor and aroma of the malt is determined. For some malt, the process stops here.
 - Roasting — Some malt is then roasted to complete its flavor profile. Chocolate malt, for example.
- In North Carolina, most barley is "winter barley." It is planted in the fall and is ready to be harvested in the late spring or early summer. This variety is well-suited to the Southeast and is considered to be more resilient than other varieties to changing weather patterns and climate change.

How do we work with others?

- We work with breweries across the Southeast. Some of our customers include Burial Beer Co, Creature Comforts, Dogfish Head Craft Brewery, Fullsteam Brewery, Highland Brewing Company, Hi-Wire Brewing, Trophy Brewing, Tarboro Brewing Co, Shortway Brewing and Wooden Robot Brewery, Zillacoah.
- We work with three farmers who grow malt-quality barley: Perry Farms (N.C), Bay's Best Feed (V.A.), and White Hat Seed Farm (N.C.). We also occasionally work with other farmers in the region who supply grain such as corn or sorghum for specialty malts.
- We emphasize collaboration among all levels of the supply chain. Brewers are often involved in the creation of the malt that they use.
- Epiphany works directly with a network of grain brokers, academics, and agricultural extension agent partners. We are a science-focused operation, so working with experts gives us a lot of control over our malt.
- We emphasize regional sustainability. As the state's craft beer industry grows, we want others in the region to benefit from that growth.

Photographs: [Click here](#) to access a Google Drive folder of press-ready photographs and logos. Please include "Courtesy of Epiphany Craft Malt" in the caption.

Media contact: Anne McDarris, Public Relations: stories@epiphanymalt.com



Our Origin Story

In 2012, Sebastian Wolfrum and his wife, Leila Wolfrum, attended a gathering between North Carolina researchers, farmers, distillers and brewers. It was a meeting to brainstorm — as the craft beer industry grew in the Southeast, how could brewers and distillers use more resources from local farmers? How could they support the region's economy?

At the time, Sebastian was working as the director of brewing operations at Natty Greene's Brewing Company. He had learned the trade in Germany more than twenty years ago at Ayinger Brewery, an establishment close to his childhood home of Munich. At Ayinger, he worked in all aspects of the brewing operation including malting, distribution and fermentation. The brewery had been open since 1877 and grew its own barley right outside. It contracted a malthouse to process the grain, and then sent it back to Ayinger to use in their beers.

"This seemed a normal thing for me," Sebastian says. "This naturally seemed the right fit."

It was with that in the back of his mind as he and Leila took part in the meeting. People talked about the potential of particular herbs and spices, and about whether hops could grow in North Carolina. As for barley, there was plenty of farmland, and farmers had the equipment to grow it, so there were few barriers to entry if they wanted to grow malt-quality barley. There were varieties that grew well in the Southeast, so brewers wouldn't have to sacrifice quality.

Except there was one problem. Most malthouses were large commercial operations in the northern Plain states. There was nobody in North Carolina that could take the farmers' crops and make it into a functional product for the 300-plus breweries in the state.

"My wife really had the epiphany," Sebastian says. "And she said, 'Hey, you've been trained in this way back, right? Let's figure this out.'"

It ended up being a great idea. After two years of exploring the risks and benefits of opening a small business, putting a plan together and finding investors, they were ready to open Epiphany Craft Malt in 2015 — named after the lightbulb moment in that meeting. Since then, Epiphany has become an important link in the supply chain for craft breweries in North Carolina and along the east coast. The malthouse also collaborates extensively with brewers by sharing data on the crops, going out to survey the fields, and involving brewers in the malting process itself. And unlike the malthouses in Idaho and North Dakota, brewers are able to talk with everyone who was involved in growing and producing the most important ingredient in their beers.

"The way we approach business and the local tie-in is that brewers should feel like they have a malthouse as part of their brewing operation," Sebastian says. "Overall, it's been really fun."

Making malt is a 24/7 process. Plant biochemistry doesn't stop because it's 5 o'clock. The first person usually arrives at Epiphany's Durham location at around 7:30 a.m., unless it's time to roast the malt — then it's closer to 6 a.m. There's a lot of biology and chemistry to think about, and people to talk to, and malt to make — a product that is in turn sold to breweries and enjoyed by people across the east coast and beyond.

"Actually saying that beer has local ingredients wasn't possible until we opened up our malthouse," Sebastian says. "Between us, we essentially make it possible to supply everybody with products that's made locally, but also grown in the region. So all that money that people spend stays at the brewery and in the community "

Media contact: Anne McDarris, Public Relations: stories@epiphanymalt.com



Company Snapshot

Executive Summary

In a very simple way, malt is the soul of beer. Epiphany Craft Malt transforms raw barley into quality malt, the primary ingredient in beer, foremost to supply North Carolina craft brewers and distillers. At present, local breweries purchase malt from large, often globally operating malting companies, as virtually no locally-made malt is available east of the Mississippi. Epiphany partners with farmers and breweries to collaborate on producing base and specialty malts. In doing so, Epiphany fills the brewer's need for transparent local production by enabling the connection between farmer, maltster and brewer. In the process, we support local agriculture, lower the impact on the planet, and keep jobs and money in the region. Epiphany works to close the loop of local production by enabling the connection between local brewers and local farmers. We are committed to establishing a resilient, sustainable and quality supply of domestically grown malt that is farmed, malted and brewed for exceptional flavor and character.

Key statistics about Epiphany

- Keeps \$1.8 million in the regional economy
- Roughly 1,200 acres of farmland are utilized for malting-quality grain
- Annually supports \$442,000 of added revenue to local farmers and the community
- Can produce 20 tons of malt per week and up to 1,000 tons per year
- At the current level of craft beer production in NC, Epiphany would be able to supply one-fifth of the annual malt usage by breweries in the state

Key statistics about craft beer

- In North Carolina (according to the [Brewers Association](#)):
 - 333 craft breweries as of 2019
 - 1,296,320 barrels of craft beer produced per year
 - In 2018, N.C. craft beer produced a \$2.6 billion economic impact
- Aside from water, malt makes up over 90% of the ingredients that go into beer

Awards and honors

- Epiphany malt has been used in a number of award-winning brews. In 2018, Wooden Robot Brewery and Little Brother Brewery won gold medals in the Great American Beer Festival using our malt in their beers. Little Brother also won the 2019 N.C. Brewers Cup with its beer "Crispy Business," made with 100% Epiphany malt.

A few of our partners

- | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| ● Fullsteam Brewery | ● Burial Beer Co | ● Tarboro Brewing Co. |
| ● Mother Earth Distillery | ● Wooden Robot | ● Trophy Brewing Co. |
| ● Hi-Wire Brewing | ● NoDa Brewing | ● Broad Branch Distillery |
| ● Ponysaurus Brewing | ● Shortway Brewing Co. | ● Highland Brewing Co. |

For more information, visit <http://www.epiphanymalt.com/> or follow Epiphany Craft Malt on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

Media contact: Anne McDarris, Public Relations: stories@epiphanymalt.com