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## 20% vinegar

Posted by [David Doncaster](#)

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[David Doncaster](#)

[20% vinegar](#)

April 18, 2018 05:35PM

Can anyone tell me if 20% vinegar has been made a registered herbicide in the US as it has been in Canada . At \$125 per 5 liters is it worth a trip across the border ?

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 50

David

[Hillview Heritage Farm](#)

Zone 5\*in British Columbia

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[David Maxwell](#)

[Re: 20% vinegar](#)

April 18, 2018 09:09PM

Fascinating question. First, why are you trying to kill vegetation in the first place, (given Michael's enthusiasm for a robust ecosystem) Second, why does 20% vinegar cost \$125 in the first place? And is there any way to brew your own vinegar from cyder, with a higher percentage of acetic acid than 5%? (And is there an easy way of converting X% of EtOH to Y% of acetic acid?)

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 197

[Broomholm Orchard](#)

Zone 5b in Nova Scotia

[Reply](#) [Quote](#)

[David Doncaster](#)

[Re: 20% vinegar](#)

April 18, 2018 11:12PM

Well David , some weeds you just don't want ,Rush Skeleton weed , Scotch Thistle . These guys have made the gov. most unwanted list . If I ignore them the local authorities will come do it at great expence and with stuff I don't want on the property . The poison Ivy , I'm just getting tired of finding it's new hiding spots . These you usually find when you get caught short in the middle of the orchard and just aren't going to make it back to the house . I was able to manage it some before with the vinegar .

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 50

As for the vinegar it's self , someone registered it about 5yrs ago and that is now the asking price .

I've been looking in to making my own but it has been suggested that the best I might do is like wine maybe 15 to 17 % . But still looking .

David

[Hillview Heritage Farm](#)

Zone 5\*in British Columbia

[Reply](#) [Quote](#)

[David Maxwell](#)

[Re: 20% vinegar](#)

April 19, 2018 12:22AM

Makes eminent sense.

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 197

If you start with 16% alcohol, and convert it into acetic acid, do you get 16% acetic acid (vinegar)? (My gut feeling is , "No", but I would have devote a lot more mental energy to the question than I feel up to just now.) And, if so, is there any evidence that 16% vinegar is any less effective than 20%? (I presume that there is some evidence that 20% is more effective than 5%...)

[Broomholm Orchard](#)

Zone 5b in Nova Scotia

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[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 226

[Re: 20% vinegar](#)

April 20, 2018 02:45PM

David Maxwell Wrote:

> If you start with 16% alcohol, and convert it into  
> acetic acid, do you get 16% acetic acid (vinegar)?

The answer to that one is approximately, yes. But I guess we don't need absolute precision here...

So, I guess one way to make it at home would be to start with a concentrated juice (maybe concentrated in a similar way as for ice cider) or with a highly chaptalised juice, ferment this to about 15 to 17 alcohol, which is the maximum yeast will go - you'd probably need to use special yeast often called "turbo yeast" which are more tolerant to alcohol.

Then I would bring the cider to over 20% ABV by addition of bought high ABV alcohol.

And finally transform the mixture into vinegar.

Lots of fun in perspective!

Claude

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

Author, [The New Cider Maker's Handbook](#)

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[Joanne Patton](#)

[Re: 20% vinegar](#)

October 30, 2018 03:47AM

Registered: 7 years ago

Posts: 62

Just saw this yesterday in [Seven Springs Farm](#) catalog. They now carry 30% vinegar and it's only \$21/gallon. The note in the catalog says, "Expected to be registered with the EPA next year for use as a herbicide. OMRI Listed" Seven Springs is in Virginia and they do ship.

Joanne Patton, Squire Oaks Farm

Zone 6A, Northern Virginia

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[Karen Brindle](#)

[Re: 20% vinegar](#)

January 17, 2019 07:26AM

Registered: 9 years ago

Posts: 103

Has anyone used this 30% vinegar with success on thistle or blackberry? Those are our 2 orchard invaders, thistle is especially a problem.

[Vista Ridge Orchard](#)

Zone 8a in Washington

235 Cider and heritage apple trees, 72 varieties,

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[gloria bell](#)

[Re: 20% vinegar](#)

July 20, 2019 09:46PM

Registered: 5 years ago

Posts: 20

oh how I would love to kill blind weed/morning glory but I think these will be around to end of time.....

Watching this thread!

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[Paul Weir](#)

[Re: 20% vinegar](#)

December 14, 2019 11:36PM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 187

My experience with concentrated vinegar has been in feedback from others locally utilizing it here in Northern California on wild blackberry and invasive bermudagrass mainly. Both were top killed with 20% vinegar (and a hearty soaking) but soon resprouted from their extensive roots. Consider the vegetation you are targeting as to whether it would likely to be killed by this approach -- I suspect many annuals are more likely to suffer than established perennials. As biennials and perennials go, I have heard it is much more effective on thistle than on blackberry.

The heavy saturation required makes me wonder what damage we are doing to the soil biology we all wish to foster in our orchards and around our trees. Concentrated vinegar is deadly aggressive on those organisms I would imagine.

If you must go this route, I would plan to do multiple applications but be VERY careful as 20% and greater acetic acid is caustic and will cause skin and eye damage if you get it on yourself. . . do not underestimate this stuff . . . wear proper and adequate eye and skin protection!

[Gopher Hill Apples](#)

Zone 8 in California

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[Todd Parlo](#)

Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 301

[Re: 20% vinegar](#)

January 03, 2020 06:07PM

Since acetic acid freezes around 62 degrees and water at 32 you should be able to use fractional freezing to concentrate the mixture. A good method would be to begin as Claude instructed by freeze concentrating the juice (or post fermentation to concentrate the alcohol) and then go the vinegar route. The concentrated fraction should be the frozen portion for acid concentration, unlike the sugar/alcohol concentrations above. Also, since acetic acid boils at 244.6 degrees, concentration should be possible through heating. Hopefully a chemist out there will confirm or refute this.

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[Steve Dagger](#)

[Re: 20% vinegar](#)

April 20, 2020 08:17PM

Registered: 9 years ago

Posts: 28

I'll second Paul's comments. I've used 25% vinegar product as a spray bottle applied targeted treatment on individual plants. Research I read says very little gets absorbed into the root system and biennial and perennial plants will recover unless the top is killed back repeatedly and the root reserves are depleted. The product peddlers say you have to really saturate the plant to get root absorption and that translates to a lot of vinegar per plant. I didn't find it a practical, cost effective solution for weed control using a spot treatment approach though persistently walking your weed patches with a backpack sprayer would probably help control some of the problem weeds over time. I wouldn't recommend any kind of broadcast application for the reasons Paul mentions above.

[Pommes de Terre Acres](#)

USDA Zone 5 - Dixon, Montana

Intermountain West Region

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