

# Boise's Big Apple Longdrop Cider Co. plans March 2015 launch

By Tara Morgan  
Boise Weekly

The Northwest is a hotbed for hard cider production. That makes sense, considering Washington grows about 58 percent of America's apple crop. This year alone, dozens of craft cideries have sprouted up across Washington and Oregon—from Core Hero Hard Cider in Edmonds, Wash., to WildCraft Cider Works in Eugene, Ore. Boise had yet to take a bite of this booming industry. Until now.

Chris Blanchard and his wife Carol Crosswhite recently announced that they're partnering with the owners of Crooked Fence Brewing to launch Longdrop Cider Co. in the spring of 2015.

"I had been looking at doing something in the industry—whether it was opening a brewery of my own or a winery, but those didn't make any sense," said Blanchard. "Cider being as fast-growing as it is, and being that there's no one doing it, was something that looked like it made sense."

Blanchard, a former research director and adjunct

Boise, completed the Craft Cidery Startup Workshop at Oregon State University and obtained a certification in cider production from the National Association of Cider Makers in the United Kingdom. Now, he's waiting for the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau to approve his license so he can begin fermenting apple juice in the former winery production facility he's leasing from Crooked Flats in Eagle.

"We saw that in Idaho, especially for a time, you could essentially have the shelves to yourself," said Blanchard. "So we said, 'Let's just do this and go big; there's no reason to start small and self-distribute and all that stuff.' The market can absorb literally as much as you can produce."

Blanchard invested in a European-made stainless steel system that has the capacity to crank out 70,000 gallons of cider its first year.

"We want to build a capital-producing venture that makes money while we sleep," said Blanchard. "I've already had a career in academia. That was why I didn't want to do the small-scale thing."

Longdrop will launch with a semi-sweet, a semi-dry and a rotating seasonal cider.



A is for apple, B is for booze, C is for cider,  
D is for delicious.

“We will have everything actually pressed in the Yakima region and then sent down here to us ready to roll. ... The blend will be granny smith, golden delicious, red delicious, fuji and galas,” said Blanchard. “And then to maintain the acid base, it’ll have a higher dose of the granny smith in there.”

Longdrop’s primary focus will be 12-ounce cans but plans to offer its rotating/seasonal release in 22-ounce bottles and to distribute a limited number of kegs.

“We don’t want to get too extensively into a draft program just because it’s so low margin and so expensive and difficult to maintain, but there will be demand for it absolutely so it’s something that we will do,” said Blanchard.

Longdrop hopes to have its ciders on shelves by the spring of 2015.

“The stores start doing their spring set in March so that’s when we would theoretically hit,” said Blanchard.

