



# CRAFT BREWERS

ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

## Craft Brewers Serve Up Strong Annual Report, Warn of Trouble Ahead

HALIFAX, N.S. – January 18, 2021 – CBANS (Craft Brewers Association of Nova Scotia) released their 2021 Craft Beer Annual Report showing an industry that has grown rapidly due to strong consumer demand and is positively impacting every part of the province. At the same time, they highlight growing challenges and a concern that the government and regulators do not appear to be listening.

By the numbers, NS Craft Beer has become an impressive local industry with over 70 independent breweries operating in every area of the province. Despite nearly two full years of pandemic conditions, local producers continue to invigorate small towns, retain younger workers and create tourist destinations. There are currently more than 1150 skilled, talented and diverse workers in this industry. In jobs per litre produced, that's more 35 times the number of a multinational brewery when it produces in-province. In fact, nearly 20% of all provincial beer sales are crafted locally, with steady double-digit growth in a category otherwise declining.

"Today's craft brewer is in the production, retail, hospitality and community events business, and they come in all shapes and sizes" says Brian Titus, President CBANS. "They spread their economic impact to every corner of the province and the one thing that connects them is a passion to create great craft beers that can be called *Proudly Nova Scotian*."

This hard-fought, 30 year success story though is now itself threatening the growth and viability of individual producers. Out-dated government regulations and punitive new rules are now holding back this industry and making Nova Scotia an increasingly inhospitable place for craft alcohol producers. The province enforces the highest government mark-ups and lowest production limits on local producers nationally and it's only getting worse. "The local industry has really exploded, particularly over the past decade, yet government refuses to even discuss ways to accommodate and support this" says Debbi MacDonald, Executive Director CBANS. "We've been warning about trouble for years, and it would be a shame to see such an important part of the economy stall out due to bureaucratic red-tape and an unwillingness to evolve the regulations".

CBANS has worked closely with NSLC management and Finance advisors for the past 18 months to help update the Manufacturers Policy. Yet the result has been more restrictions, new red tape and additional fees, with little accommodation of industry asks. Efforts to meet with Minister MacMaster have also been unsuccessful leaving local industry few remaining options. "The PC's were more than happy to profile us in their election literature, use us as backdrops and court our support" says MacDonald. "Here's hoping they haven't lost their taste for local product and producers now that they're in".

Like all Nova Scotians, craft brewers have been hit hard by this pandemic and are facing a long road ahead to recovery. In a sector as heavily regulated as alcohol production and sales, the government has a real role to play in this recovery. Constructive engagement, listening to individual producers and considering new opportunities will allow this industry to continue serving up award-winning craft beer to thirsty Nova Scotians!

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### About Craft Brewers of Nova Scotia (CBANS)

CBANS is a broad association representing most of the 70+ provincial small brewers, allowing them to speak in a unified voice. CBANS helps build industry relationships, works constructively with government and crown corporations, and strives to promote a thriving local industry that benefits all areas of the province.