



# A Fresh Vision for Ecker's Apple Farm

Sara Ecker



5<sup>th</sup> generation farm

1<sup>st</sup> generation to not  
have to work off farm

We just have to keep the  
wheels on the bus...

We don't have to build  
the bus.

# Peter Ecker

The cure for boredom is curiosity.

—Dorothy Parker

Inventor, artist, ideas man, grower



# Janet Ecker

Things will look better in the morning. –Janet

Nobody got hurt. –Janet



Perfectionist, foodie, rural socialite,  
caramel queen, antiques

# Mary Ecker

'No' - Mary Ecker 6 months later 'Ok, but it's not going to work.'

Baker, bookkeeper, head of mowing operations, CFO, 'moneybags'



# Jess Ecker

PR, HR, all events, architect, artist,  
continuous thinker

Red tape wader,  
Intuitive BS-meter





Simon DeGabriele

We don't complain about how someone does their job... because then we might have to do their job. - Simon  
Mechanic, contractor, comic relief  
Lays on thick Australian charm



Sara Ecker Live to ride another day. -Sara



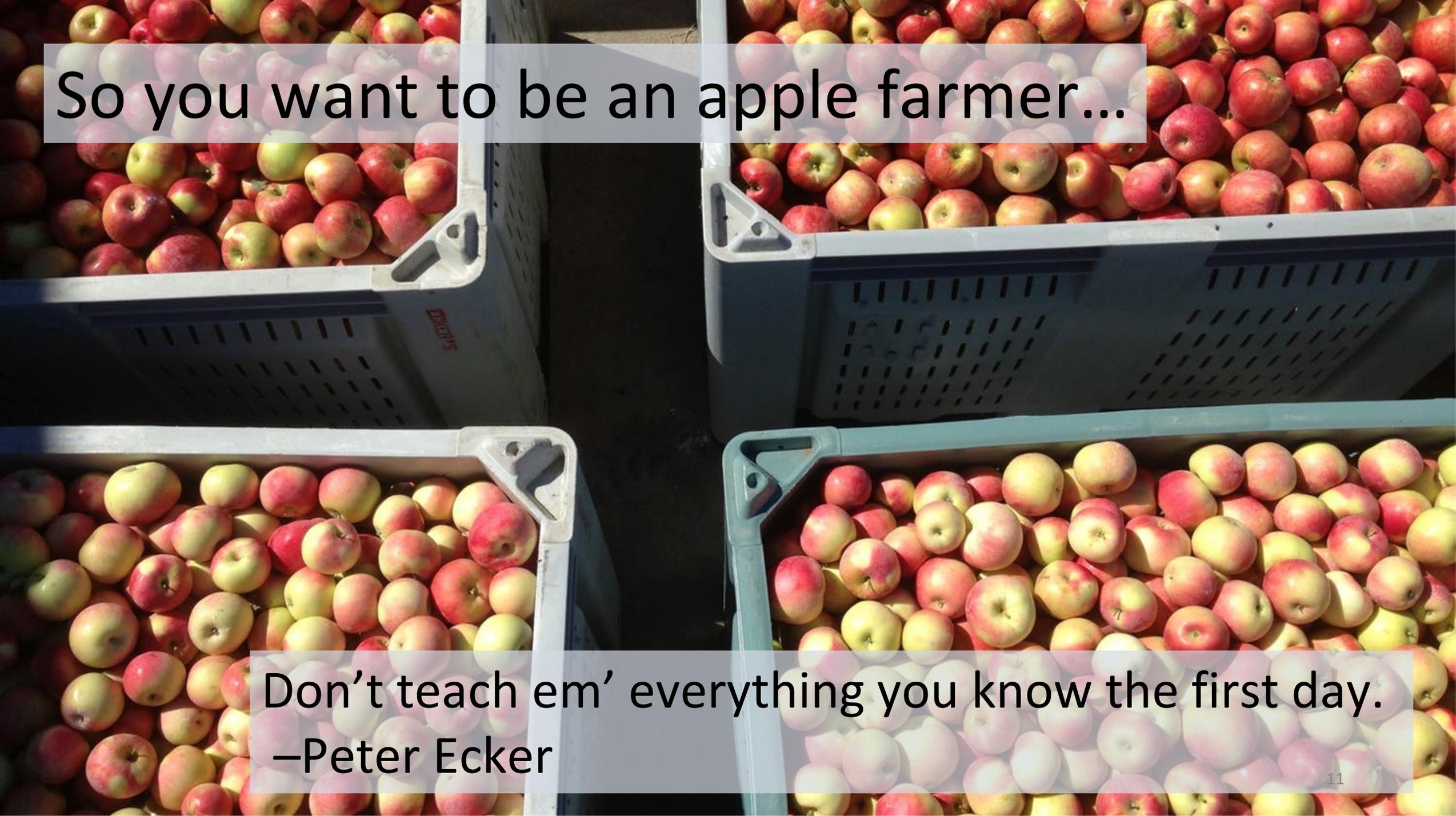
Default orchardist  
Default multi-peril insurance  
technician  
Beginning Spanish speaker



