

Beer Ranking 2016

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How sustainable is your beer? Update 2016

Brand	Rank
Neumarkter Lammsbräu	B
GULPENER	C
AMSTEL	C
★ Heineken	C
BECK'S	C
Corona	C
Jupiler	C
WARSTEINER	D
GUINNESS	D
Duvel	E
ERDINGER WEISSBRÄU	E

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1. Introduction

[Rank a Brand](#) is an independent international brand-comparison website by and for consumers who want to buy sustainable and fair products or services. Rank a Brand assesses and ranks major international and national consumer brands in several sectors on sustainability and social responsibility, and uses these ranks to inform and advise consumers, the general public and media.

Rank a Brand updated its ranking of international and national (mainly German, Dutch, and Belgian) beer brands. This report summarizes the results of this beer ranking.

2. Research

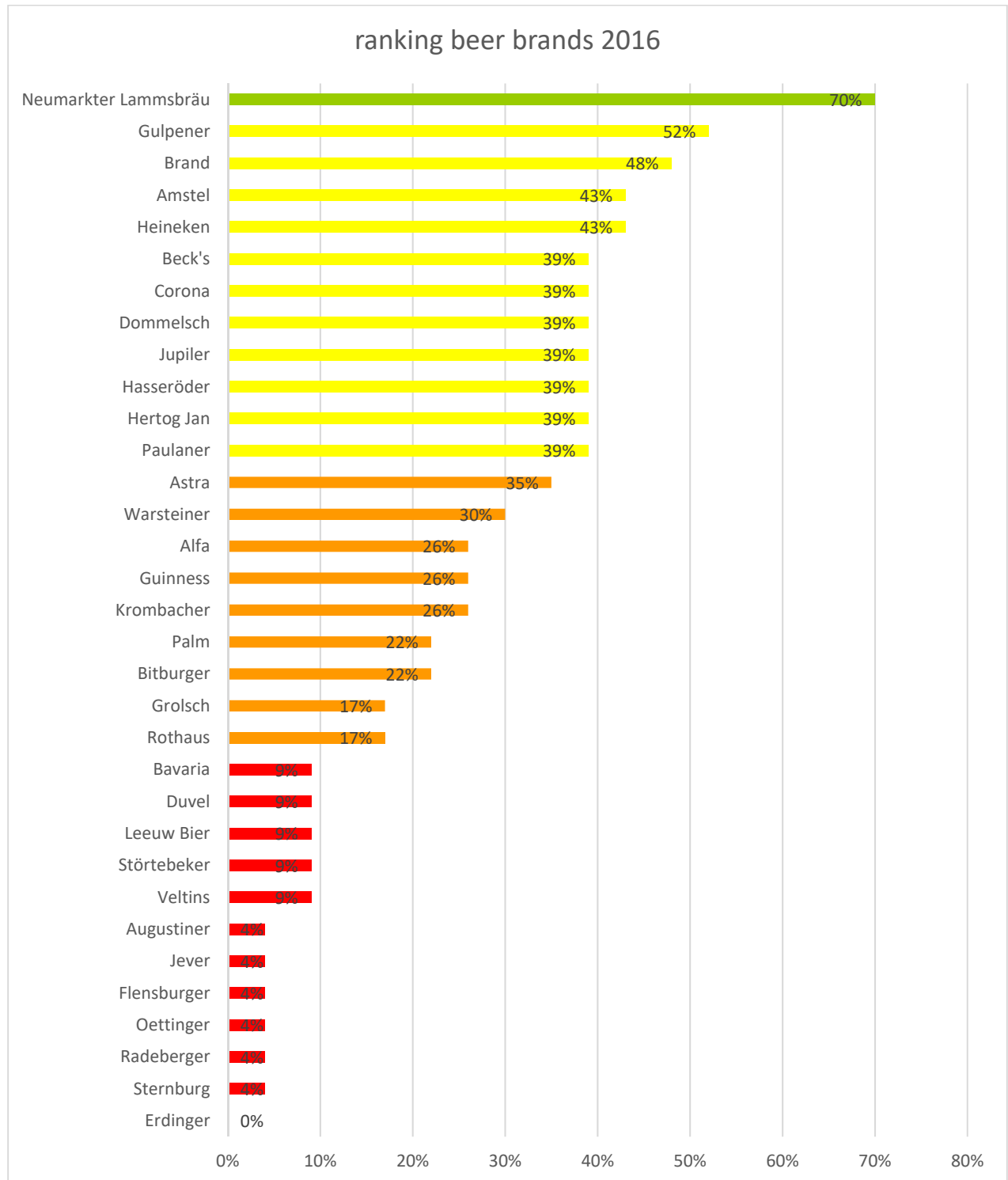
Rank a Brand assessed 33 beer brands on a set of criteria (see appendix 1) regarding their impact on the environment and climate change. Policies, targets as well as actual performance and reported results were considered. Rank a Brand assessed the brands based on publicly available information. Our position is that brands should demonstrate to their consumers that they have actually implemented sustainable and socially responsible policies. The brand has the responsibility to prove that they have and to be transparent about doing so.

