



## Cider press cloth by the bolt

Posted by [Paul Weideman](#)

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[Paul Weideman](#)

[Cider press cloth by the bolt](#)

February 23, 2016 07:59PM

Registered: 7 years ago

Posts: 13

I am restoring a 1905 Mt Gilead cider press. It's a 36" rack and cloth press. I found the original catalog that suggests 64" press cloths for 36" racks. I prefer to use polypropylene woven cloth for it's strength and ease of cleaning. Oesko sells polypropylene press cloths but they are expensive. Does anyone have any experience finding a supplier of polypropylene cloth by the bolt.? We would hem the edges ourselves, plus have enough back up cloth in case of a blow out. It should be much more affordable by the bolt. Plus, any thoughts on mesh size? Oesko press cloth is .65 lbs per square yard. Weight vs mesh size? [[www.oescoinc.com](http://www.oescoinc.com)]

Paul

Paul Weideman

Fencerow Cider

Imlay City, MI

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

[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

[Re: Cider press cloth by the bolt](#)

February 24, 2016 04:55AM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 226

That is going to be a monster!

I agree 64" is about right for 36" racks. Actually, this should be sized from the internal dimension of the square form.

The formula I use is: (length of the internal diagonal in the form) + 2 \* (height of the form) + (4 to 6" extra)

As of the type of cloth, I find that ordinary fabric used for curtains works fine and is inexpensive. I look for a white fabric (avoiding colors), that doesn't stretch in any direction, looks and feels fairly solid, and is rather rough to the touch. Avoid slippery fabric as it won't hold well the layer of pomace.

The one I bought for my new press cost 40\$ CDN, and that was enough to make 9 clothes - but smaller, only 34"... I now have 2 pressing seasons with them and they are still like new.

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

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

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[Paul Weideman](#)

[Re: Cider press cloth by the bolt](#)

February 24, 2016 03:47PM

Registered: 7 years ago

Posts: 13

Thank you Claude, I read about net curtain used as an alternative press cloth material. Also mentioned was mosquito netting. Both are made from nylon, which is easily washed and hopefully strong enough. I am a bit concerned about slippage but I imagine polypropylene is just as slick. This site is the best one I found for mosquito netting in case anyone else is interested. They have a premium net with more holes per square inch sold by the foot or rolls. [[www.usnetting.com](http://www.usnetting.com)] Joann Fabrics has a good selection of affordable curtain material. Considering Oesko cloths are \$48 a piece the above options are worth experimenting with at \$3 to \$4 a yard.

Correction: The recommended size cloth for a 36" rack and cloth press is 66"x66".

Paul Weideman

Paul Weideman

Fencerow Cider

Imlay City, MI

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[Michael Phillips](#)

[Re: Cider press cloth by the bolt](#)

February 25, 2016 05:44PM

**Moderator**

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 621

I'm going to venture a bit off topic, Paul, and ask you to tell us a bit about this 1905 Mt. Gilead cider press. Sounds exciting! I got to operate a similar beast in the 1990s just down the road. Big racks, big clothes, lots of juice. This restored press was water-powered, so the flywheels and piston made for exciting pressing.

[Lost Nation Orchard](#)

Zone 4b in New Hampshire

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[Paul Weideman](#)

[Re: Cider press cloth by the bolt](#)

