

Green on Green

Welcome to our new **Green on Green** series,
featuring valuable mini case studies on companies
that are making Green by going Green.

Monday April 2, 2007

NEW BELGIUM™

**Green On Green:
New Belgium Beer**

**Of Beer, Bikes and Biodiesel
*New Belgium Brewery produces green beer year-round***

Since it opened for business in 1991, Fort Collins, Colorado-based New Belgium brewery has always been green at heart. Now, with organic beer, efficient brewing techniques, and \$2 million in eco-friendly donations, its bottom line is green as well.

Company Profile

Company lore tells that New Belgium co-founder Jeff Lebesch set off across the Atlantic after his graduation from college to bicycle through Europe sampling Flemish, German and Czech beers. But he never made it past Belgium. In 1991, Lebesch and his wife, Kim Jordan, took their brewing from a basement hobby to a full time business. Today, New Belgium is the nation's twelfth-largest brewery, have 260 employees, and boasts annual revenue of \$70 million. Its corporate identity, like its beer, is full-bodied and fun. Employees receive red cruiser bicycles on their one-year anniversaries. The company sponsors an annual Tour de Fat, named for the brewery's Fat Tire Amber Ale – a bike rally that promotes green issues and raises money for non-profits. New Belgium also donates \$1 to environmental and cultural organizations for every filled beer barrel – nearly \$500,000 per year. In keeping with its green philosophy, more than \$100,000 goes to bike-related causes.



Green Beer

New Belgium's brewery may be the most eco-friendly brewery of its size anywhere. In 1998 the company became the first U.S. brewery to be powered entirely by wind. Jones estimates that the brewery has saved nearly 20 million pounds of coal from incinerators, reducing its CO2 emissions by nearly 40 million pounds. The brewery facility was designed by green architects and built with sustainable materials. It features natural lighting, renewable energy heating and cooling systems, a fermenting

**NEW BELGIUM BY
THE NUMBERS**

Founded: 1991

Founders/Owners:
Kim Jordan and Jeff
Lebesch

Employees: 260

2006 Revenue: \$70
million

**Coal consumption
saved:** 20 million
pounds

**CO2 emissions
saved:**
40 million pounds

room that doubles as a hot yoga studio, and an in-house water-treatment plant. In winter, induction fans pull in cool outside air to chill the beer and reduce refrigeration costs, which would otherwise account for 30 percent of the brewery's electricity budget. The plant saves not only power but water. Through capture and reuse, New Belgium has cut its water use in half. Even steam is recycled – fully 98 percent of it. Finally, once the grog has left the building, it is carried to vendors via hybrid or high-mileage diesel trucks.

Jordan admits that there are benefits to being green – energy savings chief among them. But there is also the notoriety – from the Denver Post to Popular Mechanics – that comes

from being America's top producer of green beer – or rather – beer for greenies.



Editor's note: I can't say that I have tasted their beer and although I prefer beer from the monks of Belgium, I intend to pick one up soon.