

TESTING FOR SELF & CROSS COMPATIBILITY IN NEW CIDER VARIETIES

Method

1. Designate different coloured labels for each variety.
2. Select 2 or 3 healthy trees of each variety to be tested.
3. Select 10 clusters at late balloon stage for each test. ie 10 for self and 10 each for the cross compatibility tests.
4. Reduce the clusters to 4 strong lateral flowers and emasculate and bag them , labelled according to the variety they will be pollinated with.
5. Collect sufficient late balloon stage flowers of each variety to pollinate. You will need approximately 2/cluster. ie. 2 for each self pollination =20 flowers. Plus a further 20 for each variety to be cross pollinated.
6. De-petal the flowers and dry overnight in a warm room [18 – 20°C approx] on separate labelled paper trays.
7. Day 2 in orchard. Open bags and dust the stigmas with the pollen of the appropriate dried flowers. Re-bag.
8. Tear open all the bags at petal fall.

Records needed

- Flowering time. Date of full bloom and petal fall of each variety.
- Initial set. Number of fruit/cluster set post bloom
- Final set. Number of fruit/cluster set post June drop.
- At end of season collect a sample of 10 ripe fruit per test and count the seed number/fruit.

Equipment needed

Tweezers

Water proof paper bags, with waterproof glue! [10/test. eg. 2 varieties would need 10 for self and 10 for cross = 40 bags]

Coloured labels, Twist ties, Large plastic bags

Overnight drying room [still air]

Fine weather!