



FROM OUR FOUNDERS

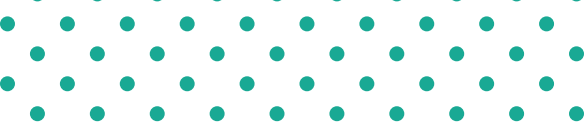
Berkshire Cider Project was started with a simple mission – to celebrate the Berkshires through cider.

Through our relationships with our agricultural and orchard partners, local retailers and restaurants, cultural institutions and employees, we aim to support local farms and farmers, create new opportunities for connection, and celebrate the best of our region.

Underpinning this mission is a commitment to making conscious choices about our sourcing and products, supporting and uplifting our employees and community, and working to minimize our impact on the environment wherever possible.

We are so pleased to present this inaugural sustainability report, where we outline our commitments, progress and future priorities. This is the beginning of a conversation, and there is much more work to do, but we are committed to this journey and we hope you will join us.

Kat Hand and Matt Brogan



2021 SUSTAINABILITY REPORT





OUR PRIORITY TOPICS

LOCAL SOURCING

We are an “urban cidery” meaning that we do not grow our own apples – instead, we purchase apples and fresh pressed juice from orchards in the Berkshires and beyond. These farms are our critical partners, and we are committed to growing by sourcing locally and promoting sustainable growing practices wherever possible.

PACKAGING

Our packaging is one the most tangible aspect of the sustainability of our products for consumers. To reduce it's impact, we are choosing lighter glass bottles with higher levels of recycled content; offering fully recyclable, unbleached paper bags for takeaway; and re-using cardboard case boxes. We aim to calculate the carbon impact of our packaging this year, and develop goals and targets to minimize our impact based on this data.

OPERATIONS

While it is likely a relatively small contributor to our overall value chain carbon impact, our operations are where we have the greatest opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to sustainability and responsibility. We take steps to actively conserve energy and water within our operations and aim to reduce our waste as much as possible and find new uses for waste products such as apple pomace. And, we prioritize the health and safety of our employees at every stage of the process.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Each year, we donate at least 2% of our revenues to non-profit organizations working to make our region and the world more sustainable, equitable, healthy and joyful. Through our employee giving program, we invite our employees to help direct a portion of our giving to organizations that are close to their hearts.

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Berkshire Cider Project is proud to be a woman-owned cidery. As we grow, we are committed to doing our best to create an inclusive space for employees and customers alike, and to work proactively to combat systemic racism and unconscious bias within our walls, in our community and throughout our industry.



WHERE'D YOU GET THOSE APPLES?

We aim to grow the portion of our juice that comes from local sources – growing our existing orchard relationships, forging new ones, and planting new, cider-specific trees. In the meantime, we will continue to purchase juice from further afield – focusing on those varieties that aim to grow locally.



COMMUNITY APPLE PROJECT

For two years now, we have invited our neighbors and community members to contribute wild foraged and backyard apples to this special project. We press these apples together in small batches, and ferment in oak barrels over the cold winter.

Each year, we receive an incredible assortment of apples - some of which you can see pictured here. These apples have unique character - tannic, acidic and complex - and the resulting cider could not be made anywhere but the Berkshires.



PACKAGING

The two most common packaging types for beer, cider and wine in the US are glass bottles and aluminum cans. From an environmental perspective, each option has its own benefits and drawbacks, and there is no clear better alternative.

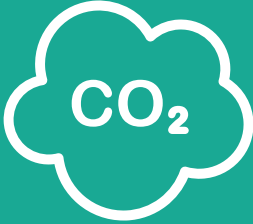
We carefully considered these options within the scope of our business model, and have chosen for the time being to package our cider exclusively in glass bottles. At our tasting room and local restaurants, we also offer cider on draft – a glass of cider poured from a re-fillable keg is among the lowest impact ways to enjoy our cider.

Ultimately, the choice of packaging involves important tradeoffs. We will continue to assess our packaging choices as our business grows and changes, and as more sustainable alternatives become more widely available.



GLASS OR ALUMINUM?

Here are just a few of the key factors that we consider when making our packaging decisions:



CARBON IMPACT

Oz. for oz, on average, glass bottles made from virgin material are estimated to have an equal or lower carbon footprint as compared to aluminum cans made with virgin metals. (1) In 2021, we made the shift to using glass bottles with more recycled content – a change that is estimated to help reduce their related carbon footprint by 26.5-40%. (2)

It is estimated that transportation of glass can potentially emit up to 20% more greenhouse gases than transporting aluminum. (3) Aside from our champagne style cider, which requires a thicker and stronger bottle, we are actively shifting toward lighter bottles to reduce the impacts on transportation from the supplier to our facility. Currently, most of our sales are through our tasting room or local retailers, so the carbon impact of our own distribution is not a significant concern.



