

Employee Handbook

Mission

Vermont Craft Mead is two brands working together to bring Craft Mead to the world so that we can teach people how to truly feast again.

What We Believe

The world has forgotten how to feast.

We believe that a feast is a space set apart from daily life where people feel that they are part of something bigger than themselves, surrounded by food, drink, and revelry.

Feasts are hallowed spaces which means that people must feel safe to be their full selves; you are welcome to the feast regardless of your age, sex, race, creed, gender, or ability. We believe that it is our duty to protect these spaces, being especially aware of the most vulnerable individuals and groups.

Feasting is about stewardship of community resources. We believe that all of our decisions as a company and as individuals can have an impact on the environment, so we educate ourselves and others to make sustainable choices. Our relationship with pollinators (bees) uniquely enables us to use our line of products to have a positive impact on the wider environment.

In all that we do, we remember that we are in the business of feasting.

How We Live Our Beliefs

Our product - whether mead, food, or event - must be of the highest quality, consistent, and meet the needs of our customers.

We make mead because it's a beverage that goes hand-in-hand with the feast; it's a way for us to tell our story and invite others to participate. We do not think it is fundamentally superior to other beverages, but we believe it is a powerful tool to tell our message.

We live our mission wherever there is a desire to be part of something bigger than oneself. This is why we have a Mead Hall, sponsor Ren Faires and Comic Cons, donate to nonprofits focused on community, and host inclusive events.

The little things matter. We maintain a sense of sacred space for our guests and coworkers through basic respect like cleanliness, tidiness, punctuality, and politeness.

To keep feasts a sacred space, we will always confront racism, sexism, and any attempt to belittle a group or individual. There is no feast without safety.

We as a company are strictly apolitical. We are happy to support positions and causes, but never parties or candidates.

We maintain the absolute highest standards of efficiency in our brewing and oversight in our sourcing, even if it reduces short-term profitability. We are stewards for the next generation of feasters.

Values

As a triple bottom line company:

- We believe that honest and accurate sales information combined with exceptional products are the only way to build the trust of our consumers and sustainably grow the profits of the company. Money is power, so we strive to acquire and use ours ethically.
- We believe that all of our decisions as a company and as individuals can have an impact on the environment, so we educate ourselves and others to make sustainable choices. Our relationship with pollinators (bees) uniquely enables us to use our line of products to have a positive impact on the wider environment.
- We believe that our employees are the foundation of who we are as a company. So, happy, healthy staff isn't just a goal, it's a nonnegotiable. We also remember that we are part of a larger community of individuals and business which call for mutual support.

Company Structure

Vermont Craft Mead is a legal DBA of Groennfell Meadery LLC and is a for profit manufacturing company. The full structure is given on the final page of this handbook.

Hiring Policies and Requirements

Basic Requirements

All employees of Vermont Craft Mead must be:

- (a) 21 years of age or older at the start of employment. Exceptions may be made
- (b) Fluent in English.
- (c) Free from prohibitions (religious or otherwise) against alcohol consumption except temporary conditions such as medical interdictions and pregnancy.
- (d) Eligible to work in the USA as verified by Employee Eligibility Verification form I-9.

Affirmative Action

It is our goal as a company to develop a supportive and diverse workforce. We are also aware that manufacturing in general and brewing specifically have traditionally been male-dominated industries. To this end, we seek to go beyond federally mandated Fair Hiring Practices and have instituted a voluntary Affirmative Action Program within the bounds of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

We will:

- Advertise job offerings in locations accessible to and frequented by traditionally underrepresented groups.
- Create policies to support individuals from traditionally underrepresented groups (see Work-Life Balance below).

- Hire and promote members of traditionally underrepresented groups when they are being considered alongside *equally qualified* individuals who do not fall into this category.
- Follow the Gender Equality Principles as outlined at www.genderprinciples.org/principles.php.

