NCADD
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG DEPENDENCE, INC.

**Plan for 3-Ounce Alcohol Drink Falls Flat**

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State regulators recently rejected a brewer's plans to sell 3-ounce vials of high-alcohol malt beverage in North Carolina, saying they feared it would entice teens to drink.

Stout Brewing wanted to sell its Stout 21 malt beverage in grocery and convenience stores in such flavors as Margarita, Screwdriver and Apple Pie. The company bills the product as a "Flavored Alcoholic Shooter."

Mike Herring, administrator for the state Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission, noted that the 3-ounce can with the twist-off cap contains as much alcohol as a 12-ounce beer.

"In a matter of minutes, a person can gulp that container down and take one of these (four) packs and gulp it four times and have the equivalent of four, high-proof, 12-ounce beers," Herring told the ABC board. "You can just keep drinking these and drinking these, and the next thing you know, it's going to hit you, and you're not going to realize how much alcohol you've had."

Stout 21 would most likely appeal to underage drinkers, he said, because they could conceal the small container in a pocket or backpack. Also, the unusual packaging would make it harder for parents and law enforcement officers to recognize it as an alcoholic beverage, he said.

Mike Adams, an attorney for Stout Brewing, said the company wanted to make a safe and responsible product and designed the 3-ounce can to "stand out" so it could be marketed better to 21- to 35-year-olds.

There was never any intent to appeal to teens, Adams said, adding that the smaller beverage is for consumers who don't want "to be filled up."

"It allows the consumer to very appropriately regulate the quantity of alcohol they consume," he said.

Adams complained that ABC regulations don't spell out rules for the size and shape of containers, adding that Stout Brewing has already purchased the equipment to make the 3-ounce can at its

Kings Mountain brewery.

The $2.1 million brewery opened last year and employs 32 people in an area with a 10.6 percent unemployment rate.

Commissioners weren't swayed, however, voting unanimously against Stout 21.

"This vial you're trying to approve is less than half the size of anything we've ever approved with that content of alcohol," Commissioner Joel Keith said.

ABC Chairman Jim Gardner, a former lieutenant governor, said he worries about his three young granddaughters.

"I'm very much concerned about the underage drinking problems in our state," Gardner said. "We're going to do everything we can possibly can – in the area of underage drinking, to do what we possibly can – to turn the tide somehow."

Stout Brewing owner Cody Sommer was disappointed with the decision and said his management team would have to reassess the situation.

"We still feel correct that our product is not marketed to underage drinkers, and we still feel that way and that's how we're going to move forward," Sommer said.

*Source:* http://www.wral.com/plan-for-3-ounce-alcohol-drink-falls-flat/12247819/