

Boortmalt, Pure Local and Huyghe Brewery launch climate-conscious beer

DELIRIUM AND DELIRIO BECOME THE FIRST BELGIAN BEERS BREWED WITH CARBON-NEGATIVE MALT

Delirium and its alcohol-free version Delirio are the first Belgian beers brewed with carbon-negative malt. Huyghe Brewery has achieved a significant milestone in its ambition to become the country's most sustainable brewery, thanks to maltster Boortmalt's Pure Local project, working in collaboration with agro-ecological cooperative Cultivaé and haulage company Kristotrans.

Boortmalt's Belgian subsidiary, Belgomalt, launched the Pure Local project in 2019 to revive the cultivation of malting barley in Belgium rather than relying solely on French supplies. Overseen by agro-ecological cooperative Cultivaé, the barley is grown using regenerative farming practices that help restore soil health and rebuild biodiversity. The programme now involves 120 farmers from every province in Belgium.

37 kg of CO₂ sequestered per metric ton of barley harvested*

"When grown conventionally, malting barley emits 183 kg of CO₂ per tonne harvested. With regenerative farming, we plant cover crops after harvest to feed soil micro-organisms and increase humus content. We also use organic fertilisers and minimise tillage to preserve soil health. In 2024, the Pure Local farmers collectively sequestered more CO₂ in the soil than they emitted, resulting in a carbon balance of minus 37 kg of CO₂ per metric ton of barley harvested," explains Alexander Hendrickx (Boortmalt).

In 2024, the Boortmalt malting plant joined forces with the Warmtenet Antwerpen Noord heat network and waste management company Indaver to transform carbon-negative malting barley into climate-neutral malt. Residual heat generated by Indaver is transported through 12 km of pipelines to Boortmalt's site in the Port of Antwerp. This heat replaces natural gas combustion in the malting process, thereby eliminating CO₂ emissions.

The malt is then transported in bulk to Huyghe Brewery in Melle by Kristotrans's Volvo FH Aero Electric lorry, meaning it is delivered with a negative carbon footprint.

A greener and more sustainable brewery

"With the commissioning of our new brewhouse in 2011, we fulfilled our ambition to become the country's greenest and most sustainable brewery," says Alain De Laet, Huyghe Group CEO. "Since 2012, we have invested €35 million in the production process. We will invest a further €50 million over the coming years. Our goal is to achieve net zero

emissions and 80% energy self-sufficiency by 2035. In this respect, we already meet almost half of our energy needs through our solar panels and cogeneration from water treatment. We have also reduced our water consumption from 8.7 to 2.6 litres per litre of beer produced. Nearly 70% of wastewater is converted into potable water and used to clean our facilities.”

First Belgian beers brewed with carbon-negative malt

“As Delirium Tremens beer (8.5% vol.) and its alcohol-free version Delirio (0.3% vol.) are now brewed with carbon-negative malt, we have taken a major step forward in phase three of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals,” continues Alain De Laet. “Phases one and two focus on production and energy supply. Phase three addresses the reduction of indirect emissions in our product value chain, working with our suppliers and customers to do so.”

“In 2021, Huyghe Brewery became the first major Belgian brewery to join Belgomalt’s Pure Local project. The result is Delirium Tremens and Delirio – the first Belgian beers brewed with carbon-negative malt. The barley is grown in Belgium using regenerative farming practices, transformed into climate-neutral malt, delivered with zero emissions, and processed as sustainably as possible at our site in Melle.”

“We use approximately 1,500 tonnes of barley malt each year to brew Delirium Tremens and Delirio – about a third of our total malt purchases. Thanks to Boortmalt’s expertise, this carbon-negative malt delivers exactly the same quality as before. When sipping on a Delirium Tremens or Delirio, you won’t taste any difference, but you’ll be playing your part in the fight against climate change,” adds Alain De Laet, Group CEO.

**This figure is determined based on the CFT (Cool Farm Tool) - DNDC (Denitrification - Decomposition) methodology.*

About Boortmalt:

Boortmalt is the world’s leading malting company with a production capacity of 3.1 million tonnes. The group operates 27 malting plants across five continents. In Belgium, it has malting plants in Antwerp, Herent and Gembloux. The world’s largest malting plant is located in Antwerp and can produce up to 470,000 metric tons of malt per year. The city is also home to the Boortmalt’s headquarters and innovation centre. Belgomalt is its historic brand, dedicated to Belgium’s craft market.

www.boortmalt.be, www.belgomalt.be

Family-owned Huyghe Brewery was founded in 1906 in Melle and is led by Alain De Laet, the fourth generation of the family. It produces approximately 250,000 hectolitres of beer annually, with 80% exported to around 100 countries. Its best-known beer is Delirium Tremens. The company also brews Averbode abbey beer, the gluten-free Mongozo beers, St. Idesbald beers plus numerous others. In late 2024, Huyghe Brewery acquired Mechelen-based Het Anker brewery, renowned for its Gouden Carolus beer.

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