# Ask Dad





The image shows four large, light-colored plastic crates filled with a variety of apples, including red, yellow, and green ones. The crates are arranged in a 2x2 grid. A semi-transparent text box is overlaid on the top-left crate, and another is overlaid on the bottom-right crate.

So you want to be an apple farmer...

Don't teach em' everything you know the first day.  
—Peter Ecker



Honeycrisp saved my generation of apple-growers...



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



**I wouldn't grow apples  
without- (at least some)  
High density trellis systems  
and drip irrigation**



I wouldn't grow apples  
(on flat land) without-

- Frost fans

**I wouldn't grow apples without (at least some) Hail Netting**



**And without as much Multi-Peril Insurance as we can afford.**



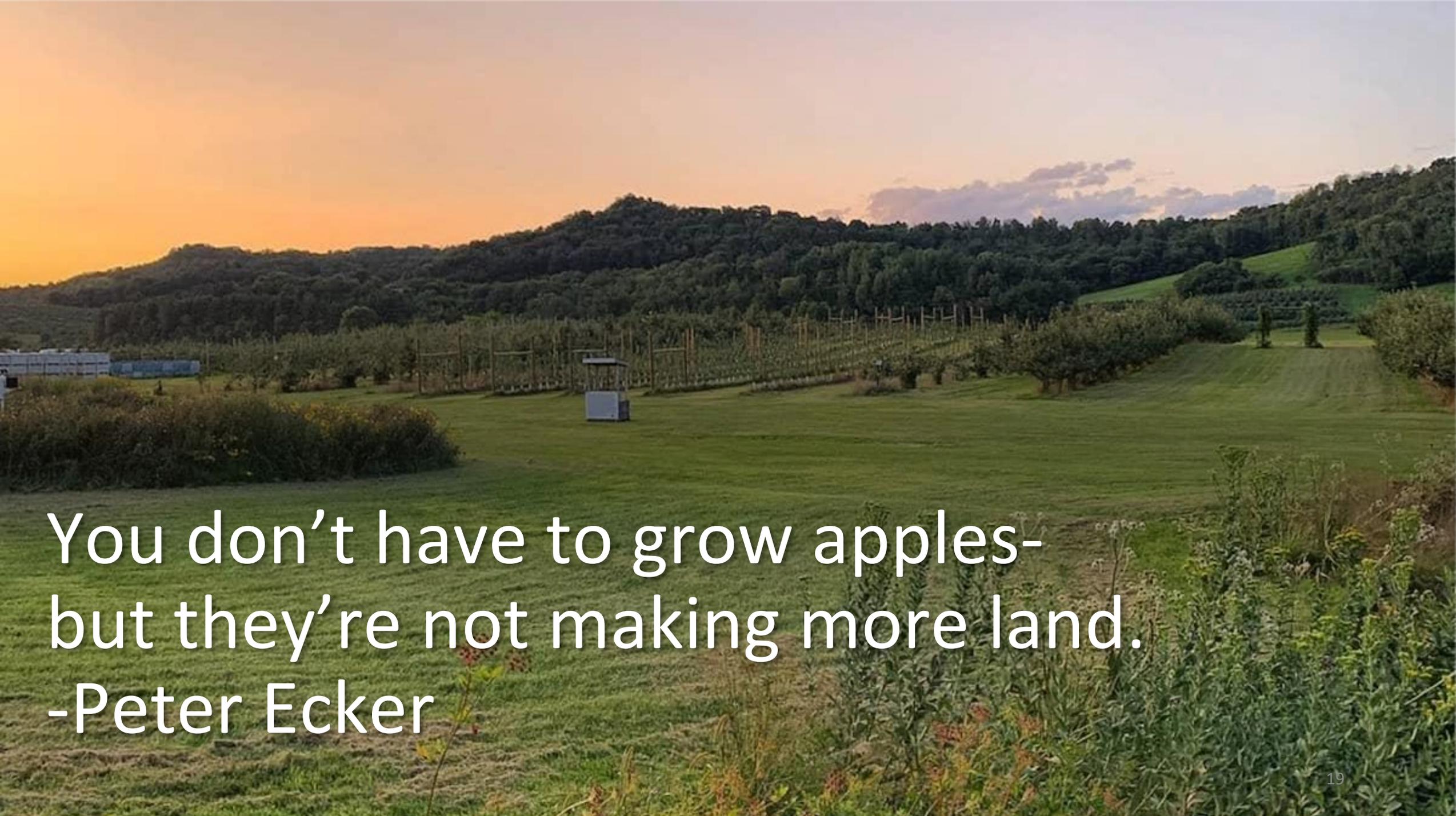
I shouldn't grow apples in a low spot. They die.

