

With the brewing industry being such a strong part of our state economy and with the push regionally for more localized food production, our project focuses on the rural development opportunities that the growing of hops and barley locally can provide. Current literature focuses more on the biophysical constraints of growing these perennial crops, which can take many years to produce a strong yield, than on the social and market constraints of production and distribution. By utilizing the community-based development theory of the Agriculture of the Middle (Kirschenmann, et. al, 2004) and Civic Agriculture (Lyson, 2004) and theory of value-chain analysis (Bloom and Hinrichs, 2010; Stevenson and Pirog, n.d.) we're working to better understand the greater social and economic opportunities present in localizing hop and malt production.