

BY KIMBERLY HERR

BIRD-IN-HAND — Today is October 1.

Why is that important?

Well, for most of you, it's just another fall Saturday, but for the Kauffmans of A.L. Kauffman and Sons Fruit Farm, Bird-In-Hand, it is the first day of the busiest month of the year.

You see, Lancaster Countians love to drink apple cider in October, and that demand keeps the Kauffmans on their toes.

Fourteen-thousand gallons of apple cider were made in October of 1981, and approximately 370 bushels of apples were used in the process, according to Norman Kauffman.

And the tangy, all-natural drink seems to be gaining in popularity.

"We are already ahead of two years ago," Norman said. "It's starting out really booming this year."

For Carl Kauffman, the man responsible for the giant press, which is located in the back of a large room, noisy with machinery,

October means nine or 10 hour days. And this October will be no different, despite the drought conditions that hit the area this summer.

According to Carl the only effect the drought had on the apples was to make them firmer. However, since the apples are firmer, they are not as juicy, but don't worry, the consumers will not compensate for that.

"We won't be raising our prices at all," Carl said.

Raising his voice to be heard, Carl explained how the press worked. The apples are washed and then carried by an elevator into the shredder. They are then carried down into the press, where each roller is located closer to the main drum, causing the apples to be pressed tighter and tighter with each trip through a roller.

Each of the rollers is made out of stainless steel, which according to Carl is easier to clean than other materials. "Regular steel," Carl explained would rust and add an extra taste to the cider.



These apples are on their way to become apple cider at Kauffman's Fruit Farm. It takes one bushel of apples to make about 3.6 gallons of cider.

"Our cider does not hit any other metal except stainless steel," Carl said.

After the apples have rolled through the press, the cider is screened twice to make sure all the apple remains are removed. It is

then put into a 750-gallon holding tank in cold storage.

From there, Nathan Kauffman, who does most of the bottling takes over.

Nathan explained that the apples

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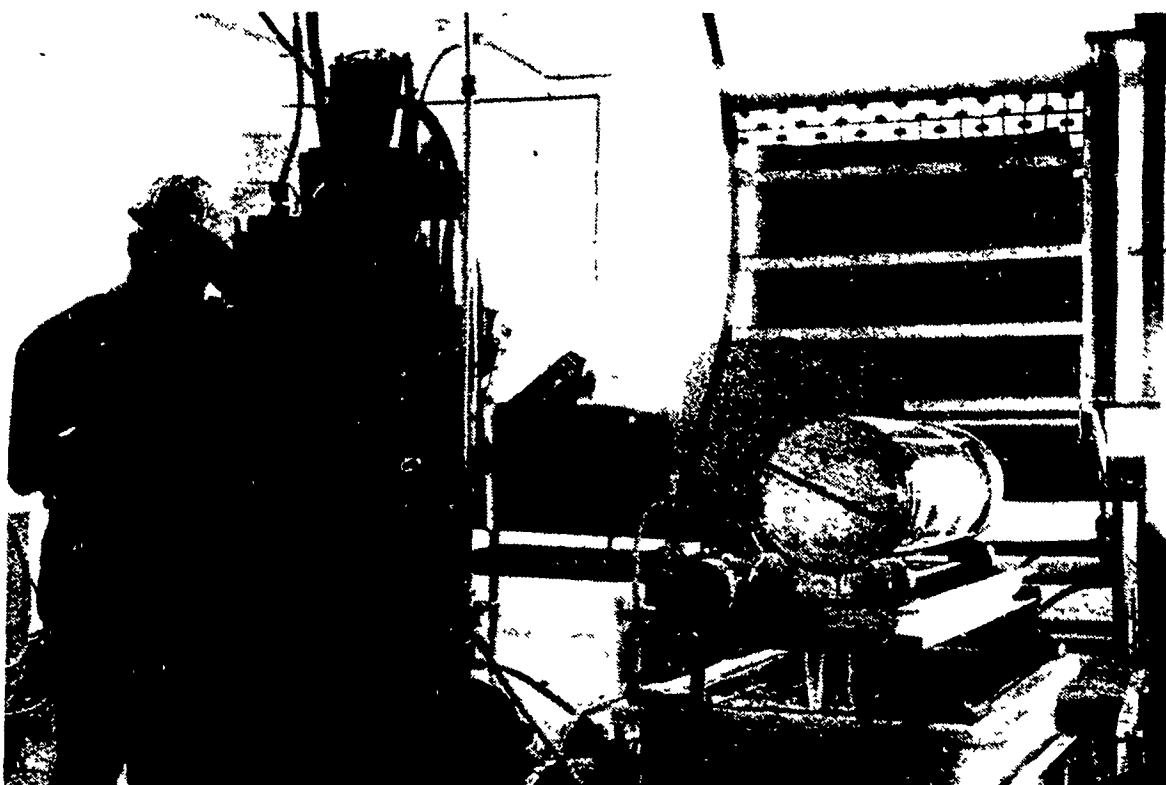
Filling the many bottles is Nathan Kauffman's job. The cider comes directly from the holding tank in cold storage to the bottling area.



These women have the job of selecting the apples used for cider and those to be sold in the market. Those with outer blemishes are used for cider.



This finished product can be in the hands of the consumer in less than an hour from when the apples entered the press.



This press was the first one of its kind in Lancaster County. It has been in operation at Kauffman's Fruit Farm for six years. Carl has been operating it for five of those years.

Cider Recipes

Hot Spiced Cider

1/2 cup brown sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 quarts fresh cider
Combine above ingredients. Tie the following in small cheesecloth and add to cider mixture.
1 teaspoon whole allspice
1 teaspoon whole cloves
3-inch stick cinnamon
dash nutmeg.
Slowly, bring to a boil, cover and simmer 20 minutes. Remove spices. Serve hot with orange slice floater.

Crockpot Apple Butter

Six pounds mixed varieties of cooking apples, cored, quartered. (They may be pared, but nice red skins add color to apple butter.) Cook with 2-3

cups of fresh apple cider instead of water until the apples are tender. Cool. Put apples through food mill. Measure. Put applesauce into crockpot and cook until it thickens. Add 1/2 to 2/3 cup sugar (part brown) to one cup sauce, depending on tartness of apples. Taste before you add it all. Add two teaspoons cinnamon. (If desired, add 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon cloves and/or allspice). Cook until nice and thick in crockpot. Spoon into hot, sterilized jars to within 1/4 inch from top. Adjust jar lids. Process in boiling water bath for 10 minutes. This recipe can be done in the oven with frequent stirring. Recipes courtesy of Jean Hileman, Kistaro Farm Market, Apollo.