

Business writer:
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MONEY

D12



The Dollar

- 82.70 yen, down .41
- 1.3694 Germ. mark, down .0143
- 1.3709 Canadian, up .0027
- \$1.6127=Brit. lb., up .0034

SATURDAY, April 22, 1995

New Belgium building new home

Brewery capacity will quadruple

By ROBERT BAUN
The Coloradoan

It's almost time to stop calling it a microbrewery.

Almost.

Four-year-old New Belgium Brewing Co. started construction Friday on a new 28,000-square-foot brew house in northeast Fort Collins, which will multiply the brewer's production capacity by almost four times.

New Belgium's new \$3.8 million home is planned for a five-

acre lot at 500 Linden Street, across the street from Fort Ram. The Neenan Co. of Fort Collins is the contractor and designer for the project.

But even with the expansion, New Belgium owners are actually trying to make themselves smaller in the beer industry.

After venturing into markets in Minnesota and Washington state, the brewer has pulled back in recent months to focus sales in Colorado and Wyoming.

That's where they intend to stay, co-owner Kim Jordan said Friday.

"We really have made a philosophical decision that part of this

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microbrewery renaissance should be about drinking fresh local product," Jordan said. "And using fossil fuels to truck beer across the country is not something we particularly want to do."

New Belgium is best known for its flagship Fat Tire product, which was introduced in June 1991.

The company now produces five styles of beer, including a wheat beer, cherry beer, a Belgian Trappist brew called Abbey, and Tripel, a stronger version of the

Trappist beer.

New Belgium produces 28,000 barrels of beer a year, and should increase production by 30 percent as soon it moves in to the new brewery, probably in October.

The full capacity of the new building will be 120,000 barrels, Jordan said.

As a construction project, the New Belgium brewery will feature a turn-of-the-century design theme, including heavy-timber rustic elements. The brewery will also feature 320-barrel fermentation vessels that will be suspended from the roof.

"That's for cleaning as much as anything," Jordan said. "There

are no legs, so there is no place where they touch the floor where bacteria can grow under the legs."

The Anheuser-Busch Brewery in Fort Collins uses a similar system of suspended tanks.

Meanwhile, the expansion also means more jobs at New Belgium, which employs 40 people. Jordan said the staff size will grow to about 50 in the new brewery.

"We're on the high side now in terms of barrels of production per employee," she said. "We're coping with a larger brew house that our economies of scale will come down."