

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Sue Husch or Ellen Serr

Phone: (303) 695-0780

Email: admin@ciderassociation.org

Web Site: www.ciderconference.com



Cider Makers Convene in Chicago

Industry leaders of America's fastest growing beverage meet to shape its future

Chicago, IL –Members of the United States Association of Cider Makers (USACM) will gather in Chicago on February 3-6 for CiderCon, the annual meeting and conference for the nation's cider industry. Cider is the fastest-growing segment of the beverage industry. From 2007 to 2012, cider revenues more than tripled in the U.S., from \$178 million to \$601 million, according to the market research firm IBIS World.

Conference sessions will focus on production, distribution, marketing, research, apple growing, and sensory analysis. Over 400 attendees will represent the most recognized cider brands, as well as small cider makers and orchardists. A complete schedule of events may be found at www.ciderconference.com/schedule.

A very special guest will be the Honorable Earl Blumenauer, U.S. Representative for Oregon's 3rd Congressional District. Serving in Congress since 1996, last year he and Congressman Chris Collins (R-NY) introduced bipartisan legislation - the Cider Industry Deserves Equal Regulation (CIDER) Act, and will do so again this Congress. The Act would amend the section of the tax code that deals with wine and related beverages, 26USC § 5041 and would allow cider makers increased flexibility in their final product without potentially facing increased tax liability.

Other prominent speakers include Robert Vail, Director of Allied Brands at the Boston Beer Company (the makers of Angry Orchard); Mark Seetin, President of the U.S. Apple Association in Washington D.C.; officials with TTB (Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau); the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) and esteemed cider experts from around the world.

In addition to the conference, the USACM membership will conduct a business meeting which includes elections of directors and officers and a celebration of the organization's two year anniversary. The industry will also launch and present a new awards program honoring those who have made significant contributions to the cider industry. Cider will be featured throughout the week at Chicago bars, pubs, and restaurants.

While the conference is for USACM members only, the general public is invited to attend the Third Annual Cider Summit Chicago on Saturday, February 7, which consists of two cider tasting sessions at Navy Pier, starting at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. Tickets are \$30 and must be purchased in advance online. To learn more visit www.CiderSummit.com.

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