



EUROPEAN
BIOTECH
WEEK



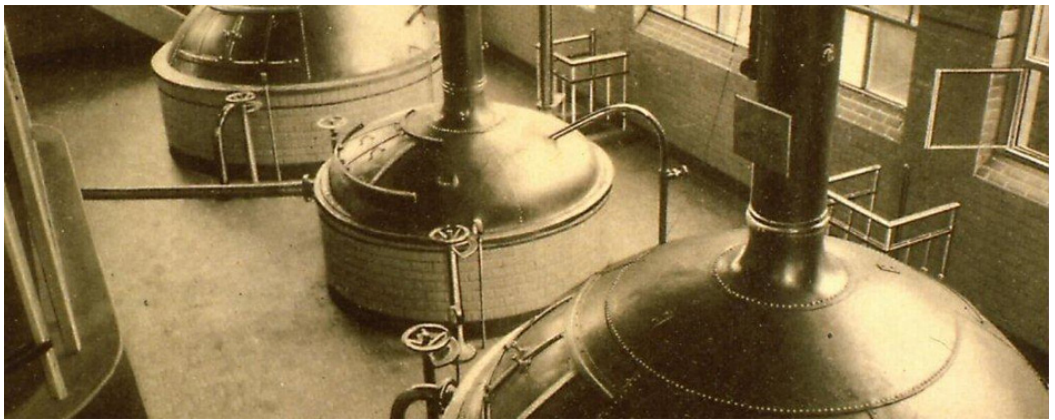
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What's the link between biotech and beer?

What does one of the world's oldest prepared beverages, possibly dating back to the early Neolithic or 9500 BC and that may have been instrumental in the formation of civilisations*, have in common with a cutting edge science like biotechnology?



* "Archeologists Link Rise of Civilization and Beer's Invention – Tech Talk – CBS News". cbsnews.com. 8 November 2010. Retrieved 10 November 2010.



Biotechnology is the use of living systems and organisms to develop or make useful products.

In fact, the history of biotechnology began with focusing on brewing techniques to produce beer so you see biotech & beer do have a whole lot in common!

Almost any substance containing sugar can naturally undergo alcoholic fermentation with the help of a microorganism. In the case of beer, yeast is the living system or microorganism that helps convert the starch source (malted barley with or without the addition of a secondary starch source, such as maize, rice or sugar) and hops into alcohol and carbon dioxide.

Brewing encompasses many aspects of science: biotechnology in the conversion of starch into alcohol, biochemistry in the choice and dosage of the ingredients and analysis of the final output; microbiology in the selection of yeast strains and their culture as well as engineering for the actual building of breweries as well as of the vats, known as bioreactors, where fermentation takes place.

So, can you guess what the other ancient biotech product is? Find out more on www.biotechweek.org/biotech-in-your-life.html and cheers!

