The Cider Farm – Orchard Worker

About The Cider Farm

- We are an expanding, organically managed apple orchard growing specialty apples to make The Cider Farm apple brandy and ciders. Neither product is made on-farm, but our cider is made at our Cidery and Tasting Room in Madison.
- We have been grafting and purchasing trees. About 12,000 trees are in the orchard and 2500 are in the tree nursery. We will expand to at least 20,000 trees within six years.
- We are reclaiming over 60 ac of timberland from invasive species.
- We are establishing 35-acres of prairie, windbreaks, and pollinator habitat adjacent to orchard blocks.
- Our farm hosts research and educational initiatives.

Qualifications

- Ability to appropriately balance speed and quality of work.
- Strong verbal communication skills and ability to follow directions, particularly regarding safety.
- The work is very physical and outdoors. You must be able to frequently lift 30 to 50 lbs.; to bend and squat for work at the tree base; to run weedwackers.
- Experience in horticultural production is desired, while previous orchard work is a plus. Mechanical skills are highly desired. Experience managing others is a plus; the right person could gain managerial responsibilities.

Duties

The work is diverse and changes from week to week, if not day to day. Work includes, but is not limited to:

- Graft apple and pear trees
- Prune trees. Apply limb spreaders and other tree training devices.
- Move, stabilize and weed deer fencing.
- Dig and plant trees.
- Install irrigation lines and emitters. Run irrigation. Check irrigation for repairs needed.
- Stake or trellis trees. Attach trees to stakes or trellising.
- Apply or remove tree guards from tree base.
- Hand weed. Operate a weed-wacker/brush cutter cautiously around trees, fencing, buildings and utilities.
- Sow cover crop or prairie seed.
- Assist with prairie burns.
- Apply mulches or horse manure to tree rows and to protect irrigation system.
- Monitor for disease and insect pests. Remove insect pests.
- Spray trees and nursery stock with NOP-approved materials
- Harvest apples keeping records of all harvest-related information.
- Help with, if not manage, apple pressings keeping track of varieties and amounts pressed.
- Spray garlic mustard in early spring or late fall with herbicide. Hand-pull garlic mustard at other times.
- Clean small and large equipment.
- Operate a skid steer, riding mower, and tractor for diverse tasks throughout the year.

Dates and Times of Work

- February through November, weather permitting, Monday through Friday. A few weekends, if needed.