

# Creating Quality Standards

By Erik Fowler, White Labs

Quality is the most important aspect of any product. The [Brewers Association](#) defines quality as “a **beer** that is responsibly produced using wholesome ingredients, consistent **brewing** techniques and good manufacturing practices, which exhibits flavor characteristics that are consistently aligned with both the brewer's and the **beer** drinker's expectations.”

Quality should be the main focus of any opening brewery. Without quality, business success is difficult to achieve. With over 8,000 domestic breweries, the standard of quality is high and it's important to meet or exceed consumer expectations.

## What is a Quality Beer?

A quality beer is a beer free from defects that is consistent batch to batch. With that said, it doesn't mean you are prevented from making improvements. Customer preference and intention are the most important aspects in producing any product and if the customer perceives any change or inconsistency in quality it may irreparably damage the brand.

## Creating a Quality Program

Breweries set up quality assurance programs to monitor quality from ingredient quality and consistency to processes and finished goods. This can vary in scope and scale depending on the breweries' resources.

Organizations such as [American Society of Brewing Chemists](#), [Master Brewers Association of the Americas](#) and the [Brewers Association](#) all offer resources in building a quality assurance program and creating standards. You do not need a lab to create and implement a successful quality assurance program. Begin with documentation and the creation of standard operation procedures (SOP's). Ensuring your process and products are consistent is a great way to improving and replicating quality.

## The Next Steps

Determine what data collection points and analyses are beneficial for your organization and operating scale, document the processes and ensure your production is up to those standards.

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In addition to in house testing, White Labs offers a full suite of testing through our [TTB certified Analytical Lab](#) to compliment every brewery's need.



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*Erik has been with White Labs since 2014. Before coming to White Labs, he worked for: a prominent regional brewery, a nano-brewery, and several beer and wine focused retail outlets. He has led education classes on yeast handling, sensory techniques and QC. Erik holds his Cicerone® certification as well as a certificate in the Business of Craft Beer from San Diego State University. His objective is to use his knowledge and experience to make fermentation education informative, accessible and interesting.*