

# HOPS: A SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BREWER, FARMER, AND LEGISLATOR.

By *DeLoe Lucke*

The story of how hops came to be growing right here in our backyard is the story of beer drinkers wanting something more authentic in their growlers. Or as hop grower Colin Boylan says, "People are starving for local stuff."

Around the mid 1980s, craft brewing takes off and keeps growing. This leads to a new market for hops and malt... *SZZZ*

...which in turn leads to New York's 2012 Farm Brewery Bill.

State Senator David J. Valesky: "I sponsored it!"

Governor Andrew Cuomo: "NY craft brewers are creating jobs, supporting our state's farmers and hop growers as well as bringing in tourism!"

About this time, Beacon Resident Justin Riccobono is down at The Hop with a glass of Heady Topper in his hand.

I saw a photo on the wall of a guy on stilts picking hops. I got interested and started researching.

He discovers that in the 19th cent. NY grew 45,488 acres of hops.

Local food has become a thing. Hmm. Why not local beverage?

He becomes an advocate for hops, convincing what will become Dutchess Hops to put in the HV's first acre since 1872.

Upfront costs aren't tiny. The infrastructure for a hopyard is \$12,000-\$15,000 per acre. That includes: plants, drip irrigation, and 18-foot poles with cables in between.<sup>1</sup>

Hops also take 3-4 years to mature so ROI is delayed.

Worst mistake I made was trying to build the infrastructure around the plants! We're in our infancy here. The knowledge is lost--only way to get it back is by doing.

Colin Boylan 6th generation apple and fruit Farmer/Hop Grower/Brewer

Orca was brewing beer and growing hops in half-barrels on our balcony in Brooklyn.

Orca Bates Colleen Bates Year 2 growing in the Black Dirt Region

The Bates moved up with a plan to open a farm brewery.

It's a lot of manual labor. The soils so rich we get serious weeds. 6 feet high!

Steve Miller Executive Director Northeast Hop Alliance

"In a good season, New York State hops have greater total oils than anywhere in the world."

Local prices are anywhere from \$8-\$14 per pound.<sup>2</sup>

Lupulin gives hops its taste.

Biological Farmer Stuart Farr

Hops are hungry; they use tons of nitrogen. We replace it with chicken manure and liquid fish.

Stuart grew 600lbs. of organic hops in 2018.

You can practically see them grow. Mid season it can be 10 inches a day. It's lush. And a bit terrifying... like "The Day of the Triffids."

Note: A British Sci-Fi book/movie/TV series about a carnivorous hop-like plant

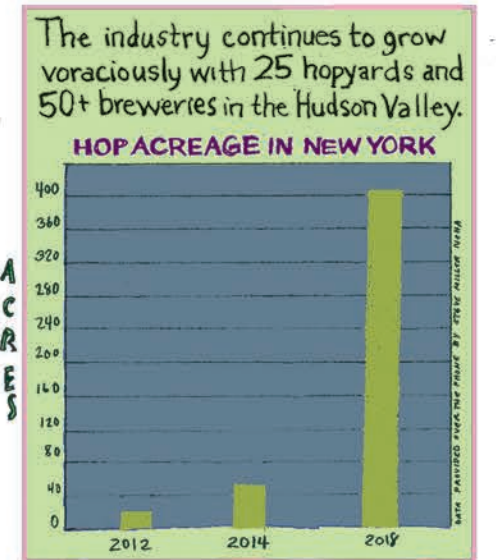
BEWARE THE TRIFFIDS

HELP!

EKK!

THE DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS

WRITTEN BY John Wyndham STARRING CASCADE THE HOP



Capital is needed for harvesting and processing equipment, but it's safe to say:

We'll have a barrel of revenues!<sup>\*</sup>

\*This cartoonist didn't hear Governor Cuomo sing this tune...but he may have thought it.