Wirral-based artisan gin company switches manufacturing to vital production of hand sanitiser during COVID-19 crisis

Monday 30 March, 2020

Tappers Gin, Wirral's independent family-run Distillery, is joining a growing number of producers that are switching production to hand sanitiser. They hope to make a small but vital contribution to tackle the ongoing shortage across the UK which is also affecting key workers on the front line in the fight against COVID-19.

"We work with ethanol (alcohol) on a daily basis to produce our gin and it's a key component in the World Health Organisation's recommended formula for hand sanitiser", explained Founder & Managing Director, Dr Steve Tapril.

"Production-wise, it isn't such a leap from making gin but we've had to acquire new licenses and obtain approval to go ahead. We want to do our part where we can", adds Tapril.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that hand sanitiser has an alcohol content of 80% (v/v) - something only achievable for those who are already working with the purest, industrial-strength alcohol such as a gin distillery like Tappers. But it isn't for drinking, Tapril explained:

"It's for external use only, of course. While ethanol is the main component, we've also added hydrogen peroxide and glycerol – the glycerol helps to soften and reduce the loss of moisture from your hands."

Helping to solve the shortage isn't all that Tappers want to achieve by switching production. They've gone the extra step with a pledge to set aside a portion of all proceeds so they can produce, and then donate, sanitiser to front line workers, and others most in need, during the crisis.

The Distillery is based less than a mile from Wirral's Arrowe Park Hospital so it's no surprise that Tappers are looking to support their local community.

"We thought about fundraising at first but realised we could make a more practical contribution by donating sanitiser. Rather than crowdfunding or asking for help up front to fund production, we took the plunge since the need is there right now. We're instead using proceeds from sales to those who are less in need, to cover our costs and produce sanitiser that we can then donate to those who are most in need", Tapril explained.

The Distillery has described this as a communal effort and notes that "we are all in this together".

Customers who purchase their no-frills liquid hand sanitiser, which is available to order for £7.50 inc VAT (200ml) from the Distillery's website at https://www.tappersgin.com/shop, will have some comfort in these troubling times knowing that their purchase will enable vital donations to be made.

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