

**Cider**

**There are many varieties of cider: common cider, English cider, French cider, common perry, traditional perry, New England cider, fruit cider. The best cider is made from several different varieties of apples. There should be some tart, some sweet, and even crabapples.**

**Hard Cider: makes 5 gallons**

* 5 gallons sweet apple juice
* 3 pounds brown sugar
* 3 pounds honey
* 2 packages of champagne yeast

**Procedure:** Strain 3 gallons of apple juice into a 5 gallon carboy. Strain 2 gallons into a pot and heat enough to allow the sugar and honey to thoroughly dissolve. Pour into the carboy and finish filling to the neck. Pitch yeast and seal with an airlock/fermentation lock. When fermentation stops, prime with sugar to add carbonation and bottle.

**New England Style Cider:** **makes 15 gallons**

* 15 gallons freshly pressed apple juice
* 15 cups any combination of cane, corn, or light brown sugar with no more than 3 cups of brown sugar or 1 cup of molasses
* 1 tablespoon tannin powder
* 2 pounds raisins

**Procedure:** make sure your key is secure and high enough off the ground that cider may be easily siphoned from it. Using a funnel, pour the sugars and the tannin powder into the sanitized key, then pour in the cider until it comes up to the bottom of the bunghole. Cover the bunghole with plastic wrap to keep insects out and wait a week or so for the yeast to kick in. (These yeasts are the companion yeast in the orchard and get into the juice on the apple. They are the whitish film on the skin called the bloom.) In two or three weeks, the fermentation will slow. At this point, add the raisins to the keg. Attach airlock.

By early winter, 12-16 weeks after getting this cider started, fermentation will be complete and the cider will slowly clear. Don’t rack this cider; let it stay on the lees until bottling time. If you use oak chips to impart the traditional aromas and tastes, place about one-half pound of chips in a cheesecloth or grain bag and boil in water for about five minutes to sanitize. Place the bag into the key. Top off, bung up tightly and let it set for between one and two weeks. At the end of the oak finishing, the cider may be racked directly into bottles and capped or corked for still cider. A simple syrup containing 1 ½ cups sugar and one quart water may be stirred in before capping for sparkling cider. Ready to drink in 2 months.

**Tim’s Firehouse Cider: makes 7 ¾ gallons**

7 ½ gallons fresh pressed apple juice

4 cups dark brown sugar

4 cups cane sugar

1 jar (approximately 2 ounces) dried, grated orange peel

2 tablespoons ground cinnamon

**Procedure:** Put the sugars, dried orange peel and cinnamon in the key. Pour in the juice until the keg is filled to the bunghole and cover with plastic wrap to keep out the insects. In a few days, when the cider starts working, remove the plastic wrap and let the cider do its thing. In a few weeks, as the primary fermentation slows and the cider ceases foaming up and out of the keg, attach fermentation lock.

Leave the cider alone until March, or at least 2 months after the airlock stops bubbling. Rack the cider off the sediment into a clean sanitized container. Boil and cool ¾ cup can sugar and 2 cups water. Add the resulting syrup to the cider. Siphon the cider into sanitized bottles and cap. Let the cider carbonate and mellow for at least 2 months before enjoying.