Retail:  
25% of crop  
75% of income



Wholesale:  
75% of crop  
25% of income





You don't have to grow apples-  
but they're not making more land.  
-Peter Ecker

# Bakery

- Scratch pies
- 7000+ pies a year
- Only apple 😊

# Peeler

Simon's 1<sup>st</sup> baby

- 4 moving arms
- 100s of parts
- FB Pease
  
- 5000 apples to make 500 pies





# Assembly

- Crew of 10-12 people 3 days/week
- 500 pies/week



Pie Freezer



Rack Oven

# Caramel

You've got to sell sugar and lace.

—Peter Ecker

7 high-school kids, 5 hours each  
weekend day

20,000 caramel apples a year



# Caramel wholesale

- Weather independent product
- Sales to other businesses
- Takes pressure off the apples
- **If we lose the apples, we can make the farm payment.**



# Wedding venue

**1 per month**

**Not during apple season**

**Detailed contract**

**Don't give them away**





# Wedding venue

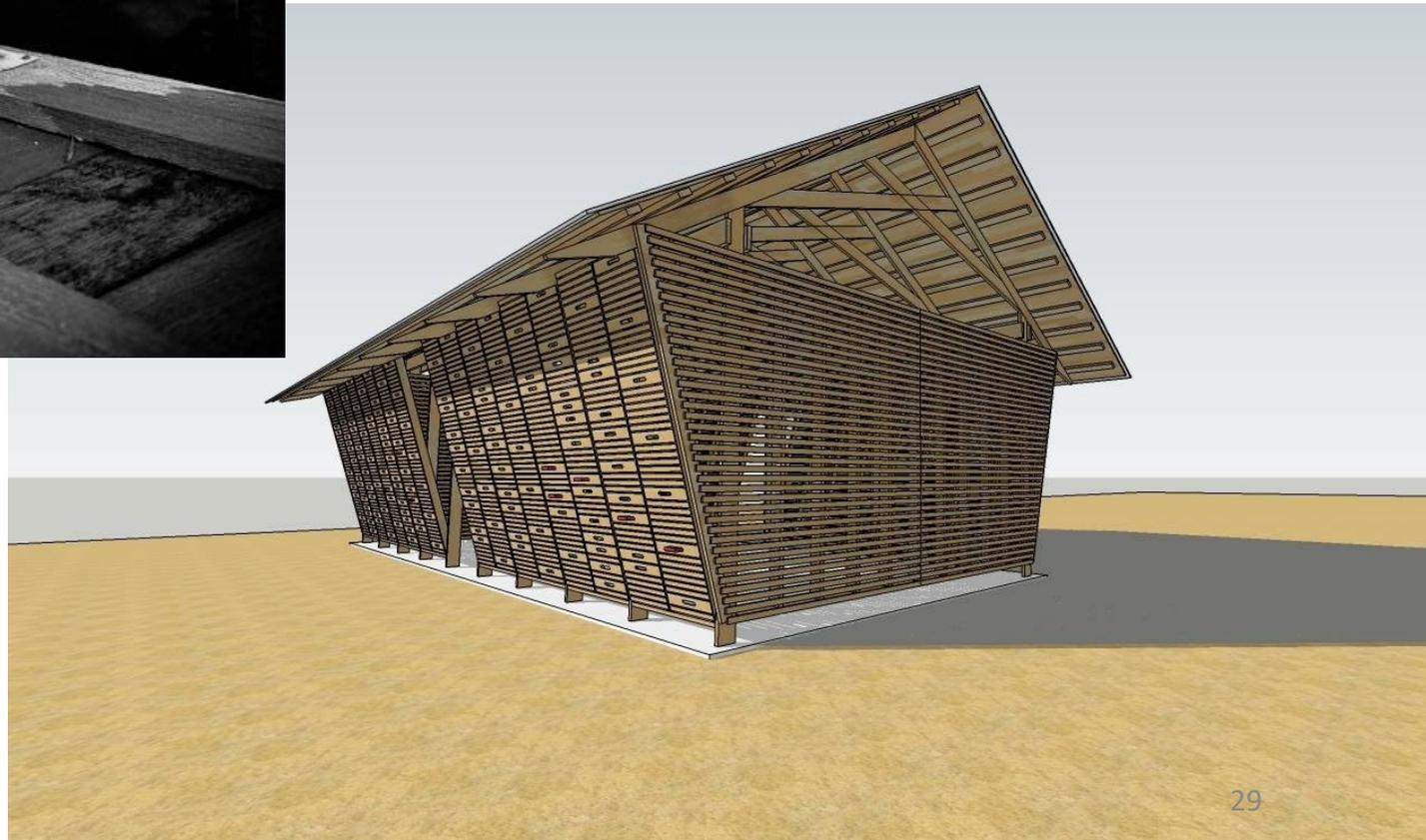
Host Liquor License and 1 day event license

