

FUTURE TASTES

THE ACID v TANNIN SHOWDOWN

THE THREE PILLARS OF CIDER MAKING

SUGAR + TANNIN + ACID

FUTURE TASTES

- Is the current worldwide production of cider, largely based on using discarded eating apples, (frequently with other fruits and sugars added) going to make the way forward for the more complex, tannic based apple ciders a bigger challenge in the market place?
- Too challenging?
- Too complex?
- Too demanding?
- Too tasty?

FUTURE TASTES

- I have always believed that to make a “good” cider you need to use tannic cider fruit to provide structure for the cider. A framework with which to weave and balance the acidity and sweetness around, to deliver a cider with balance, body, mouthfeel, colour and character.
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- Does every one gathered here believe that you “need” tannic apples to make a good cider or is the brave new world of cider making going to surge forward on the outstretched arms of acids and sugars?
- Given that cider making in recent years has been fuelled by utilising the cheapest source of apple available (unwanted dessert and cull fruit from wherever) and then, frequently, use as little apple juice as legally possible to make “cider”.
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- Also where growth of craft cider has occurred, as witnessed here with the vibrancy and energy and quality of the Nordic Cider Awards and the excellent ciders being made with local apples, where tannins are frequently harder to find, might the consumer be less prepared for the demands that tannic ciders would place on them?

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- Does this mean that we are in danger of at best, minimising or at worst, removing one of the foundations (tannin) of cider making and therefore if so, will we make it harder for classically made “tannic” cider in the market place?
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- As a cider maker, do you feel the need for tannin in your ciders or is the cost of the fruit, or the difficulty of growing tannic apples in your location, or the difficulty of selling tannic cider make you reluctant to embrace tannic fruit in your cider making?
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- I shall now give a very brief outline of some of the aspects of tannic fruit before asking a selection of cidermakers from around the world to give us their take on this.
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- Once we have heard from them, I would like to open up the floor for a discussion around this topic.

TANNIN

- The Importance and Relevance of Tannins/Polyphenols:
- (In a very non scientific way)
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- In 1801 Thomas Andrew Knight identified “tannins” as being responsible for the characteristic flavour of West Country Cider in the UK.
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- In the early 1900’s B.T.P.Barker at Long Ashton, Bristol classified cider apples as:
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- Sharp: high acid/low tannin
- Sweet: low acid/low tannin
- Bittersharp: high acid/high tannin
- Bittersweet: low acid/high tannin

TANNIN

- Responsible for Sensory Characteristics:
- Bitter taste.
- Astringent mouthfeel.
- Also higher levels of polyphenols give a sense of body (as opposed to ciders made from dessert/cull fruit which tend to be thinner in the mouth)
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- I am unable and will not touch on the science and chemistry of polyphenols but procyanidins are described by Peter Mitchell as the only “true” tannin.
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- Phenolic acids also of major importance for the “spicy” (clove/nutmeg) characteristics of West Country Cider (Yarlington Mill)
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- The concentration of phenolic compounds increases in fruit from older and unfertilised trees.
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- Tannins/Polyphenols give a cider anti microbial and anti oxidative properties.
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- Tannins/Polyphenols are very important in the “Keeving” of Cider.