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NEWS FROM THE TASMANIAN INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Taking a cider tippie for science

Ten of Tasmania's leading craft cider-makers and cider scientists will gather in Hobart this afternoon to taste-test new harvest and trial ciders as part of research that is helping grow the State's premium craft cider industry.

The Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) and Cider Tasmania will host the cider technical session involving an industry harvest tasting where cider makers will share and compare their 2016 harvest ciders prior to release.

TIA is leading a cider research program to find out the secrets behind making unique Tasmanian ciders, which involves trialing two different yeast varieties and comparing fermentation methods with different apple varieties.

TIA cider researcher, Dr Fiona Kerslake, is leading the workshop and says panel members will be comparing laboratory analysis results and then rating the ciders.

"The taste tests compared with laboratory analysis further develops our understanding of what makes a good cider," Dr Kerslake said.

"This can be quite complex as there are multiple cider styles and further research is needed in Tasmania to understand the relationship between cider astringency and consumer preferences with the available dessert apple varieties, like Granny Smith and Sundowner, that Tasmania is using to make cider.

"Old French and English style ciders are made using apples bred specifically for cider making, which have higher concentrations of phenolics.

"Phenolics are the compounds that give ciders their astringency, or 'dryness'.

"Understanding the relationship between taste preferences and laboratory analysis is valuable to cider makers who are developing novel styles.

"We have shown that our cider makers can make absolutely distinctive and beautiful Tasmanian ciders using the current apple varieties in Tasmania."

The results from today's tastings will be fed back into TIA's cider research program to further advance the industry through research into strategies that yield unique characteristics and consistently produce high-quality ciders.

Cider is booming in Australia with double-digit growth and retail sales are expected to exceed \$1 billion in retail sales by 2019 (IBIS World).

Tasmania currently has around 16 craft cideries, each contributing to Tasmania's growing reputation as a gourmet foodscape and travel destination.

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