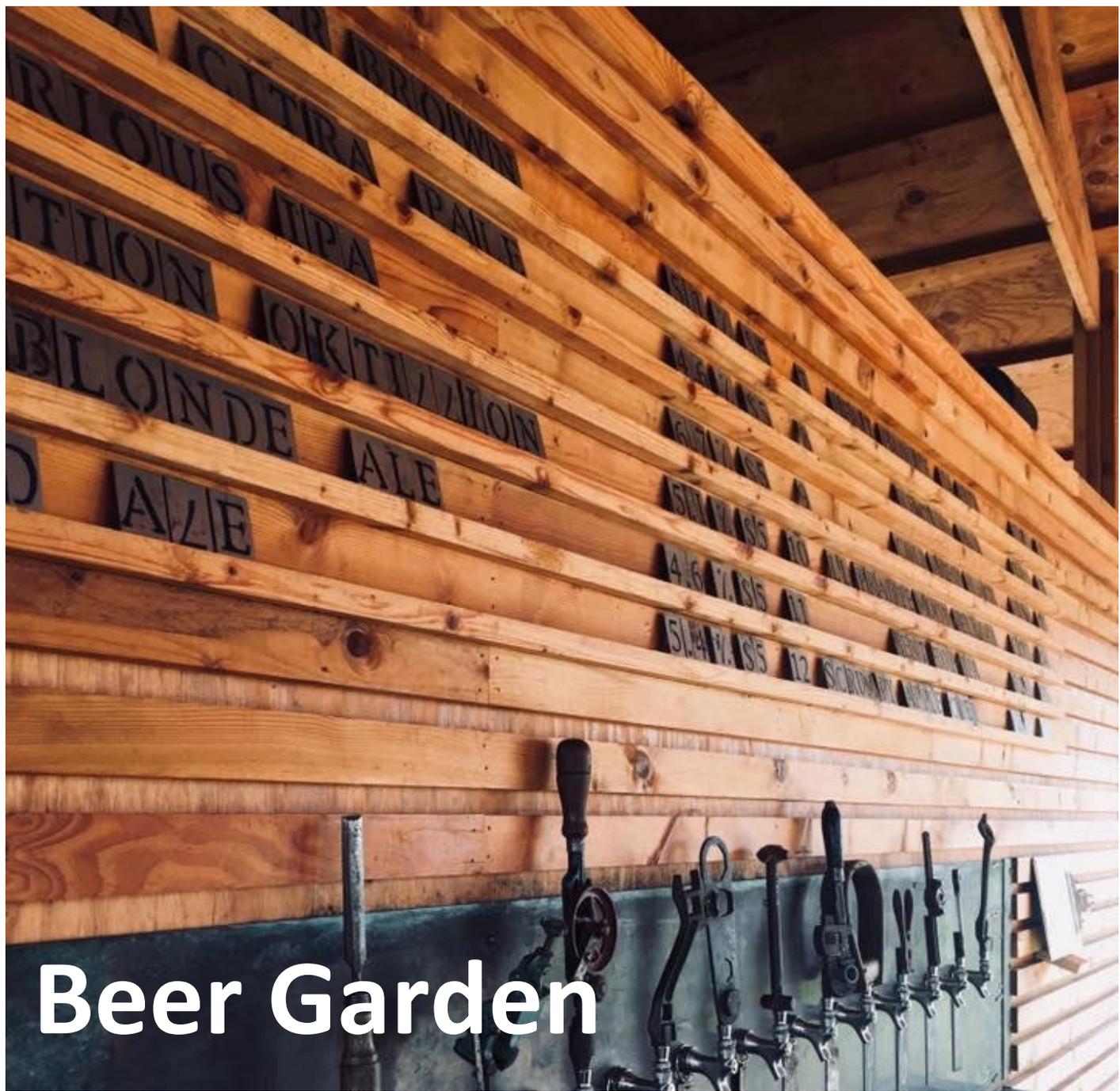


# Hog's Back Brew Farm

Eckers never do anything fast. –Peter Ecker







