



# news from the brewmaster

**Greetings to all. The Yellowbelly Bakeapple is nearly gone now. I will miss it. It really is quite a unique beer. Perhaps we'll try it again next year. Done some pilots for a ginger beer but I'm thinking it may not happen. A very strange can of worms, I must say.**

[www.bangordailynews.com/detail/126224.html](http://www.bangordailynews.com/detail/126224.html)

I include the above link for your consideration, as it is relevant to this discussion. Some colleagues forwarded it to me. I didn't know whether to laugh or cry when I first read the article.

Here's the difficulty. The ginger beer I propose is much like the lemonade in the above article. It is naturally fermented by yeast. Yeast eat sugar, piss alcohol and fart

carbon dioxide (carbonation, or, the bubbles in beer, soda pop, champagne, etc). This natural carbonation process by the yeast is arrested very shortly after starting. Settling and filtration remove most of the yeast. You are then left with a sweet bubbly liquid or pop. The issue is that this pop has about 0.5% alcohol. Is it beer? Most certainly. How much would a child need to consume to experience any sort of intoxication? I don't know. But I do know that it would take 3.41 liters (10 standard bottles) to equate to 1 standard bottle of 5% alcohol beer. That's a lot of liquid for a little tummy, now isn't it?

Whereas I have no problem serving this sort of beverage to children, many people would disagree. Why? I'm not really sure. Many fresh fruit juices contain a similar level of alcohol.

**Being a first generation immigrant from Europe, perhaps I have a little different perspective than many North Americans.** I grew up knowing what alcohol is, what it does to you physiologically, how it can harm you, but also, very importantly, how it can be enjoyed as a regular part of life.

Liam  
McKenna

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**YellowBelly**  
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It was treated as a normal reality of life. We learned about the ritual and cultural aspects of alcohol. It was not demonized.

Given that we have, as a species, consuming alcohol as a foodstuff since time began for us, how could moderate consumption be bad? Empirical observation of reality can really help with perspective I find. I also find that you should not underestimate how smart your children are. If we continue to say that alcohol is bad for them and then they see us drinking alcohol, how does that affect their perception of us, our ability to respect them, to look out for their best interests, our ability to be honest with them, our ability to lead them into the future well equipped for the realities they will face? If they know that we are lying not only to them, but also to ourselves, how will they continue to respect us?

In no way am I counseling anyone to serve alcohol in any way to his or her children.

I will tell you, however, that my 12 year old has grown up as I did. Knowing the reality of alcohol. She has always been allowed a 'sip' from our glass whenever she asked. That sip is always singular. She has also been allowed a 'wine drop' (splash of wine in glass topped with water) at ritual family gatherings (Christmas, weddings etc). Last New Year's Eve she had a 3-ounce glass of champagne. She didn't finish it. These things are part of my responsibility to her. I take that responsibility very seriously.

Neo-prohibitionism and demonizing alcohol is not the answer. I invite your comments.

Pax.

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