



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Belue Farms adds hops to its list of S.C.-grown products**

*Boiling Springs, SC (July 26, 2016)* – Over the past 60 years, Belue Farms has grown and sold peaches, berries, melons, vegetables, Black Angus cattle and grain. Now the farm has added a new crop to its South Carolina-grown offerings: hops. Part of the stinging needles plant family, hops are native to Great Britain and primarily grown in the northern temperate zone as well as Australia. Belue Farms’ crop is part of a joint venture with Clemson University to evaluate the viability of new crops grown in Upstate S.C.

The hops plant bears flowers that are commonly used as a stabilizing agent and flavoring for beer, and also serve as a medicinal aid to promote sleep, appetite and relaxation. Belue Farm’s hops plants are being grown adjacent to its affiliated store, Belue Farms Natural Foods Market on Parris Bridge Road. Considered a bine (or vine), hops grow along a wire or string to form a teepee shape. As hops need to be pruned or harvested, the wires are lowered for easier access. Planted from rhizomes, hops require at least 120 days before yielding the first harvest. Now in their second year of production, Belue Farms’ plants will be harvested July through early September when they die back for winter.

Harriett Belue, co-owner of Belue Farms and manager of Belue Farms Natural Foods Market, says the farm hopes to sell the crop to both home and commercial brewers. “So far, Hub City Ale House in Spartanburg has purchased our hops to create a new brew called Ferme Ici Saison. The beer will be part of its Ciclops Cyderi & Brewery line and will be a peach wood-smoked

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farmhouse ale flavored with nectarine, peach and chili pepper.” She continues, “We’re excited to be part of the process and glad our hops are being used right here in Spartanburg County.”

Belue notes the hops plant’s flavor will continue to change for up to nine years. She explains, “Like most plants, the flavor of hops can change based on local soil influences. So some varieties will taste differently when planted in different soils. But that’s life on a farm. You have to learn to adapt to environmental changes every year and look forward to what Mother Nature brings.”

In addition to being sold to local breweries, Belue Farm’s hops can be purchased in frozen, vacuum-packed bags at Belue Farms Natural Foods Market on 3769 Parris Bridge Road in Boiling Springs, S.C. The market’s year-round store hours are Monday through Saturday, 9:00 A.M. until 6:00 P.M. For more information, visit [BelueFarms.com](http://BelueFarms.com).

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