Many beer brands are available in more than one country, and some are produced in several countries, possibly under license. These brands were assessed on their global sustainability performance, not just on the sustainability in their home country. For two brands, Bavaria and Grolsch, this negatively impacted their ranking, compared to the previous update of 2015, when we only used the production reporting data from their home country (the Netherlands).

The research was conducted by trained and qualified rankers of Rank a Brand (see appendix 2). Based on publicly available data they established a preliminary score for each brand. The preliminary results were verified by a verifier to guarantee quality and consistency. After verification, Rank a Brand sent the preliminary results by email to each brand for feedback and to give them the opportunity to provide additional information, raise questions, or make corrections. Ten out of 33 brands responded and provided feedback. The additional information and corrections were checked by Rank a Brand's head of research. Based on this final check, the final results were established. Each brand then received a label, ranging from an A-label for the best performing brands (75% or more of the maximum score) to an E-label for the worst scoring brands (less than 15%), based on their respective scores for the ranking criteria.

3. Results

Below is an overview of the scores for all beer brands assessed. Detailed ranking reports per brand are available on www.rankabrand.org/beer (click on brand name and scroll downwards).



Labels

No brands in this research received a score good enough for an A-label (75% or more). Only one brand, Neumarkter Lammsbräu, received a B-label with a score of 70%, and is on track towards sustainability. Eleven brands received a C-label and are on their way, but can do better: Gulpener (52%), Brand (48%), Amstel and Heineken (both 43%) as well as Beck's, Corona, Dommelsch, Jupiler, Hasseröder, Hertog Jan and Paulaner (all 39%). Nine brands received a D-label and should do better: Astra (35%), Warsteiner (30%), Alfa, Guinness and Krombacher (all 26%), Palm and Bitburger (both 22%) as well as Grolsch and Rothaus (both 17%). Twelve brands received the lowest label, E: Bavaria, Duvel, Leeuw Bier, Störtebeker and Veltins (all 9%), Augustiner, Jever, Flensburger, Oettinger, Radeberger and Sternburg (all 4%) as well as Erdinger (0%). Rank a Brand advises not to buy these brands until they have improved their sustainability performance.

Score	% correct	Advice
 A	75-100	Shop away!
 B	55-75	On track towards sustainability
 C	35-55	On its way, but can do better
 D	15-35	Should do better
 E	0-15	Better put your wallet away

Climate

The average score on criteria regarding climate impact is 26%. Neumarkter Lammsbräu and Brand received the highest score on climate impact (both 60%). Almost all brands, except Erdinger, communicate a policy to minimize, reduce or compensate their greenhouse gas emissions. Brand beer is the only one who achieved a greenhouse gas emissions efficiency level of below 5.5 kg CO₂(e) per hectolitre of production. Only Gulpener and Rothaus have at least 25% of their energy consumption derived from renewable sources.

Environment

The average score on criteria regarding environmental impact is 24%. Neumarkter Lammsbräu (48%) and Gulpener (35%) received the highest score on environmental impact. These two are the only brands who use at least 90% organic or otherwise environmentally certified ingredients. All other brands in this research have not reported to use at least 5% of such environmentally preferred ingredients.

More than half of the brands in this research (18 out of 33) have published the water footprint of their operations. Fourteen of them (42%) have achieved an average level of below 4 hectolitre water use per hectolitre of beer produced.

The majority of brands (76%) have published clear objectives to minimize the environmental impact of packaging or have already shown clear best practices regarding more sustainable packaging. Only one brand, Palm, has achieved more than 99.5% global recycling and reusing rate for its solid waste.

