

Ninkasi supersizes suds production

City: Eugene, OR



Founded in 2005, Ninkasi is already the seventh largest brewery in Oregon and one of the fastest growing in the United States. In just the past three years, the brewery's workforce has doubled each year to 32 workers and it is expected to continue to grow. Ninkasi anticipates sales to increase by 40 percent in 2010 and hopes to add up to 15 new positions in the next 24 months and a total of 28 jobs over the next three years.

The company is nearing completion of a \$4 million expansion of its West Eugene plant, which includes a new 60-barrel brewhouse (double the size of the one they installed in late 2008) and a new bottling line that also can fill 12-ounce bottles. A \$50,000 forgivable loan from the Governor's Strategic Reserve Fund helped the company put the final pieces of its financing plan in place in April 2010.

In 2009, Ninkasi brewed 18,000 barrels of beer (558,000 gallons) and graduated from microbrewery to a "regional brewery" designation. In 2010, the company hopes to nearly double the previous year's total and brew as much as 32,000 barrels—nearly a million gallons of beer. The company says the new facility has a maximum capacity of 90,000 barrels, or 2.8 million gallons of fine tasting ale.