We will not:

- Create practices and qualifications that unfairly discriminate against a group or groups of people, (e.g. requiring that all staff be capable of lifting full kegs, which would skew hiring towards able-bodied men).
- Select against a more qualified individual who is *not* from a traditionally underrepresented group, (a process known as “reverse discrimination”).
- Go to “unreasonable lengths” to find hires from traditionally underrepresented groups at the expense of employing other individuals.
- Set specific proportions for gender or minority hiring parity which could violate the above rules.

Work-Life Balance

Working at a meadery can involve long and irregular hours, but we do our best to provide everyone access to time-off and as regular a schedule as their position will allow. We offer:

- Flexible work options and hours upon request and within the limits of the position, (e.g. jobs which involve a great deal of design work and social media may be done from home and at the employee’s preferred schedule).
- Opportunities to rework a position to meet personal life changes and goals, (e.g. a brewer may be allowed to take on more mobile work such as supply-chain management to allow for travel or family requirements).
- Paid parental leave for all genders for both birth and adoption, with full wage replacement for 4 weeks. (Available after 6 months with the company.)
- Extended parental leave for all genders for both birth and adoption. Employees may take up to 9 months off unpaid and return to their position at the same pay-rate and hours. Employees may also opt to take advantage of our flexible working arrangement to modify their position as per the previous bullet point.
- Space for young children as well as space for nursing mothers. Parents are welcome to bring their children to work so long as advance notice is given and a safe space is prepared either at the meadery or at the venue of employment.

Breastfeeding/Pumping Policy

All employees who are breastfeeding will be allowed reasonable breaks for breastfeeding or pumping as well as a clean, private location for doing so. This policy will cover a woman as long as she is breastfeeding with no limitation based on the age of the child.

We will also supply refrigeration and freezer space for breast milk provided that the milk is properly dated and labeled.

General Standards of Conduct

The entire staff of Vermont Craft Mead is held to an extremely high standard of knowledge, comportment, and ethics. We pride ourselves on being the best of the best in everything from mead knowledge to personal presentation to commitment to our environment.

We will offer guidance if we feel that you are not meeting our company standards. Failure to heed spoken guidance will be met with a specific warning, request for correction, and time frame in which to make the correction. Failure to respond to the request for correction in the allotted time will be grounds for dismissal.

Knowledge

Every member of the staff is expected to be able to accurately represent the products we make and the process by which we make them. It is understood that most staff will be hired with relatively little knowledge of mead and mead making, so we will:

- Take responsibility for providing you with clear and accurate information about mead making, mead history, our production, and common questions you might receive.
- Offer you opportunities to try a variety of mead products to expand your knowledge of the subject.
- Correct you privately if you make a mistake or need further education/clarification on a subject.
- Hold the entire staff to the highest standards of citability in our statements and claims whether they are in print or in person.

Comportment and Dress

Whenever representing Vermont Craft Mead in any capacity, official or unofficial, you are expected to dress appropriately and comport yourself as is befitting a member of the Vermont Craft Mead Family. Specifically, we request that:

- Your clothing be well-fitting and suited to the occasion. Wearing rubber waders to a Chamber of Commerce meet-and-greet is as inappropriate as wearing a tuxedo on a brew day or another brand's shirt while working the taps at an event. Brewers have a fairly relaxed dress-code, but we will ask you to change your clothing if it is deemed inappropriate or unsafe. (Other breweries' swag is appropriate at onsite events, just not offsite events.)
- You be mindful that we are all part of a larger community; all people you interact with have inherent worth and dignity and we ask that you remember that.
- You be respectful of other people's thoughts and opinions whether you agree with them or not. This does not mean that you may not seek to inform people who have non-scientific views or lack data, but seek to inform in a compassionate and non-confrontational manner.
- You take note of and practice all of the more specific guidelines presented in our employee alcohol consumption documents and other sections of this document such as the Sexual Harassment Policy.
- Comply with all regulations of the venue in which you are working; some hotels, ski mountains, etc. may have specific dress codes and safety protocols more stringent than our own.

