



2015 Darling Creek

Traditional method semi-dry cider

Wild-harvested seedling 25%

Krys 15%

Bramley's Seedling 11%

Sommerset Redstreak 11%

Gold Rush 8%

Ellis Bitter 7%

Wickson 7%

Harry Master's Jersey 5%

Golden Russet 5%

Akane 3%

Northern Spy 3%

~380 cases produced

~65% of the apples were estate grown, 24% were wild harvested in the hills of Van Etten and Newfield and 11% were grown by Eric Shatt at Cornell Orchard's cider block.

24% wild ferment, 76% inoculated fermentation

~Primary fermentations in stainless steel. Secondary fermentation in the bottle, Traditional Method.

~Returned sugar 2%, Alc/Vol 8%, TA 9.4 g/l, pH 3.6

The nose starts with ripe, ripe, red fruit which yields to complex aromas of apple blossoms, marzipan, cream soda and tamari. The palate is soft and full, reminiscent of white wine but with the juicy flavors of limeade and salted pretzels. The finish is red cherry preserves with vanilla bean and silty tannin for miles.

Each year the theme of the Darling Creek story is acid: indeed this year two-thirds of the apples in the blend are considered high acid varieties. Where that acid comes from year to year varies. The 2015 chapter is especially surprising. It shows a big man in a bushy tree. A mountain climber in a tall apple seedling. One-quarter of the apples used in the 2015 Darling Creek blend were wild harvested in and around Van Etten, NY. Seventy-two bushels to be exact.

In the Spring of 2015, wild apple trees visible from the hilly roads in and near our Town produced a huge bloom, a biennial reaction to a freeze event in the Spring of 2012. That bloom forecast a vast wild apple crop. We talked to our friend Ben Kahn about gathering them. We paid him the going amount for cider varieties, but that included negotiating with the land owners and searching for the best trees out there. Also, we said, "you are an independent contractor. If you fall out of a tree, you are on your own."

Also unusual about the 2015 Darling Creek is the use of uninoculated fermentations. All of the wild apples we pressed we left to their own devices: we watched and waited. *-Ezra Sherman orchardist/cidermaker*

CIDER SERVING SUGGESTIONS: Pair this cider with pork of almost any kind, especially cured meats and charcuterie.

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