

Brooklyn Brewery and Yolélé Collaborate to Release 'Fonio Rising' Beer Worldwide, Celebrating Culinary Heritage and Illuminating the Super-Grain's High Potential in both Sustainability and Empowering Smallholder Farmers in Africa

9/27/2023

'Fonio Rising' will be Rolling Out at Whole Foods Market Stores Across the U.S. Starting Early October

BROOKLYN, N.Y.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Today, global craft beer innovator **Brooklyn Brewery** announces the launch of **Fonio Rising**, a distinctive and delicious craft beer made with the climate-resistant, ancient West African grain fonio, meticulously brewed in collaboration with purpose-driven food business **Yolélé**, whose mission is to bring underutilized African ingredients like fonio to global tables. Led by the visionary and James Beard Award-winning Brewmaster **Garrett Oliver**, Brooklyn Brewery has been working with fonio - which has long been a source of income for the most rural of African communities - since 2019, paving the way for this remarkable creation. **Fonio Rising Double Pilsner** (6.4% ABV) is an invigorating golden lager that exudes a robust and crisp profile, featuring vibrant tropical fruit notes. The beer will be available at **Whole Foods Market** stores across the U.S. starting early October, and in Brooklyn Brewery's Williamsburg-based **Tasting Room**.

From left to right: Pierre Thiam of Yolélé, Garrett Oliver of Brooklyn Brewery (Photo: Business Wire)

Known as the "seed of the universe," fonio - a grain in the millet family, which has thrived

in West Africa for over 5,000 years - has gained significant attention recently for its exceptional nutritional profile

and culinary versatility, and even recognized as part of the **UN's declaration that 2023 is "the year of the millet."** In 2019, Garrett Oliver reached out to the esteemed Senegalese Chef Pierre Thiam, whose pioneering food company Yolélé has played a pivotal role in introducing fonio to the Western world. Inspired by **Chef Thiam's insightful TED talk**, Oliver swiftly recognized the immense potential of this ancient grain, embarking on a mission to craft a beer that pays homage to its extraordinary heritage while supporting the smallholder farms in West Africa.

Since then, Garrett Oliver has emerged as the foremost authority on utilizing fonio in the brewing process. Prior to the creation of Fonio Rising, fonio has been featured in a number of limited releases. Last year, Brooklyn Brewery and Yolélé's first partnership, **Brooklyn Brewery x Yolélé Fonio White Beer**, was released regionally in the U.S., as was the Brewery's collaboration with Run The Jewels, a beer dubbed 36" Chain. Additionally, in 2021, fonio was used in Seed, Stalk And Root, a dark lager brewed in partnership with U.S. based Cajun Fire Brewing Co. And most recently, in the UK, Brooklyn Brewery teamed up for a fonio session IPA release with renowned impact beer brand Brewgooder.

Garrett Oliver explains: "No fertilizers, no irrigation, no pesticides, no insecticides, no fungicides - nothing. Whether you look at it from an environmental perspective, a social benefit perspective for the farming communities, or from a brewing perspective, fonio is so good that it seems like someone must have just made it up. But fonio is real, and Africa grows 700,000 tons of it every year. Fonio is easy to brew with and gives beautiful flavors to beer. This is very exciting stuff, and I can easily envision a future where fonio is widely used as an everyday brewing ingredient, bringing vast benefits to brewers, beer drinkers, farmers and the planet."

What sets fonio apart is its ability to flourish in areas where other crops struggle. In arid regions near the Sahel Desert, this highly nutritious and gluten-free grain thrives in nutrient-poor soil without the need for fertilizers or pesticides. Remarkably drought-resistant, fonio helps regenerate the soil within a short two-month growing period, resulting in bountiful harvests and providing a vital source of income for rural communities in fonio-farming countries. Fonio can play a key role in our efforts to forge a sustainable, biodiverse food system that addresses the effects of climate change.

Fonio Rising epitomizes Brooklyn Brewery's unwavering commitment to bringing new ideas and flavors to its communities at home and across the globe. Working in conjunction with Yolélé, Brooklyn Brewery has created an exceptional beer that harmoniously blends innovation and tradition, drawing inspiration from Africa's rich, thousands year-old beer heritage. Simultaneously, it pays homage to and financially rewards the relentless efforts of predominantly female-led smallholder farms in West Africa, who persevere in cultivating fonio to safeguard its legacy for future generations. Fonio Rising stands as a testament to Brooklyn Brewery's dedication to excellence, diversity, and celebrating the vibrant cultural tapestry that unites beer enthusiasts worldwide.

DISTRIBUTION: Fonio Rising will be sold in a 4PK of 16oz cans, available at Whole Foods Markets across the United States starting in October.

For updates and more information on Fonio Rising, **please click here.**

ABOUT BROOKLYN BREWERY:

Brooklyn Brewery is a leading global independent craft brewer and a pioneer of the American craft beer revolution. From our home in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, we draw inspiration from our local community of innovators and those always in the making to spread the culture and creativity of craft beer to over 30 states and more than 30 countries on 5 continents. Learn more at **brooklynbrewery.com**.

Sarah Usher

SU PR, Inc.

sarah@sarahusherpr.com

Source: Brooklyn Brewery