RECYLCABILITY

Both glass and aluminum can be continually recycled without loss in quality or purity, and we encourage our customers to recycle as much as possible. In the US, aluminum is recycled at a slightly higher rate than glass, but the process for recycling aluminum takes considerably more energy and results in more dangerous byproduct emissions as compared to glass. (4)



QUALITY AND HEALTH

All aluminum cans are lined with an extremely thin layer of plastic to protect the aluminum from interacting with the product and changing the taste and composition. Because cider is relatively high in acid, if cans are dented or not sealed tightly, the product can easily become impacted – the can is at risk of corroding or even exploding, and the cider can be negatively impacted in terms of taste and quality. Glass bottles do not pose these risks.

It is also worth noting that in many cases this plastic coating is often made with bisphenol A (BPA), a chemical that has been shown to disrupt the endocrine system. However, the amount of BPA in a single can is extremely small, and manufacturers are working on eliminating BPA from their products.



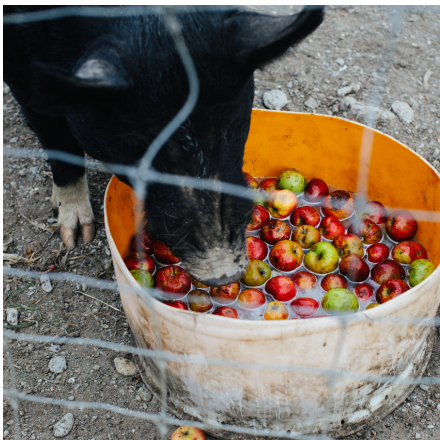
OPERATIONS

Our cidery is located in a historic mill building that is being revived and renewed to house a range of small businesses. As a leasee, we have relatively little control over the building's efficiency, but aim to reduce our impacts as much as we can within our four walls and act as a responsible neighbor. While our operations make up a small part of our overall value chain carbon impact, we feel strongly that it is our responsibility to model sustainable behaviors and build these values into our every day activities.



WATER AND ENERGY

Cidermaking is not a water-intensive process, but hot and cold water are used to clean and sanitize equipment. We use a tankless water system, which only operates when there is a hot water demand, thereby consuming much less energy than conventional systems. By choosing energy efficient fixtures, actively managing the heating of our space through the use of thermostats, and choosing not to cool our space with air conditioning, we reduce our energy use and therefore the carbon impacts of our operations.



WASTE

Within our facility, we minimize waste wherever possible and recycle all materials that we can.

Annually, when we press some of our small batch ciders in-house, we are left with hundreds of pounds of apple pomace - dry, pressed apple guts. We partner with farms like Cricket Creek and others to feed this pomace to their pigs, helping to close the loop and make use of what could be a waste product.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of our employees are of the utmost importance. Managers lead by example, making safety a personal priority and ensuring that all employees keep safety top of mind. We align our approach to the COVID-19 pandemic with leading guidance - encouraging social distancing, more frequent disinfection of shared spaces, additional personal protective equipment, and maintaining proper airflow within the cidery.

OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

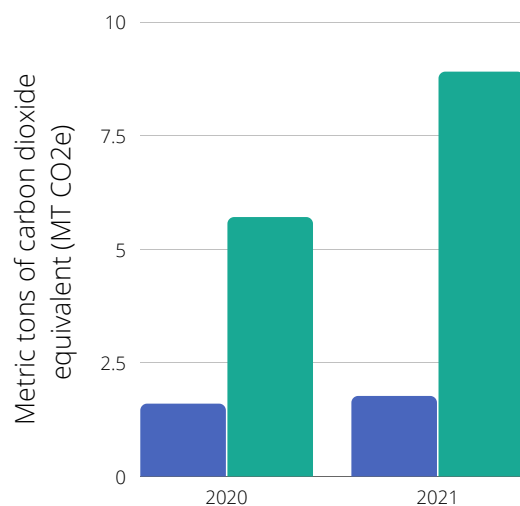
The effects of climate change are already being felt across all sectors and geographies. Building a responsible business means building a climate-smart business, and we are working hard to understand our biggest potential for impact.

Within the cidery, we aim to control our energy use wherever possible – through efficient fixtures and practices. We also use carbon neutral shipping for any of our online orders and purchase carbon offsets to cover all of our direct (Scope 1 and 2) emissions.