Trends

Compared to the previous update of 2015 we have seen some progress in the performance of beer brands on the criteria regarding climate impact. A few brands received a lower score, in particular Bavaria and Grolsch, due to the fact that we have now used global sustainability reporting instead of national data. Gulpener has lost its B-label due to insufficient reporting on greenhouse gas emissions efficiency, which left only one brand, Neumarkter Lammsbräu, in this category. The number of brands with a C-label however increased from 5 to 11, so the overall sustainability performance and transparency of the sector has improved somewhat.

4. Conclusions

Overall, the majority of the assessed beer brands are not performing very well on our criteria regarding climate impact and environmental protection, although there is some progress compared to last year. In particular, brands could improve on their use of organic and other environmentally certified ingredients, renewable energy, recycling, and reusing of production materials.

Only 12 out of 33 brands (36%) score more than 35% of the maximum score and get a B- or C-label. Still, this is an improvement compared to 2015, when only 7 out of 33 brands this score. Only one brand, Neumarkter Lammsbräu, received a B-label and shows the way forward for the beer industry. More brands might be able to get a higher score in our ranking, if they would improve on transparency and the tangible impacts of their global sustainability reporting.

Appendix 1. Criteria

Nr.	Criteria	Score perc.
	Climate impact	26%
1	Is there a policy for the brand (company) to minimize, reduce or compensate carbon emissions?	97%
2	Has the brand (company) disclosed the annual absolute carbon footprint of its 'own operations' (Scope 1 & 2) and has the brand already reduced or compensated 10% of these emissions in the last 5 years?	42%
3	Has the brand (company) set a target to reduce the carbon footprint of its 'own operations' by at least 20% within the next 5 years?	12%
4	Has the brand (company) achieved a carbon emissions efficiency level below 10 kg CO2 per hectolitre of production?	42%
5	Has the brand (company) achieved a carbon emissions efficiency level below 8,5 kg CO2 per hectolitre of production?	33%
6	Has the brand (company) achieved a carbon emissions efficiency level below 7 kg CO2 per hectolitre of production?	12%
7	Has the brand (company) achieved a carbon emissions efficiency level below 5,5 kg CO2 per hectolitre of production?	3%
8	Is at least 10% of the brand (company) consumption of energy derived from renewable sources?	12%
9	Is at least 25% of the brand (company) consumption of energy derived from renewable sources?	6%
10	Has the brand published its carbon footprint specifically for the transport of ingredients?	3%
	Environmental impact	26%
11	Does the brand use organic or otherwise environmentally certified raw materials for at least 5% of its volume?	6%
12	Does the brand use organic or otherwise environmentally certified raw materials for at least 10% of its volume?	6%
13	Does the brand use organic or otherwise environmentally certified raw materials for at least 25% of its volume?	6%
14	Does the brand use organic or otherwise environmentally certified raw materials for at least 50% of its volume?	6%
15	Does the brand use organic or otherwise environmentally certified raw materials for at least 75% of its volume?	6%
16	Does the brand use organic or otherwise environmentally certified raw materials for at least 90% of its volume?	6%
17	Does the brand (company) publish the water footprint of its 'own operations'?	55%
18	Has the brand achieved an average level of water use below 5 hectolitres per hectolitre of beer produced?	45%
19	Has the brand achieved an average level of water use below 4 hectolitres per hectolitre of beer produced?	42%

20	Does the brand have clear objectives to minimize the environmental impact of packaging or does the brand already show clear 'best practices' regarding more sustainable packaging?	76%
21	Does the brand have clear objectives to minimize the environmental impact of packaging, by reducing, re-using and recycling, and does the brand annually report on these results?	9%
22	Does the brand (company) have clear objectives to minimize waste, by reducing, re-using and recycling, and does the brand annually report the results?	42%
23	Has the brand achieved 99,5% global recycling and reusing rate for its solid waste?	3%

Appendix 2. Rank a Brand Research Team

[Rank a Brand](#) is an international NGO by and for consumers that assesses and ranks consumer brands in several sectors on sustainability and social responsibility.

The research was conducted by a team of qualified and trained rankers, led by Mario Dziamski (head of research) and Radboud van Delft (managing director).

The team consisted of: Daantje Berghuis, Jungyeon Choi, José Dams, Armida di Lorenzo, Tara Durieux, Hilary Haskell, Pia Henn, Irene Jonkman, Barry Konst, Eefje Notten, Annika Reinds, Heinz Rotter, Trix Vahl, and Maarten Wubben.