



Steven Balster
Director of Barley Operations, Anheuser-Busch, Inc.

Virtually all of Steve Balster's life has revolved around grains. But for him, one grain shines more than the rest. As director of barley operations for Anheuser-Busch, Steve knows a thing or two about barley, better known as the soul of beer. For the past 21 years, Steve's been working to harvest the best natural barley grain used to brew the world-famous Anheuser-Busch beers.

As one of the key ingredients in beer, Steve's knowledge for selecting the best batches of barley has earned him the nickname "The Barley Guy." While other ingredients such as hops add to a beer's bitterness, barley remains the life-blood of the beer – giving it both richness and flavor.

Raised in southern Minnesota, Steve's passion for agriculture began at an early age. His father managed a Farmers Coop Elevator catering to local farmers' feed, fertilizer and grain needs. After graduating college where he earned his degree in agricultural economics, Steve joined Anheuser-Busch.

Today he shares his knowledge and passion for barley with growers, teaching them about the importance of timely planting and watering and careful harvesting and handling of the grain. These steps are crucial to making sure the best barley makes it in to each batch of Anheuser-Busch beers. Steve is also an industry representative for the Idaho Barley Commission.

Steve feels fortunate to travel all over the United States and witness firsthand all of the hard work and dedication barley growers exhibit each day to supply Anheuser-Busch with the finest-quality barley in the world.

As the father of five and grandfather of nine, Steve keeps busy with both work and family and enjoys every minute of his time with both. In his personal time, Steve enjoys camping, trail riding or partaking in regular hunting trips with his wife. He also enjoys an occasional round of golf. A trip to Alaska or an African safari rank high on Steve's list of dream vacations.