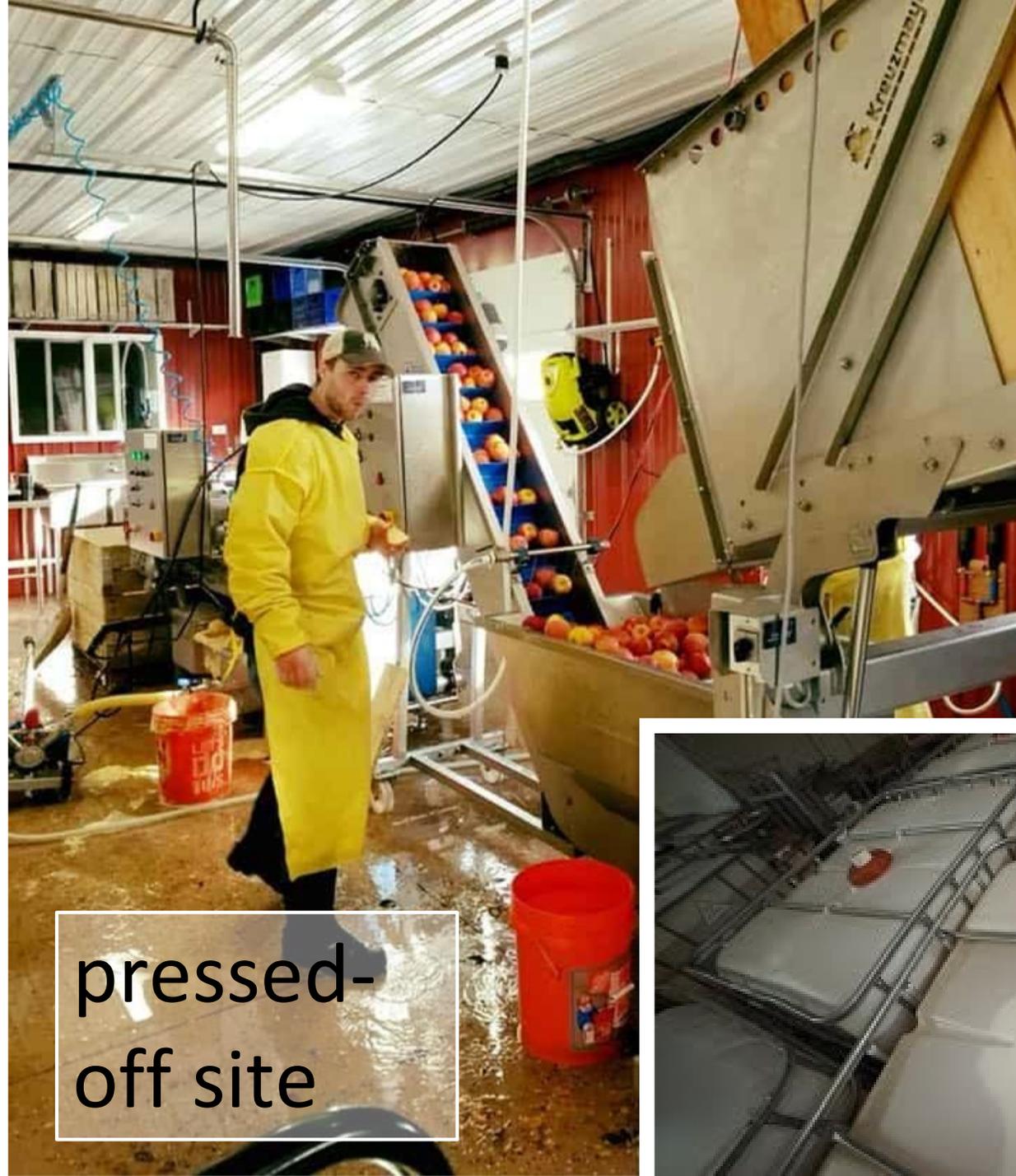
**Beer Garden**



# Hard Cider-



Our apples,

