



WHAT ARE CRYO HOPS



Photography courtesy of Yakima Chief Hops

Different companies now make their own versions of "lupulin-enriched" hop products. For example, John I. Haas has created a line called LUPOMAX, which you might see in some of our beers, while Yakima Chief (YCH) has created Cryo Hops. The term "cryo" is derived from the Greek word "kayos" meaning "frost."

YCH makes their Cryo Hops by starting with fresh hop bales and using liquid nitrogen to quickly chill the raw hop to sub-zero temperatures. After that, they shatter it. The different glands in the raw hop separate into individual structures once they're shattered. The material is sifted through and the leaf material is separated from the lupulin. The lupulin then gets pressed into cryo hop pellets.

Cryo Hops have two distinct advantages over whole cone or pelletized hops. For one, they enhance the actual flavor and aroma in the beer. They also improve the brewing process by increasing the batch yield. Green matter in hops act like sponges and end up soaking up a lot of the liquid from the beer, generating a lot of loss. We can usually use half as many Cryo Hops in our beer recipe than pelletized hops.

Brewers look to the lupulin, an oil inside the hop, to create the expressive flavors and aromas we all know and love from an IPA. With increased demand for hops, hop farmers have looked for more efficient ways to distribute their products.

Typically, in the Bay Area, hops come in T-90 pellets (versus whole cones, which you'll see more in areas closer in proximity to hop farms). T-90 stands for "Type 90," which means that the hop pellet is made up of 90% green matter by weight and 10% lupulin. When you see a whole hop cone, the yellow spots on the inside of the cone (the stuff that looks like pollen) are the lupulin glands. The more lupulin, the more flavor and aroma-rich the pellets are. For example, T-45 pellets have 55% lupulin and are considered "lupulin-enriched."



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