

APPLE CIDER PRESSING GUIDELINES FOR RETAIL SALE

Raw apple cider has been associated with food borne illness outbreaks in Washington State and the United States. Examples of food borne illness caused by raw cider include *E. coli* O157:H7, Salmonellosis, and cryptosporidiosis. Many of these outbreaks were associated with raw apple cider made from “drops” (apples picked from the ground). “Drops” are often contaminated by fecal material from animals. Studies have shown that in raw refrigerated apple cider *E. coli* O157:H7 can survive for 20 days and *Salmonella* can survive for 30 days. Young children and the elderly are especially vulnerable to getting food borne illness.

Due to the increase of food borne illness outbreaks associated with raw apple cider, the Chelan-Douglas Health District has developed the following guidelines and recommendations for persons proposing to process raw apple cider. These guidelines do not include state or federal requirements for wholesale and/or interstate sales of apple cider.

If the apple cider will be offered to the public for consumption, a food establishment permit from the Chelan-Douglas Health District is required. Please contact the Food Program at 886-6450 for additional information.

1. Use only firm, ripe, wholesome apples that have been thoroughly wet brushed and rinsed with drinking water. All apples must be thoroughly washed and then the cut, punctured, split, bruised etc. portions should be removed. Washing and brushing the apples is important to reduce the risk of *Salmonella* contamination from bird droppings. Do not use apples that have dropped on the ground. Drop apples are more likely to be contaminated with *E. coli* or other bacteria. Store all apples in clean food grade containers, elevated off the floor/ground, and protected from sources of contamination.
2. Before pressing the cider, wash your hands thoroughly using soap, warm water (minimum of 100° Fahrenheit), and single use sanitary towels. Gloves must be worn by individuals who will have direct hand contact with the cider when pressing. Gloves are not a substitute for hand washing.
3. Store pressed cider in sanitized food grade containers.
4. We recommend that raw cider is heated to at least 155° Fahrenheit or above before use. Be sure a metal stemmed thermometer is used to monitor the cooking temperature! Although heating the cider will change the product, it is the only method shown to destroy *E. coli*. Freezing raw apple cider will not destroy any bacteria.
5. If raw apple cider is put into containers to be consumed off site and the cider is not heated to 155°F. or above the wording “keep refrigerated” must be on the container.
If the cider was processed without being heated to 155° F., then it is recommended that all packages be labeled as follows: “WARNING: This product has not been pasteurized and, therefore, may contain harmful bacteria that can cause serious illness in children, the elderly, and persons with weakened immune systems”.
6. The cider press should be adequately separated and/or roped off from the public to prevent any contamination of the raw cider.
7. The cider press must be dismantled or disassembled prior to being cleaned. The cider press and all equipment must be thoroughly cleaned by washing, rinsing and sanitizing prior to commencing pressing operations. One teaspoon of bleach per gallon of cool water can be used to sanitize the press and equipment. Let the press and its parts air dry before reassembling.
8. Pressed pomace must be properly disposed of daily to reduce insect and rodent problems.
9. **We recommend only offering pasteurized samples to the public.**