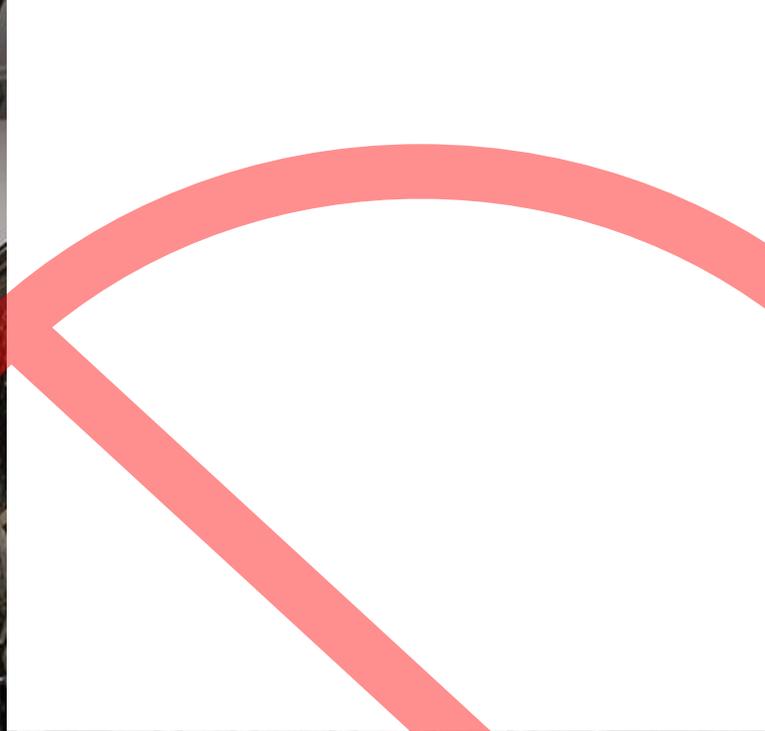


pressed-  
off site

Stored,  
frozen, and  
fermented in  
IBC totes.

