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## cold storage for cider apples

Posted by [Nathaniel Bouman](#)

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[Nathaniel Bouman](#)

[cold storage for cider apples](#)

December 23, 2014 06:42AM

Registered: 9 years ago

Posts: 81

We are growing apples for hard cider production. Most of our potential customers are microbreweries or microcideries. They don't have their own cold storage and they don't have the capacity to ferment huge volumes all at once. So, I'm guessing that I'll have to send some of the crop to cold storage somewhere. Not finding a lot written about this part of the business. Can someone point me to a resource about cold storage--or just offer me a basic rundown of using a cold storage facility?

Nat Bouman

Growing cider varieties in Zone 5b

On B.118 at 18X24

Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania

Edited 1 time(s). Last edit at 02/05/2015 08:48PM by Michael Phillips.

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[Clair Kauffman](#)

[Re: cold storage](#)

December 23, 2014 07:15PM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 22

Hi Nat!

We utilize other storages quite a bit here in the southeast so I'm pretty familiar with that part of the industry.

There are a number of storages in central and southeastern PA that will hold your apples at a per bushel fee. However, your apples will have to take a bit of a ride to get down here. Regardless, I'd be happy to help you with any info you might need and to give you contact info of the storages we do business with. Email me at [clairATkauffmansfruitfarmDOTcom](mailto:clairATkauffmansfruitfarmDOTcom).

Clair Kauffman

Zone 6b, Lancaster, Pennsylvania

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

[Michael Phillips](#)

[Re: cold storage](#)

February 03, 2015 02:22AM

**Moderator**

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 621

Paying for storage may be part of a legitimate cider apple "providing" strategy ... still, I have to wonder about fermenters who need to spread pressing so far beyond reasonable harvest. I would put some effort into convincing your potential customers that apples picked at peak sugar/flavor levels are best processed sooner rather than later. Sweating of the fruit is better done by the customer to lessen the evaporation factor in a volume sale. Beyond that, what's needed is commonsense storage based on cold night air and over-the-top insulation. Pick in early October ... process by the end of November. Considering CA storage to prolong this window seems bizarre if the market is something other than dessert fruit or sweet cider (fresh juice). And if the goal is "ice cider" that of course is all about freezing the apples to reduce water content.

**The opportunity to grow traditional cider apples for those setting up a cidery is fantastic right now.** Don't let silliness on the buyer's part dictate the extent you prolong the harvest. Grape growers know this ... press fruit when its ready to maximize sugar levels in the wine.

[Lost Nation Orchard](#)

Zone 4b in New Hampshire

Edited 1 time(s). Last edit at 02/03/2015 09:35PM by Michael Phillips.

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[Todd Parlo](#)

[Re: cold storage](#)

February 03, 2015 06:56PM

Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 301

Perhaps some folks out there could let everyone know what they are doing for cold storage systems, as I am sure it is all over the map. We are using the increasingly popular coolbot unit interface with an LG air conditioner (this system allows air conditioners to go down to freezing). The former is only 300 clams, and the latter I traded for apple trees. This is coupled with an insulated cooler I built within the woodshop. It really does use little electricity, especially when paired with logical schemes like opening the windows during cool eves. This, incidentally was the way it was done in the past without any supplemental cooling from electricity, for fruit and plant storage facilities. We sometimes extend the spring cooling by freezing 5 gallon buckets of water and putting them in the cooler (mostly for plant storage and our own (now downgraded) pie apples.

I think for those on the smaller scale of things, the idea of quick liquidation is key, not storage so much. Few would disagree I bet. The advice I would give is for all of us to be very strict with enterprise budgets, keeping track of everything. I have found that there are more costs with storage than utility bills, or facility charges. It is the downright hassle of re-sorting, pest damage, freeze damage, advancements in blemishes (read bitter pit), not to mention the headache of keeping track of more things. We have accidentally frozen many bushels over the years from just a moment of distraction (this year it is 40, this family's stock). Perhaps freezing purposefully for hard cider is sensible in colder regions. (Claude may chime in here)

I do think for those marketing unpasteurized "real" cider, some storage for apples makes sense. It allows for continual pressing through winter if the facility allows for it. Thereby it provides for a healthy local product, one that needs to be sold quickly but pressed routinely to maintain freshness. Although very cold storage of cider (ie freezing those jugs and selling them all year) has worked great for us, but it has its own costs as well.

[Walden Heights Nursery & Orchard](#)

Zone 3 in Vermont

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[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

[Re: cold storage](#)

February 05, 2015 03:57AM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 226

As far as storage and cider making is concerned, it seems there are a couple of different schools of thought out there...

1- is process all the apples in fall, as Michael says, and make all your batches of cider at apple peak flavor. This is favoured by cider makers who are for slow ferment.

2- is store part of your apples, this permits to start new batches of cider as your tanks are freed from first batch. This permits doubling the cider output from the same set of equipment (and investment) - press, tanks and so on. But fermentation management is going to be different as the cider maker has to accelerate the fermentation to make place for the second batch. Cider makers who are good at accounting often choose this second way...

And I guess we all agree - freezing for ice cider is another story - and one doesn't need any special storage for this, just a cold winter!

Claude

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

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

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[Todd Parlo](#)

[Re: cold storage](#)

February 05, 2015 07:10PM

Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 301

Another consideration would be in relation to the physiological effects of storage on the fruits. While these changes degrade most cultivars for fresh fruit sales, they may be of benefit in pressing for either fresh or hard cider production. Since T.A. and starch content tends to decrease, and sugars increase in storage, it could conceivable benefit the operation, particularly where there is otherwise a shortage of ideal specimens to meet those needs. Since, in northern climates particularly, we do not see high brix often, this may be of benefit. I imagine this would also be the case with excessively acid fruit. This may be the opposite effect desired in many cases, and extended storage can result in poor pressing due to cell collapse, it may have a place.

The following link has some figures on storage changes in apples :

[[www.aup.edu.pk](http://www.aup.edu.pk)]

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[Chris Vlit](#)

[Re: cold storage for cider apples](#)

February 06, 2015 04:37AM

Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 47

Edited for brevity

Edited 2 time(s). Last edit at 09/30/2022 05:46PM by Chris Vlit.

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