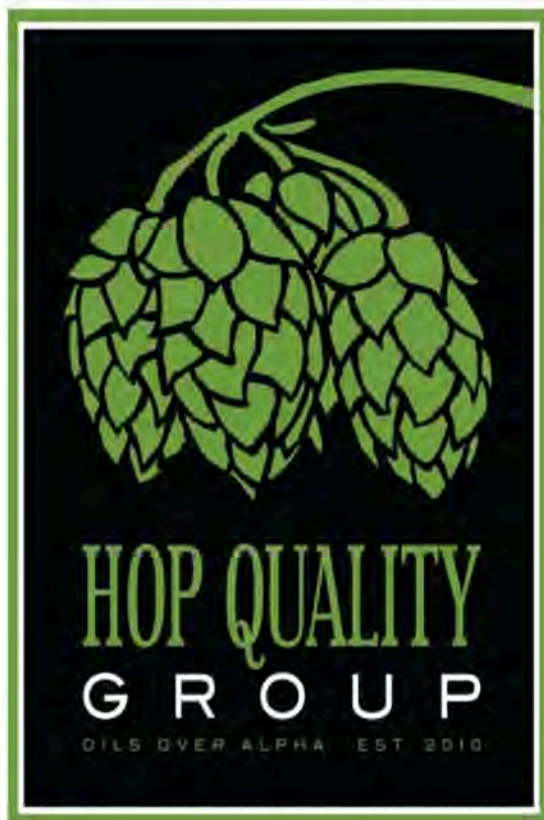


HQG Visit Date:	8/24/23
Farm/Facility:	Black Star Ranch
Picker Name & Grower Number(s):	WA355
Grower Name & Phone:	Ben and Ed St. Mary
Physical Address of Farm/Facility:	6005 Bell Rd., Yakima WA 98901 (Picking Facility); 6509 Gamache Rd, Moxee, WA 98936 (Office).
Email Address:	ben@bsr.farm; ed@bsr.farm
Picker Type(s) & Description:	Brand new Perrault Picker! Also have the older Dauenhauer.
Merchant Partners/Direct/Both?	Merchant

HQG Attendee & Brewery	
Jeremy Moynier – Stone Brewing	Sam Pecoraro – Von Ebert Brewing
Joe Mohrfeld – Pinthouse Brewing	
Krystal Angelo – Pinthouse Brewing	Pete Venegas - YCH
Aaron Inkrott – St. Arnold Brewing	Steve Lonneman - YCH



Operations Description:

Perrault Picker: 1st harvest. Had only run a few times before our visit. Updated design. The huge loader driving the hops into the picker is coming off of gravel, onto a cement area. The tires are airless and solid rubber so they pick up less debris than traditional tires; however, they do have someone inspecting and looking out for debris as well. They want to pave the entire outside but it's insanely expensive so it will have to be a future project. Kolmar negative air system. VFD distribution plenum for cleaning the plants. Insulation in Picker. Kick plates throughout the picker and closed flooring. 1 magnet in Picker which they check every shift. The dribble belts in this system are stickier to catch more material. Trash tunnel is very cool and underground! Gear boxes are not over any conveyance in new picker.

Dauenhauer Picker: idle this year because of reductions.

Kiln: 24 years old. Upgraded fans 2 years ago. Natural gas. Some insulation tears but not bad. Can expand the kiln out. Have plans to do 4 more beds in the future. It will go out over parking lot and that's why the trash tunnel is in place so you can build over it. 4-5 years ago, they re-did the kiln roof. Put in new diffusers with new fans that distribute the air which is better for drying. It's a slick recycle air system. It not only saves energy but improves quality. Discussed making sure trucks aren't idling outside kiln where machinery is stored to avoid fumes.

Conditioning/Baling: new room that's 4 years old. 24hr conditioning. Electric forklift with scoop. Pest control traps are labeled and no traps kept in the room during harvest—just outside by the doors. Magnet before baler that is checked every day. Bales sit outside overnight before being hauled away.

Other: nice sign-in system utilizing a QR code. Could use more signage throughout facility. Food grade lubes/oils throughout. They also do apples.

Areas of Concern:

Loader driving on gravel into picker.

Insulation tears in kiln.

Ambient storage for bales (but it's just overnight until truck picks up).

Improvements since last HQG visit (if applicable):

HQG last visited in 2018 and there have been massive upgrades since then.

Brand new state of the art Perrault Picker with top-of-the-line cleaners and air systems in a brand new building. It's a very impressive set-up with attention to detail to produce quality hops.

Underground trash tunnel.

Kiln fans were upgraded 2 years ago. Kiln roof was re-done 4-5 years ago.

Conditioning room is 4 years old.

QR code check-in process.

Recommendations:

Gravel and rocks outside of the picker are a concern but you have the loader with the special tires and dedicated inspection to help mitigate as well as plans in the future to pave outside.

Insulation tears: we see it all over the valley. Keep up on inspections and fix/patch areas of concern when they arise to avoid having that material fall into the hops.

Put in signage throughout the facility to remind team and visitors of safety, food-safety, etc.

We have recommended other farms to add kickplates and/or other solid material in walkways above open conveyance: you have done that from the start in the new picker!

Ensure trucks aren't idling outside kiln to prevent fumes from getting in – looks like you have already done this.

Additional Comments:

What hop varieties are grown? Acreage?

- Cascade, Chinook, Citra, Cluster, El Dorado, Mosaic, Pahto, Palisade, Simcoe. 800 acres, however this year doing 700 because of cuts. Dauenhauer is idle this year for that reason.

Does Grower plan any major upgrades in the near future?

- Pave the outside around facility. Add 4 more kiln beds when needed.

Does Grower operate multiple facilities? If yes, how many? Facility names and locations (grower numbers)?

- No.

Does Grower custom pick for anyone else? If yes, who?

- No.

What certifications does the grower possess, if any?

- Global Gap (2years). Green Chief.

Additional Comments about the operation?

- This was a very impressive visit. Thanks for letting HQG come to your farm. Every time we have visited we have seen upgrades and improvements. What you have done over the last 5 years is incredible. You have set up a world class hop processing facility! Your attention to detail and commitment to producing quality hops is very evident. We appreciate the partnership with HQG over the years. We hope you had a great harvest and we look forward to visiting again in the near future. Cheers!