Alcohol Consumption Policy

Being that consuming alcohol is an essential part of the meadmaking process;

And being that consuming alcohol at company functions is an anticipated part of the job;

And being that alcohol consumption can lead to intoxication which has attendant risks in the workplace for the safety of the employee, customer, and product;

And being that the safety of customers and employees as well as the quality of our product is of the utmost importance to the company;

Groennfell meadery has in place the following rules governing alcohol consumption by employees at the facility:

When working behind the bar at the Mead Hall or an outside event:

- Employees must follow current Vermont DLC standards

Any time an employee is at the facility during open hours or representing the company in any capacity he/she:

- May not appear visibly intoxicated
- May not participate in activities which have the express purpose of inducing intoxication (e.g. drinking games, keg stands)
- As stated above, may not consume any alcohol while serving alcohol to customers

On active brewing days, shipping/receiving days, and any time an employee uses heavy machinery or ladders, in addition to the above regulations, employees:

- May consume no more alcohol than is required to complete the task (sampling for transfers, bottling, etc.) and never more than one alcoholic beverage in total before the completion of the day's work
- May request an unpaid break if they feel that intoxication may make them unfit for an activity or unsafe in the working environment, regardless of how much has been consumed

Ethics

Regardless of whether you are actively on the job or not, you are a representative of Vermont Craft Mead and your behavior reflects on the company. To this end, we ask that you be mindful of our company values and that you:

- Make decisions which support our commitment to community.
- Respond compassionately to the concerns of others.
- Report any behavior of a fellow staff member that you deem unsafe or unethical after first confronting the individual (if possible).
- Remember that alcohol is, technically, a poison and that it is all of our responsibility to make sure that it is being consumed in a safe and responsible manner. This means going above and beyond Vermont standards of manufacturing and pouring.

Sexual Harassment Policy

It is against the policies of this employer, and illegal under state and federal law, for any employee, male or female, to sexually harass another employee. This employer is committed to providing a workplace free from this unlawful conduct. It is a violation of this policy for an employee to engage in sexual harassment.

What is "sexual harassment"?

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- (1) submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;
- (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a component of the basis for employment decisions affecting that individual; or
- (3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to the following, when such acts or behavior come within one of the above definitions:

- either explicitly or implicitly conditioning any term of employment (e.g. continued employment, wages, evaluation, advancement, assigned duties or shifts) on the provision of sexual favors;
- touching or grabbing a sexual part of an employee's body;
- touching or grabbing any part of an employee's body after that person has indicated, or it is known, that such physical contact was unwelcome;
- continuing to ask an employee to socialize on or off-duty when that person has indicated s/he is not interested;
- displaying or transmitting sexually suggestive pictures, objects, cartoons, or posters if it is known or should be known that the behavior is unwelcome;
- continuing to write sexually suggestive notes or letters if it is known or should be known that the person does not welcome such behavior;
- referring to or calling a person a sexualized name if it is known or should be known that the person does not welcome such behavior;
- regularly telling sexual jokes or using sexually vulgar or explicit language in the presence of a person if it is known or should be known that the person does not welcome such behavior;
- retaliation of any kind for having filed or supported a complaint of sexual harassment (e.g. ostracizing the person, pressuring the person to drop or not support the complaint, adversely altering that person's duties or work environment, etc.);
- derogatory or provoking remarks about or relating to an employee's sex or sexual orientation;
- harassing acts or behavior directed against a person on the basis of his or her sex or sexual orientation;
- off-duty conduct which falls within the above definition and affects the work environment.

What this employer will do if it learns of possible sexual harassment

In the event this employer receives a complaint of sexual harassment, or otherwise has reason to believe that sexual harassment is occurring, it will take all necessary steps to ensure that the matter is promptly investigated and addressed. The employer is committed, and required by law, to take action if it learns of potential sexual harassment, even if the aggrieved employee does not wish to formally file a complaint. Every supervisor is responsible for promptly responding to, or reporting, any complaint or suspected acts of sexual harassment. Supervisors should report to Ricky Klein (who has been designated to receive such complaints or reports), or to Kelly Klein Failure by a supervisor to appropriately report or address such sexual harassment complaints or suspected acts shall be considered to be in violation of this policy.

