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Crafting an Orchard Heritage: Cider Producers and the Construction of Landscape in England and Wales

This paper examines the ways that craft cider producers shape and protect the apple orchard landscape in England and Wales. Demonstrating that craft cider production involves the active management and construction of a heritagized landscape, I show how producers work to discover neglected orchards, plant new trees, identify and replant heritage apple varieties, encourage pollinators through planting, and nurture orchards through ritual practices such as wassailing. These activities, and the relationship with the environment upon which they are founded, are central to producers' sense of identity as crafters and they commonly construct and represent themselves as guardians of the landscape, as well as highlighting their role in upholding the heritage of cider through such idioms. The production of craft cider, then, and the tangible and intangible heritage on which its producers draw, is deeply embedded within and coterminously creates an orchard landscape. Moreover, this landscape provides an aesthetic framework and visual representation of the places of production as 'cider regions'; a process that, in turn, enables producers to promote their cider as 'heritage' and encourages consumers to place the cider they are drinking in a heritagized – and often romanticized – landscape. The orchard landscape thus becomes a marketing tool; albeit, I argue, one that facilitates protection and conservation. This paper thus critically unpacks and reflects upon the complex interplays between the production of food and drink, landscape management and conservation, the representation and commodification of both the landscape and food as heritage, and the construction of producer identity.

Emma-Jayne Abbots is Senior Lecturer in Anthropology at UWTSd Lampeter and Research Associate at the SOAS Food Studies Centre, London. Her research addresses the cultural politics of food and drink and the visceral practices of their production and consumption. She is broadly concerned with material and embodied engagements with food, relationships with the environment, and the political ecologies of food knowledges. In addition to a number of chapters and articles on these topics, Abbots is the author of *The Agency of Eating* (Bloomsbury 2016), and the co-editor of *Why We Eat, How We Eat* (Ashgate 2013) and *Careful Eating* (Ashgate, 2015).