Then bottled  
or kegged.





Hard Cider

We invest as we  
can  
afford to.

Ecker's Apple Farm and Hog's Back Brew Farm are 2 separate entities.



Currently hold retail beer and federal winery license. Awaiting state winery license.

# Music Venue





# Honeycrisp Hootenanny

- 1<sup>st</sup> Hoot in 2009
- “Jess, why don’t you go up to George’s Bar and get a ¼ barrel”
- Had ½ of a ¼ barrel leftover
- A party to celebrate the end of Honeycrisp harvest



# 2012 Hoot



# 2015 Hoot

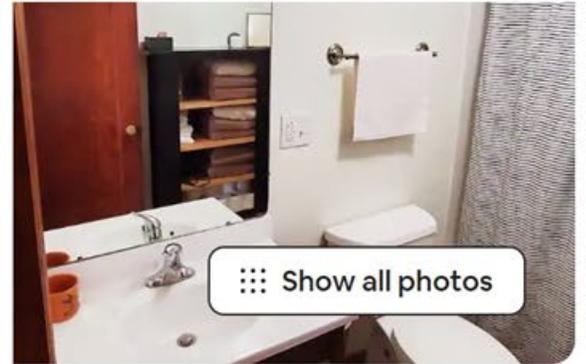


Hootenanny Now: (not 2020)  
Capped at 4000 tickets sold  
After 10 free years, we now  
charge admission. \$10

# Frank's Farmhouse at Ecker's Apple Farm

★ 5.0 (46) · Superhost · Trempealeau, Wisconsin, United States

Share Save



Show all photos

## Farm stay hosted by Jessica

7 guests · 3 bedrooms · 5 beds · 1 bath



\$149 / night

★ 5.0 (46)

Earliest availability is Jan 21. [Add check-in date](#)

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# Social media: Facebook and Instagram



FANCY A PIE ON  
MOTHER'S DAY?  
  
These treats are hot and fresh so  
place your orders now, ladies...



1 post per week max,  
Picture, info about event, 1 joke

What didn't work for us...



It's not a race to the bottom...



It's another beautiful day in paradise.

– friends, mentors and largest apple growers in WI and MN, Ferguson's Orchards

What works for them...



# Ferguson's Welcome to Fall!



- HOME
- GALESVILLE
- EAU CLAIRE
- PEPIN HEIGHTS - LAKE CITY
- ONLINE STORE/CURBSIDE
- ABOUT
- COVID-19

## Select a Location Below!

[Galesville, WI](#)  
Now Closed Until Aug. 2021



Our original farm - conveniently located between La Crosse and Winona, our Galesville farm has everything: apples, pumpkins, tons of fun fall activities, local gifts and products, delicious caramel apples and baked goods! Visit the Galesville tab for more!

[Galesville Home](#)

[Galesville Attractions](#)

[Eau Claire, WI](#)  
Now Closed Until Aug. 2021



Welcome to Fall - located just minutes from Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls, and only an hour from the Twin Cities, our Eau Claire farm has it all: apples, pumpkins, tons of fun fall activities, local gifts and products, delicious caramel apples and baked goods! Visit the Eau Claire tab for more!

[Eau Claire Home](#)

[Eau Claire Attractions](#)

[Pepin Heights - Lake City, MN](#)  
Now Closed Until Aug. 2021



One of the most famous destinations along Highway 61 and the Mississippi River - the Pepin Heights country store in Lake City, MN, offers a quaint stop for locals and road-trippers alike. Shop local gifts and products, caramel apples, baked goods, and of course, apples! Visit the Pepin Heights tab for more!

[Pepin Heights Home](#)

[Pepin Heights Contact](#)

What works for them...



### Corn Maze

Get lost in our 7-acre "Thank You Heroe...



### Farm Animals

Meet our friendly farm animals - goats,...



### Pumpkin Pad

Jump for joy on our giant pumpkin...



