

February 1, 2017

United States Association of Cider Makers

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## **Cider Association Launches Online Cider Certification Exam for Industry Professionals**

Hard cider's popularity has dramatically increased in the last several years, and now there is a way for food and alcohol industry professionals to prove their cider knowledge—the Cider Certification Program (CCP). The United States Association of Cider Makers has released CCP as an online exam that allows test takers to become CCP level one certified. Exam questions fall into five categories: apples, processing, fermentation, taste and style, and history. The exam is 60 questions long and costs \$75.

Paul Vander Heide, USACM's Board Secretary and CCP spokesperson, shared that "the association is dedicated to providing a path for professionals to expand their knowledge of apples, cider production, history, and regional styles. Cider is a fascinating beverage with deep historical roots and a vast culture, but outside of cider makers themselves, few people know about it. Our goal is to educate the frontline of cider sales—distributors, wholesalers, retailers, and bar and restaurant professionals—and increase cider sales as a result."

CCP was launched initially in Portland, Oregon at the 2016 CiderCon—short for Cider Conference, the association's annual membership meeting and industry conference. Over two hundred people were certified during that pilot launch. The association's CCP committee, comprised of professional cider makers, has since worked to deepen and strengthen the question base.

"The program is designed to evolve," shared Vander Heide. "The rebirth of our industry was not that long ago, and consensus is still evolving. We'll be helping guide the development of a broadly accepted cider lexicon, and that progress will be reflected in future iterations of CCP."

The association plans to roll out levels two and three over the next couple years. For more information on CCP, you can visit the association's website at [www.ciderassociation.org](http://www.ciderassociation.org).

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