

## **PREPARING YOUR APPLES BEFORE A PRESSING**

Some suggestions about the condition of apples you bring for pressing, and how to prepare them:

The pressing is quicker / more efficient if you bring apples in a good enough condition to chuck straight in the mill or scrapper. Best to prepare them the day before.

**GOOD ENOUGH?** When you're selecting apples for pressing, a good question to ask yourself is; would I want to put this in my mouth right now? If the answer is 'no', because the fruit is manky, then it's probably not worth pressing.

**HYGIENE** and sterilisation are really important when it comes to **BOTTLING** juice or cider you want to keep for any length of time. At earlier points in the process, I don't think you need to be neurotic about hygiene. When you pasteurise juice, you kill the bugs in it anyway - rendering it safe.

**MOULD** is a definite no, no. Nothing with mould on it goes to press.

**BRUISING** is best avoided. I tolerate it up to a point. Light bruising – don't worry about it. If there's a moderate amount, I cut it out. Throw away apples if they're more than a quarter rotten.

Some people say bruised apples do cider no harm. I find that hard to imagine but hey... who knows? Rotten apple cider might be a useful experiment to try out.

**DIRT** Apples picked off the tree are clean enough to go straight into the mill. Probably a good idea to give windfalls a quick dunk-wash if you have time.

WORM Various creepy-crawlies like burrowing into apples. Up to a point they're not going to do any harm after they've been through the mill. Don't fret about them unless the fruit looks badly riddled.

PIPS I don't bother cutting out cores or pips. Fiddly work. That way madness lies. 95% of that stuff is left behind in the press. The rest settles as sediment. The pips are alleged to contain low-level cyanide poisoning. What doesn't kill you makes you stronger.

Buzz Cousins