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Press Release

LINC Foods is launching a new arm of their business

A local farm-to-bottle barley malting operation

Spokane, WA, May 11, 2015: The worker-farmer-owned cooperative, which launched in August of 2014, is expanding beyond produce, dairy, grains, legumes, and meat to also bring Spokane some of the most local beer in the nation. The local beer scene in Spokane has exploded in recent years, but nearly every brewer in the nation is limited to choices from a handful of firms that make malt geared towards the needs of large brewers. Washington is the hop growing capital of the country, and though Eastern Washington is a prime grain-growing region, the availability of local grains for use in beer is nearly nonexistent.

"We're constantly looking for ways to reconnect the supply chain for local food," says LINC Foods co-founder and avid home brewer Joel Williamson, "It just seemed like a no-brainer." LINC will still continue to grow its food distribution network, which aims to connect local farmers to larger markets in Spokane such as universities, hospitals, school districts, and restaurants. "We are looking to be a one stop shop for local food," adds Williamson's co-founder, Beth Robinette, "Supporting our farmers is our number one priority and this is just another way we can do that."

The team needs to raise \$600,000 to buy their new malting equipment. Half that money will come in the form of a loan, the other half from investors. There is also an opportunity to get involved on a smaller scale. In conjunction with Community Sourced Capital, LINC is running a crowd-lending campaign to raise \$5,000. Individuals can buy "Squares," worth \$50 each, which will be given to LINC Foods as a 0% interest loan. "We wanted a way for every day people to get involved. We want our 'Square Holders' to be excited when they see beer made with LINC Malt in their local brew pub," Robinette says.

Since LINC Foods launched in August, the co-op has swelled from just a handful of member farmers to 32. Though most of the member farmers run small diversified vegetable or livestock operations, a few do grow grains. "We're starting with barley from some of our existing farmers. But we'll also be malting wheat and rye as well as ancient grains such spelt, emmer, kamut," says Williamson, "This is really going to step up the brewing game in Spokane. When microbreweries have to use exactly the same malt as larger companies, they're limited with how much they can do. With local custom malt, the beer in Spokane will really be something special."

LINC Foods hopes to complete fundraising by mid-summer and to launch in the fall. For further information contact Joel Williamson, (509) 230-1223 or visit lincfoods.com.

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