



Reusable Container Guidance for Retail

Guidelines for Maine Cider Sales

On June 8, 2021, LD 630 “An Act To Prohibit Shelf-stable Products from Being Sold as Cider” was signed into law and became effective as of October 18, 2021 (90-days post adjournment). No person may sell, advertise, offer or expose for sale any product labeled as "cider" if that product does not require refrigeration from pressing through purchase or if it has been **heat treated**. This law applies to both interstate and intrastate processors of apple, pear, peach etc. products packaged in glass, metal, plastic and aseptic containers labeled as **cider**. The word “juice” or other like-product marketing terms may be substituted for “cider” on product labels that have been heat treated. "Hard Cider" means liquor produced by fermentation of the juice of apples or pears, including, but not limited to, flavored, sparkling or carbonated cider, that contains not less than 1/2 of 1% alcohol by volume, and "liquor" has the same meaning as in Title 28-A, section 2, subsection 16, and is exempted from Maine public chapter law 111. Effective October 26, 2023 non-alcoholic sparkling and carbonated cider is exempt per PL 2021, c. 111, §3.

The chaptered law may be accessed at this link: legislature.maine.gov

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: My current product is not refrigerated after production. It was heat treated. Can I label this as cider?

A: No.

Q: Do I have to label my hard cider product as juice?

A: No. Hard cider is an alcoholic beverage and is exempt.

Q: Who can I reach out to with questions about this label restriction?

A: You may call the Division of QA&R at (207) 287-3841 and ask to speak with someone from the retail program.