Care will be taken to protect the identity of the person with the complaint and of the accused party or parties, except as may be reasonably necessary to successfully complete the investigation. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee who learns of the investigation or complaint to take any retaliatory action which affects the working environment of any person involved in this investigation.

If the allegation of sexual harassment is found to be credible, this employer will take appropriate corrective action. The employer will inform the complaining person and the accused person of the results of the investigation and what actions will be taken to ensure that the harassment will cease and that no retaliation will occur. Any employee, supervisor, or agent who has been found by the employer to have harassed another employee will be subject to sanctions appropriate to the circumstances, ranging from a verbal warning up to and including dismissal.

If the allegation is not found to be credible, the person with the complaint and the accused person shall be so informed, with appropriate instruction provided to each, including the right of the complainant to contact any of the state or federal agencies identified in this policy notice.

What you should do if you believe you have been harassed

Any employee who believes that she or he has been the target of sexual harassment, or who believes she or he has been subjected to retaliation for having brought or supported a complaint of harassment, is encouraged to directly inform the offending person or persons that such conduct is offensive and must stop. If the employee does not wish to communicate directly with the alleged harasser or harassers, or if direct communication has been ineffective, then the person with the complaint is encouraged to report the situation as soon as possible to her or his supervisor, or to **Kelly Klein** at kelly@groennfell.com or 802-333-0158 (the head of this organization). It is helpful to an investigation if the employee keeps a diary of events and the names of people who witnessed or were told of the harassment, if possible.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with this employer's action, or is otherwise interested in doing so, she or he may file a complaint by writing or calling any of the following state or federal agencies:

Vermont Attorney General's Office, Civil Rights Unit, 109 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05609, tel: (802) 828- 3171 (voice/TDD). Complaints should be filed within 300 days of the adverse action.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02114, tel: (617) 565-3200 (voice), (617) 565-3204 (TDD). Complaints must be filed within 300 days of the adverse action.

Each of these agencies can conduct impartial investigations, facilitate conciliation, and if it finds that there is probable cause or reasonable grounds to believe sexual harassment occurred, it may take the case to court. Although employees are encouraged to file their complaint of sexual harassment through this employer's complaint procedure, an employee is not required to do so before filing a charge with these agencies.

In addition, a complainant also has the right to hire a private attorney, and to pursue a private legal action in state court within 3 or 6 years, depending on the type of claims raised.

[Where can I get copies of this policy?](#)

A copy of this policy will be provided to every employee, and extra copies will be available in the following office: 650 Industrial Park Road, St. Albans, VT 05478. Reasonable accommodations will be provided for persons with disabilities who need assistance in filing or pursuing a complaint of harassment, upon advance request.

Anti-Discrimination Policy

It is against the policies of this employer for any employee to discriminate against or harass another employee or a customer. Examples of discrimination include, but are not limited to, treating an individual differently based on race, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, etc. Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to, bullying, unwanted teasing, or other unwanted verbal or physical interaction.

[If you believe you have been harassed or have been the victim of discrimination:](#)

Any employee who believes that she or he has been the target of harassment or discrimination, who has witnessed an employee harassing or discriminating against a customer, or who believes she or he has been subjected to retaliation for having brought or supported a complaint of harassment or discrimination, is encouraged to directly inform the offending person or persons that such conduct is offensive and must stop. If the employee does not wish to communicate directly with the alleged harasser or harassers, or if direct communication has been ineffective, then the person with the complaint is encouraged to report the situation as soon as possible to **Kelly Klein** at kelly@groenfell.com or 802-333-0158 (the head of this organization). It is helpful to an investigation if the employee keeps a diary of events and the names of people who witnessed or were told of the harassment or discrimination, if possible.

