

## Cider Making Process at the Fly Creek Cider Mill & Orchard, Inc.

Follow in the footsteps of the many folks who have witnessed the making of fresh, sweet cider at the Fly Creek Cider Mill. Take a self-guiding tour of the Mill's production area in the Cider Gallery on the second level. The Gallery houses the exhibit *Power, Process and Popularity* that depicts the entire process, portraying the unique equipment that powers the Mill and offering information about apples and cider. The Gallery overlooks the original cider-making equipment that the Mill still uses to produce some 20,000 gallons of cider each fall. The actual process takes place on weekends at non-scheduled times dependent on cider sales. On busy fall weekends the Mill runs continuously from ten until two. At other times a video demonstrates the cider making process.

The cider making starts with the harvest of hand-picked New York State Apple Country® Apples. The apples are stored at 38 degrees Fahrenheit before pressing. As needed the apples are sent through the apple washer located in the Mill's old ice house where they are scrubbed with nine rows of brushes and heavy jets of fresh, clean water. Grinding is the next step performed by the power of the Mill's 1924 Waterloo Boy two-cylinder engine. The engine was purchased directly from the factory that later became the John Deere Corporation. The Waterloo Boy runs a flat belt that turns a line shaft delivering power to the grinder. Once ground, the apple mash, called pomace, is transferred to the 1889 Boomer & Boschert water-hydraulic press. Layers of pomace are placed in nylon cloths between plastic racks in a formation called a "cheese." After the "cheese" is complete the entire pressing tray is rotated under the press. Pressure is applied by a two-cylinder water pump that is powered by the Lestner Water Turbine located in the basement of the Mill. The spinning turbine runs another flat belt to transfer power to the press's water-hydraulic pump creating pressure on the "cheese." The resulting sweet cider is pressed out of the pomace and held in a storage tank for the next step: assuring cider safety. The Mill's newest piece of technology is an ultraviolet light processing machine called "Cidersure." The Cidersure process guarantees cider safety by shining high intensity ultraviolet light through a very thin stream of cider. The light eliminates the possibility of any harmful contaminants in the fresh juice. The cider is then pumped into two storage tanks ready to be tasted and purchased by Mill visitors.