

Organic, Vegan, and Gluten-Free Beer

1. **Organic farming** is a form of agriculture which avoids the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, plant growth regulators, and livestock feed additives. As far as possible organic farmers rely on crop rotation, crop residues, animal manures and mechanical cultivation to maintain soil productivity and tilth, to supply plant nutrients, and to control weeds, insects and other pests. Certified Organic food products meet US government standards, and the production facilities are inspected by government-accredited agencies.

Because all of Merchant du Vin's organic beers are made from organic malt, hops and fruit, and because Samuel Smith and Pinkus are inspected by a USDA-accredited agency, they meet the USDA criteria to be called "Certified Organic" and proudly carry the USDA Organic logo.

Pinkus is certified through ABCERT AG, and Samuel Smith is certified through the UK Soil Association.

A note: some "organic" beers from other breweries are made from organic barley - relatively easy to source - and from non-organic hops. Organic hops are expensive and limited in supply.

2. **Vegan or veganism** (also known as strict vegetarianism or pure vegetarianism), as defined by The Vegan Society, is "a philosophy and way of living which seeks to exclude - as far as is possible and practical - all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose." A vegan (one who practices veganism) does not consume or use animal products, notably meat, fish, poultry, eggs, and dairy products.

All beers from Samuel Smith, Pinkus, Ayinger, Lindemans, Orval, Westmalle, Rochefort, Green's, and Zatec are vegan. (Sometimes, beers are clarified - or "fined" - with isinglass, a product derived from fish. Beers that are made using isinglass are not vegan.) Of MdV beers, only Samuel Smith is *registered* with The Vegan Society, a registered charity in the United Kingdom that promotes veganism.

Founded in Britain on November 1, 1944 by Donald Watson, The Vegan Society was the first-ever vegan society, in the process coining the word "vegan" for "non-dairy vegetarians." The word has since passed into common usage. The date of the society's founding, Nov. 1st, is now celebrated annually as World Vegan Day. Please note: The Vegan Society is not a government agency or entity.

3. **Gluten** is a protein found in wheat, barley, and rye. People who suffer from gluten intolerance, also known as celiac disease or celiac sprue, must avoid gluten in their diets - gluten disrupts the ability of their small intestine to function properly. Celiac disease appears to be significantly under-diagnosed, and may affect up to 1% of the US population, or up to 3,000,000 people in the US alone.