February 25, 2016 07:56PM

Registered: 7 years ago

Posts: 13

Hi Michael, of course I will venture off topic. I found the press for sale in Maine last year. It was manufactured in Mt Gilead, Ohio by the Hydraulic Press Manufacturing Company. They are still in business but not the cider press business. The press frame is made from oak beams with huge steal bolts holding it together. The table base or frame is 12' long and including the elevator 13' tall. In Maine it was adapted to run with 4 or 5 different electric motors and belts. I am restoring it to run on 1 engine. I just brought home a 1915 6hp Fairbanks Morse hit and miss engine that runs at 400 rpm. The engine will drive a 24" wood wheel on an upper line shaft that will in series drive the hydraulic pump. The shaft also has a 36" wooden wheel that will drive the apple grater at 2300 rpm and the elevator at 64 rpm. Fortunately the original line shaft and wheels were still intact. All I had to do was find the intended rpm of the line shaft and with some basic math make sure all the different diameter wheels will run as intended. It has a huge hydraulic piston that pushes a 3" thick 4' x 4' press table up from the frame of the press. It's a 2 cart system, while 1 stack is pressing you build a second and wheel them into place. A built in swing arm carries the empty cart back to step one. The press table was rotten in spots so I made a new from White Ash that I had milled from my farm. I will be making all new press racks from ash as well. Maybe some racks from elm that I have stored in my barn. Elm was the original wood used for racks. Both more flexible than oak. One cart was in good shape, I rebuilt the other with maple and ash. They are fitted with cast iron wheels, which are in perfect shape. A brief citric acid bath and the cast iron came out good as new. I have a friend that is a machinist, which came in handy when I needed new bolts for the press table. The table has 4 , 1/2" x 4' bolts running through it. The old ones did not come out in one piece. Plus, he fashioned a 24" extension rod for a 9/16" drill bit that will be a huge help lining up the holes across the 4' table. I hope to be operational mid summer so I can start renovating the 1880 barn that it is now in. I plan to press 1 or 2 bins this fall. The capacity is 10 36" racks per press. The original catalog says that's around 24 to 27 bushels per press and up to 170 barrels a day. Whatever that means. 60 gallon barrels? Seems outrageous. Hopefully it will keep up with my 11 acre orchard of the future. My trees are only 3' whips now so I have plenty of time to prepare. I will be taking a break from restoration soon to bench graft 400 more trees in the next couple weeks. I wish I could post pics but I don't see a button for that. I could create a URL I guess. It's a pretty amazing machine.

Paul Weideman

Fencerow Cider

Imlay City, MI

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[Paul Weideman](#)

[Re: Cider press cloth by the bolt](#)

February 25, 2016 09:37PM

Registered: 7 years ago

Posts: 13

Here are some pics. Work in progress of course. The parts of the press that do not come in contact with juice will be painted with organic paint. I will varnish the press table and carts with a high quality marine spar varnish.

[IMG\\_4604\\_zps0fqhmdtz.jpg](#)

[IMG\\_4605\\_zpsvcb3ueyg.jpg](#)

[IMG\\_4610\\_zps5tcrecl1y.jpg](#)

[IMG\\_4613\\_zpsb6jpirys.jpg](#)

[IMG\\_4615\\_zpsjxhph8c.jpg](#)

[IMG\\_4611\\_zps9weslx7w.jpg](#)

[IMG\\_4642\\_zpsbfqawpc.jpg](#)

[Paul Weideman Fencerow Cider Imlay City, MI](#)

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[Paul Weideman](#)

[Re: Cider press cloth by the bolt](#)

February 26, 2016 01:25AM

Registered: 7 years ago

Posts: 13

I forgot to add a pic of the line shaft that drives the hydraulics, apple grater and elevator. The smaller wooden wheel will be driven by the hit and miss engine. This pic was taken in Maine, not my barn. My barn is a bit tidier.



[IMG\\_3883\\_zpsundd4ryf.jpg](#)

This pic is inside the barn looking out with my bench graft nursery in the background. Those white sticks are plastic wire loom slipped over young apple whips to protect the bark from rabbits and mice. About 1/10 the cost of typical orchard tree wraps or tubes. I bought 1100' of 3/4" split loom for \$204. A larger diameter might have been smarter though.

[IMG\\_4608\\_zps7sgpnycp.jpg](#)

Paul Weideman

Fencerow Cider

Imlay City, MI

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[Paul Weir](#)

[Re: Cider press cloth by the bolt](#)

February 27, 2016 10:16PM

Those photos were great! Thanks for adding those to the thread

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 187

Production level cider joy is to be yours . . . very soon

[Gopher Hill Apples](#)

Zone 8 in California

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[Kent Eddy](#)

[Re: Cider press cloth by the bolt](#)

December 04, 2016 10:16PM

I saw a video on Youtube where polyester curtain material was used for the cheese. If too thin it can always be doubled up, but it seemed to work for him as is.

Registered: 7 years ago

Posts: 5

Video: [[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)]

"Sheer Voile Polyester" Cheese Material (\$2.79/yd):

[[www.fabricswholesaledirect.com](http://www.fabricswholesaledirect.com)]

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[Fabio Chizzola](#)

[Re: Cider press cloth by the bolt](#)

January 15, 2017 01:18AM

Beautiful project!! Can't wait to see it finished! I doubt they are cheaper than Oesco, but you could try Elnova in Montreal for the press clothes.

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 35

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