



# APPLE CIDERING

Greenburgh Nature Center  
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## About Our Programs

Our programs are geared to the grade level of your students. We will accommodate any specific competency or physical needs level if notified in advance. *All classes meet and begin in the visitors parking lot.*

**Groups must bring 3-5 apples per child and a container for any "extra" cider. As a safety precaution, all apples brought for a program must be washed ahead of time. To ensure cleanliness, our staff will also do a final wash of your apples before they are ground and pressed. Please be sure apples are fresh and are not bruised or cut. We recommend that all cider be consumed the same day that it is pressed.**



## APPLE CIDER LORE



**LONG** before the proverbial apple fell and hit abruptly upon Sir Isaac Newton's head, apples have been used to make delicious cider. Although the exact origin of the cultivated apple is not known, it is thought to have originated somewhere between the Caspian and Black Seas.

Apples have been so desired in American history that apple seeds were brought from Europe to the New World when settlers first began arriving to its shores. The soon to be apple trees became prized possessions by these early pioneers because of their tastiness and their use in all types of "apple cooking". The three species of native apples already here were crab apples and were not desirable as either fresh fruit or for culinary purposes.

Grafting European varieties onto native American stock or onto other European varieties soon yielded a whole wide variety of apples and eventually good "tasting apples" were produced. This "making" of desirable apples continues even to this day.

### SOME APPLE FACTS

It takes about 36 apples to create one gallon of apple cider.



An apple tree will start bearing fruit 8-10 years after it is planted. A dwarf tree starts bearing in 3-6 years.



2500 varieties of apples are grown in the United States. 7500 varieties of apples are grown around the world. 100 varieties of apples are commercially grown in the United States.

The pilgrims planted the first US apples trees in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Most apples are still picked by hand in the fall. Apples are the second most valuable fruit in the United States. Oranges are first.

In 1730 the first apple nursery was opened in Flushing, New York.

One of George Washington's hobbies was pruning his apple trees.



### Some Ideas for Pre-trip Activities

NOTE: Teachers should adapt the following material to the grade level of their students.

- Make some tasty apple treats:



#### **SLO COOKER APPLE BUTTER**

12 cups unsweetened apple sauce  
1 cup vinegar      2 tablespoons cinnamon  
6 cups sugar, half brown sugar      pinch salt



Combine ingredients in slo cooker. Cover and cook on high until mixture boils. Remove cover and cook for 6 hours. Stir now and then. Fill clean hot jars to within  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch of top and seal. To insure perfect seal, process in boiling water bath for ten minutes.

- Read about *John Chapman* - better known as **JOHNNY APPLESEED!**



- Try making **Applehead Dolls** like Colonial children did.



To Make: (<http://www.appledolls.org/>)

1. Peel an apple but leave some skin on the bottom.
2. Carve a face into the apple. Make the eyes deeper than the cheeks. The mouth may be slit.
3. Soak the apple in salt water for one hour and put it in a warm dry place to let dry for at least two weeks. The apple is completely dry after it has shrunk and shriveled and is no longer soft inside. This may take up to three or more months (use it after four weeks).
4. The hair can be made from yarn - sew or glue it on.
5. The doll's body may be made any way you like. An easy way to make a body is to sew some material together with some stuffing.

- Make some apple-shaped name tags for your visit.
- Research about some of the varieties of apples found in New York.
- Have a contest to see whose apple has the most seeds, and which apples are favored by the class. Make a chart to record findings.

### Some Ideas for Post-trip Activities

- Read about or visit an orchard.
- Discuss pollination and why its needed for apple trees to bear fruit.
- Plant some apple seeds and see what happens.

### Bibliography:

1. *Sweet and Hard Cider*, By A. Proulx & L. Nichols, Garden Way Publishing, Charlotte, VT, 05445, 1975.
2. *Hands-On Nature*, Vermont Institute of Natural Science, Woodstock, VT 05091, 1986. ISBN 0-9617627-0-5
3. *Prime Time Together With Kids*, by Donna Erickson, Augsburg Fortress, 1989. ISBN 0-8066-2430-2
5. *How Do Apples Grow?*, by Betsy Maestro, Harper Trophy, New York, NY, 1992. ISBN 0-06-445117-8



### Two excellant web sites on APPLES:

**NY Apple Country - <http://nyapplecountry.com>**  
**U.S. Apple Association - <http://www.usapple.org>**