Ultimately, though, the greatest climate impact of our business is tied to our agricultural supply chain. This is also the area where we have the least direct control. We are committed to sourcing locally and to working with our orchard partners to understand and minimize their environmental impact wherever possible. However, as we work with our suppliers and encourage more sustainable practices, we will do so with a deep understanding of the challenging economic environment that small farms operate within.

As we grow, we expect our overall footprint to continue to grow. However, we aim to reduce the carbon intensity of our products (Metric tons of CO₂e per gallon of cider produced). In the coming year, we aim to calculate our full carbon footprint – including our agricultural and broader supply chain. From there, we can set intensity goals and find ways to support our suppliers to combat the impacts of climate change, ensure the stability and supply of apples, and do so in a way that is economically viable for small farm operations.

OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT



Scope 1 and 2 emissions calculated using the EPA's Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator.

Scope 1 emissions

- 2020: 1.6 MT CO₂e
- 2021: 1.8 MT CO₂e
- Key contributors: Auto fleet

Scope 2 emissions

- 2020: 5.7 MT CO₂e
- 2021: 8.9 MT CO₂e
- Key contributors: Procured electricity and gas

Scope 3 emissions

- To be calculated
- Key contributors: Upstream emissions (production and transportation of packaging, including bottles; growing and processing of apples and transportation of juice to cidery); Downstream emissions (waste generated in operations, transportation and distribution of finished product; recycling and end-of-life treatment of sold products)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The strength of our business is inextricably linked with the strength and health of our community. For two years running, we have contributed more than 2% of our overall revenue to non-profits that contribute to the vitality and health of our local community. This year, we were able to include our employees in this pledge - empowering them to help us direct a portion of our giving to non-profits of their choice.

In 2021, we supported the following organizations as part of our community giving pledge:



HANCOCK SHAKER VILLAGE CIDER

Hancock Shaker Village is home to a beautiful historic orchard - we estimate that some of the trees are nearly 75 years old! Each fall, we hand harvest these apples, hand press them back at the cidery, and ferment with native yeast to create a unique, heirloom-style cider.

A portion of sales from each bottle of this limited release cider is contributed back to the Village to help support its sustainable agriculture and education programs, and to support the orchard's upkeep.