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Smoking Policy

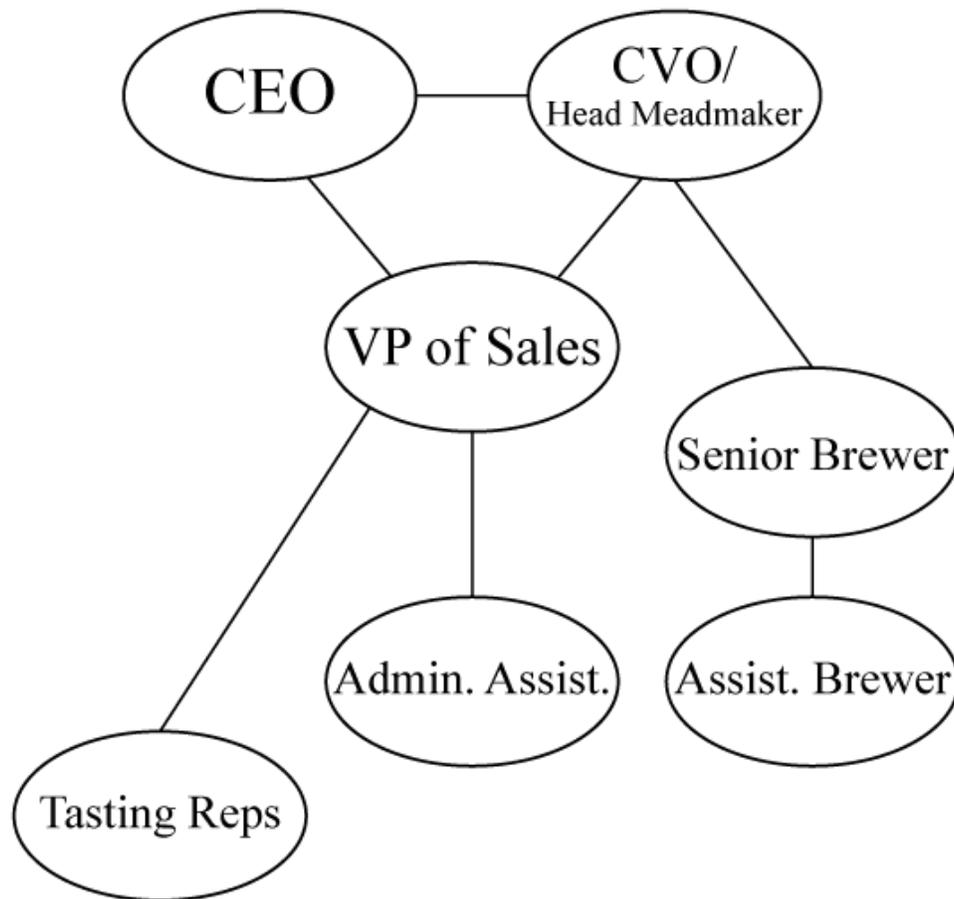
Smoking is really, really bad for you, and we strongly recommend that you don't use any tobacco products. If you do use tobacco products, however, the rules are as follows:

- No tobacco products may be used within the meadery. This includes chewing tobacco and e-cigarettes.
- Smoking is allowed outdoors 20 feet or further from all building entrances.
- You may not use any tobacco products while handling company products, e.g. no chewing tobacco while pouring pints (even off premise) and no smoking while carrying cases.
- You may not represent our company while smoking or smelling of smoke.

Safety and Security

Brewing can be a dangerous process, so we hold ourselves accountable both to VOSHA standards (<http://labor.vermont.gov/vosha>) and our own specific practices outlined in our Safety Protocols which can be found in hardcopy at the office at the Meadery and digitally in the DropBox Folder Groennfell→Operations→Safety Protocols.

Organizational Structure



CEO: Kelly Klein

Chief Visionary Officer/Head Meadmaker: Ricky Klein

VP of Sales: Marinna Wojciechowski

Senior Brewer: Nate Palm

Administrative Assistant: Jake Gorton

Assistant Brewer: Jake Gorton

(Current as of July 9, 2019)