

## Mel Kees – Brewers Guild

### 1. Changing consumption patterns:

- The way in which New Zealanders drink is undergoing a cultural shift. Alcohol consumption has declined more than 25% since the late 1970s<sup>1</sup>
- In November 2022 the NZ annual health survey NZs health and wellbeing: the survey says that 81% of NZ adults (four out of five of us) are drinking beer, wine and spirits responsibly<sup>2</sup>. (this is 2.1% fewer hazardous drinkers in the past 5 years).<sup>3</sup>
- However hazardous drinkers are still too high.
- Health NZs low-risk alcohol drinking advice recommends having no more than 15 standard drinks a week for males (no more than 3 a day) or no more than ten standard drinks a week (no more than 2 a day) for females and two alcohol free days a week<sup>4</sup>.
- Its okay not to drink alcohol.

### 2. Youth drinking:

Adolescent drinking has declined dramatically over the past 15 - 20 years in New Zealand and also in other OECD countries.

According to the NZ Youth 2000 survey<sup>5</sup> an increasing proportion of secondary school students are choosing not to drink. The proportion of secondary students who have never drunk alcohol increased markedly from 26% in 2007, to 45% in 2019.

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<sup>1</sup> Total NZ population 15 years and over total alcohol, 12 litres per person in 1978 – 8.5 litres per person year ended September 2023. StatsNZ Infoshare.

<sup>2</sup> Moderate and responsible drinkers/hazardous drinkers:

- Four out of five of NZers drink in moderation. (Health NZ Nov 22: 81% of us drink in a responsible way, 18.8% of us drink in a hazardous way). This is a decrease of 2.1% on hazardous drinkers in the past 5 years.

<sup>3</sup> Hazardous drinkers:

- We are seeing a reduction in hazardous drinking by 18 – 24 years old and 25 – 34 years old. A decline of 6.2% and 4.7% over the last five years respectfully.
- However 18 – 24 year olds are still drinking too much at 31% and 25 – 34 years old at 22.4%.

<sup>4</sup> According to the Health Promotion Agency research in 2019/20, 82% of NZers drank at or below the recommended weekly limit. Nearly two-thirds (63%) followed the ‘daily’ limit advice of no more than three standard drinks per day for males or no more than two standard drinks per day for females. The advice calls for two alcohol-free days a week, which the research says 92% of people are doing.

<sup>5</sup> Youth19 was conducted in 2019 in the Auckland, Northland & Waikato regions by researchers from The University of Auckland, Victoria University of Wellington, University of Otago and Auckland University of

Over time, young people are drinking less often. In the total student population, young people who used alcohol in the past month fell between 2007 and 2019 from 49% in 2007 to 34% in 2019<sup>6</sup>.

It is encouraging to see that fewer young people drink and drink less hazardously<sup>7</sup>. In 2006/07 74.5% of 15 to 17 year olds had alcohol in the past year and in 2022 this was reduced by 17.4% to 57.1%.

It is important that people under 18 years of age should not drink alcohol.

3. Contribution to our economy – NZIER report to NZ Alcohol Beverages Council February 2022:

Economic contribution to our economy – our industry contributes:

- a. Contributes \$1.92 billion to gross domestic product
- b. Generates \$2.09 billion in exports
- c. Pays \$1.819 billion in taxes (excise and GST).
- d. We directly employ around 10,200 people and indirectly another 20,900 people in our supply chain from hops growers to packaging providers.
- e. Our industry like many others has been impacted by covid-19 and the impact has been felt in hospitality closures, skilled worker shortages and transport and logistics issues.

People are the heart of our industry:

- f. There are 1,855 beer, wine spirits producers nationwide.
- g. We are employers, taxpayers, farmers, environmentalists, sustainable manufacturers, innovators, small businesses, entrepreneurs, charity and community partners and parents. Our brewers, winemakers and distillers take pride in their work and want the people who consume their world-class beverages to appreciate their crafts in moderation.

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Technology. Youth19 is a scientifically and ethically rigorous survey, funded by the Health Research Council of New Zealand. [Youth19 - A Youth2000 Survey.](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> NZ Health survey 2021/22, Annual Update of Key Results 2021/22: New Zealand Health Survey | Ministry of Health NZ, accessed 2 Dec 22

4. The changing way that we are drinking:

- We are seeing changing trends with NZs sipping and savouring their beverage, and turning on to low and no-alcohol beverages.
- A poll of 1,250 NZs (Curia market research for NZABC) in Dec 2022 found 56% (up from 47%) in the preceding year) of respondents drinking low-alcohol beverages at least some of the time and some of us prefer low alcohol beverages.
- Its okay not to drink alcohol.

Virginia Nicholls  
NZABC Executive Director  
12 December 2023