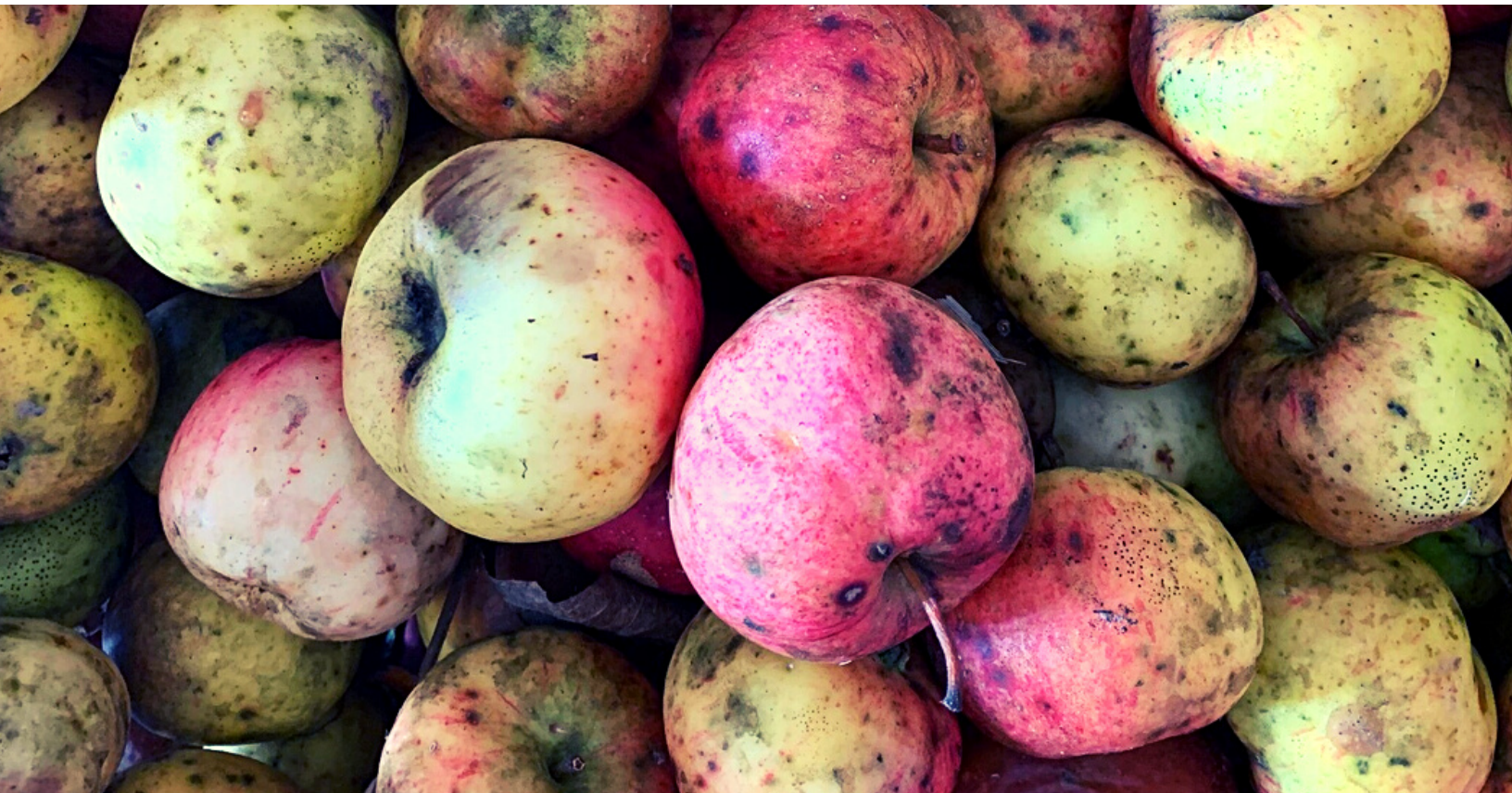




EQUITY AND INCLUSION

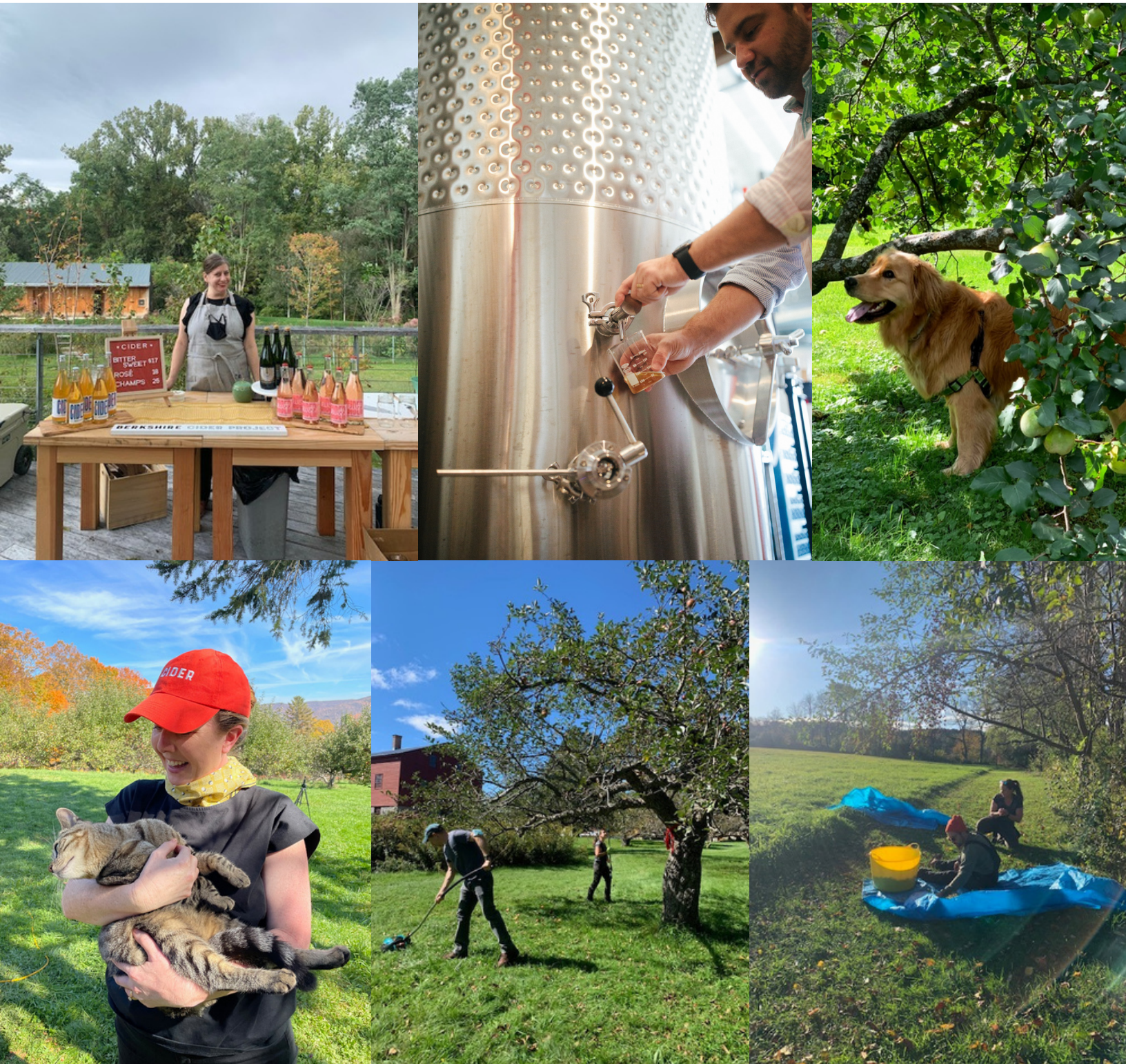
Berkshire Cider Project is proud to be a woman-owned business with a majority female employee base. We strive to foster an inclusive environment where everyone can bring their true self – employees, customers, partners and community members. For us, that means:

- Living and working by a clear set of shared values that include respect for diverse points of view, life experiences and identities, as outlined in our company code of conduct and non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies
- Implementing practices designed to widen and diversify the pool of candidates considered for employment openings.
- Maintaining an open line of communication with employees and partners, and amending our company policies and processes to reflect the dynamic and ever changing conversation around diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Being thoughtful about and interrogating the use of language and imagery in our cidermaking and marketing.
- Celebrating full story of cidermaking – including the critical contributions of non-white, non-American and historically marginalized communities, as well as the complex realities of agriculture.
- Advocating for a more diverse and inclusive cider industry.
- Contributing to and supporting local organizations that seek to empower and uplift marginalized or otherwise underserved populations.



LABOR PRACTICES

Our employees are one of our most important assets - they make our cider possible and are our best advocates. As of 2021, we have part-time, hourly and seasonal employees who work in our tasting room and retail shop or helping us with fall harvest and cider production. We offer all of our employees, regardless of status, a wage at least 20% above the standard minimum wage in Massachusetts. We are proud that all of our employees are local residents, with the majority residing within our town.



RESPONSIBLE DRINKING

We aim to connect people through cider and offer them a premium product to share with others. These social interactions and connections are critical to mental and community health. Hard cider is a lower alcohol alternative to similar drinks such as wine and hard seltzers - a growing trend in our industry.

However, we also know that the consumption of alcoholic beverages can lead to negative impact to individuals and society - including drunk driving, addiction and a range of public health issues. While we respect every individual's right to make their own decisions about how they consume our products, we recognize our duty to encourage responsible drinking within our tasting room and among our customers. We do not target underage drinkers with our marketing or messaging. We encourage savoring our ciders - offering tasting portions in our tasting room and empowering our staff to monitor customer intake to ensure our customers are never overserved.



APPENDIX

MATERIALITY ANALYSIS

A materiality assessment is a process of identifying numerous potential environmental, social and governance issues and ranking them in order to inform company strategy, targets, and reporting. These topics are mapped along two axes, providing a visual representation of relative importance:

- Y axis: The issues that are most important to stakeholder assessments and decisions regarding the company.
- X axis: The economic, environmental, and social issues on which a company has the greatest impact, or those which it may be most impacted by

An issue's placement on the matrix is meant to show where a company should invest their time, resources and influence for maximum positive impact. While we recognize that all topics listed on this chart are important to the health and success of our business and community, we have a greater ability to impact some of these issues more than others. And, some topics have a greater and more tangible, direct impact on our ability to conduct business than others.

There is not universally standard process to conduct this assessment, and each company may take a different approach. We developed a shortlist of topics based on widely accepted sustainability standards and analyzed them based on our understanding of market dynamics, our business model and our relationship with a range of stakeholders, including employees, customers, partners and our local community. In the next year, we aim to refine this approach through greater stakeholder engagement and feedback.

MATERIALITY ASSESSMENT (2021)





APPENDIX

REPORTING PROCESS AND STANDARDS

This is Berkshire Cider Project's first ever sustainability report, and we intend to update this report at least annually going forward.

This report describes key values, policies, programs, and goals, and covers the calendar year 2021 (January 1-December 31), unless stated otherwise

In preparing this report, we referenced the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) guidance and the SASB standards for Alcoholic Beverages, Food Retailers & Distributors, and Agricultural Products - both widely accepted sustainability reporting standards.





#BRINGTHEBERKSHIRES