# Double vision...

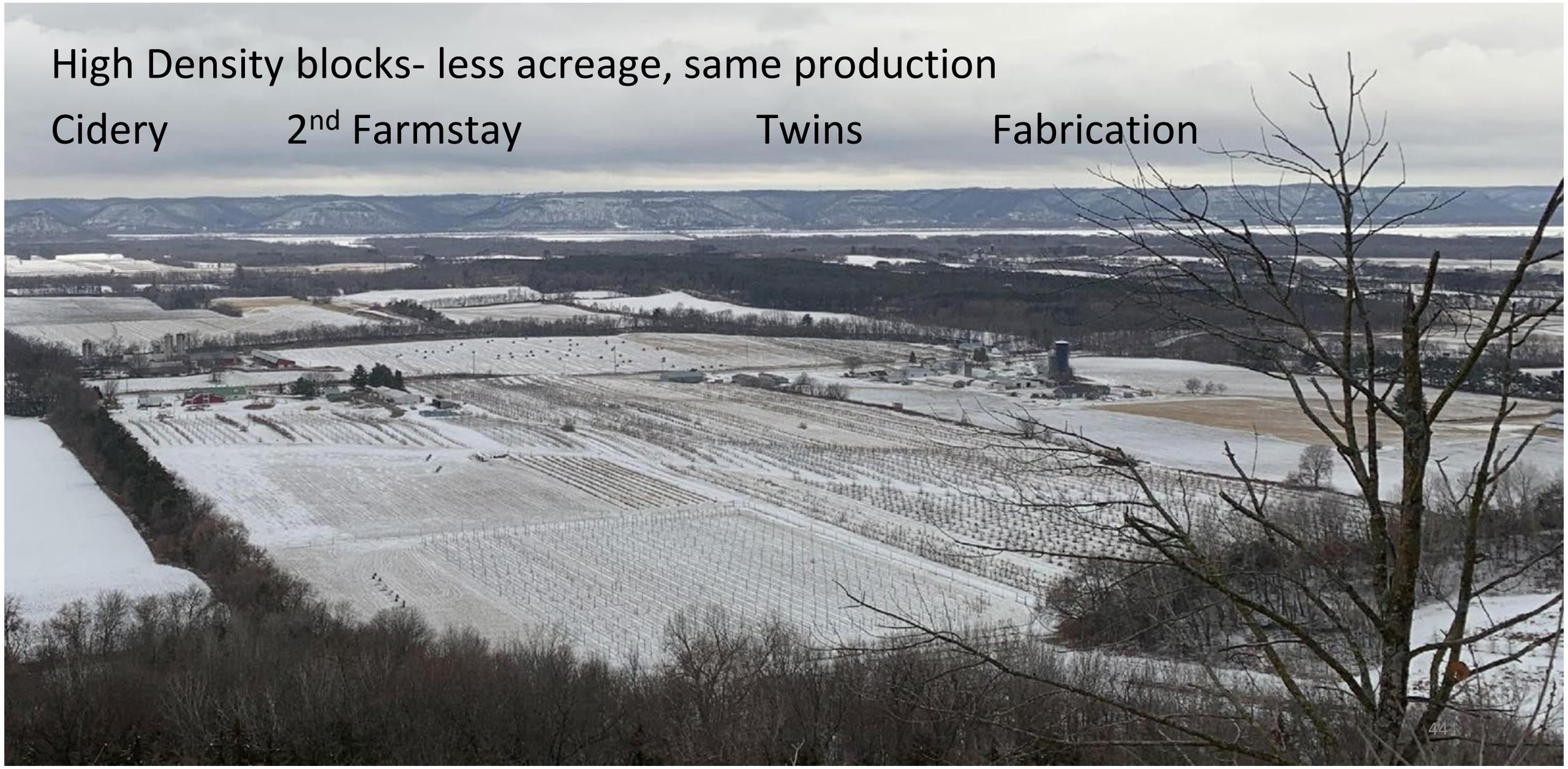
High Density blocks- less acreage, same production

Cidery

2<sup>nd</sup> Farmstay

Twins

Fabrication



Simon's  
2<sup>nd</sup> baby:

Google:

Wisconsin  
Hemp  
Stripper





**ECKER'S  
APPLE FARM**

**My worst decision is better than someone else's best advice.**

–Peter Ecker