



1. Production of cider

Serial	Check	Details
1	(a) Orchard – if producer grows their own apples	
	(i) Apples must be grown in the English county of Somerset.	(i) Check location of orchard. It must be totally encompassed in the English county of Somerset.
	(ii) Apples must be grown without the use of nitrogen fertiliser at any stage of the growing cycle.	(ii) Check purchase records and apple growing practices to see if nitrogen fertiliser is introduced at any stage.
	(iii) The orchard must not yield more than 25 tonnes (25,000kg) of apples per hectare (10,000m ²).	(iii) Check harvest records.
	(iv) Apples must be of the traditional cider varieties grown in the region.	(iv) Check list of varieties grown are 'genuine cider apples', as used by the industry and are <u>not</u> , for example, of the Russet, Cox or Gala varieties.
	(b) Orchard – if producer purchases apples	
	(v) Purchased apples used to produce cider or to complement producers own harvest of apples must also comply with checks (i) to (iv) as above.	(v) Check purchases records. Producer must obtain sufficient documentary evidence from the orchard owner to satisfy above checks.
2	Cider	
	(i) At least 20 varieties of Somerset apples must be pressed to create apple juice.	(i) Check that the operator has controls in place to ensure at least 20 varieties of Somerset apples are used. Check the operators recipe.
	(ii) No other ingredient must be added to this juice, including water.	(ii) Check recipe and process to ensure no other ingredient is added.
	(iii) Cider is produced by fermenting the juice by the addition of yeast.	(iii) Check the process and specifications to ensure that fermentation is by yeast only and no enzymes or other fermentable material are added.
	(iv) No sugars may be added to increase the alcohol content (chaptalisation).	(iv) Check process.

2. Distillery

Serial	Check	Details
1	Distillers and distilleries	
	(i) All Somerset Cider Brandy distilleries must be located in Somerset.	(i) Check address of distillery.
2	Distillation	
	(i) Somerset Cider Brandy must be distilled before ageing.	(i) Check all alcohol intended for filling as Somerset Cider Brandy has been distilled or will be distilled prior to filling.
	(ii) Distillation must be either by a pot still or a continuous column still.	(ii) Check that a still exists and that it is either a pot still or column still. Distillation by other methods such as vacuum and freeze are not allowed.
	(iii) Distillation must be at a minimum strength of 65% and at a maximum strength of 72% alcohol by volume (abv).	(iii) Check distillery records to confirm distillation strength and visually check procedures.
	(iv) Stills must not produce more than 100 hectolitres of product in 24 hours.	(iv) Check size of still, capacity and throughput for compliance. Check processes to ensure production is below 100 hectolitres per 24 hours.

3. Maturation (including filling locations)

Serial	Check	Details
1	Warehouse	
	(i) Maturation may only take place in Somerset, England.	(i) Check address complies.
	(ii) Maturer must be able to demonstrate that product to be matured as Somerset Cider Brandy complies with the Product Specification up to this stage.	(ii) Check processes exist and records kept to ensure inward deliveries are received from operators with assured processes.
2	Casks	
	(i) Somerset Cider Brandy must be matured in oak casks.	(i) Check operator's purchase records to ensure that casks are made of oak. All repairs to casks must be made with oak. Steel bungs are allowed. Traditional cooperage practices (such as charring and decharring) are allowed.
	(ii) The capacity of each cask must not exceed 700 litres at any time during maturation.	(ii) Check a sample of casks to identify their size. Check operator's purchase records to identify sizes of casks.
3	Filling	
	(i) Casks must be filled only with distilled spirit that will mature into Somerset Cider Brandy.	(i) Check casks have been thoroughly drained of any previous contents before being filled. Check that there is an appropriate procedure in place for emptying casks.

Serial	Check	Details
	(ii) No additives are allowed at this stage.	<p>(ii) Check that no substance is added to the inside of the cask, for example paxarette, boisé, sugar, caramel, oak chips, wooden structures (whether oak or not).</p> <p>Note - it is recognised that some casks may previously have been used to age sherry, port, cognac, wine or Pomona and this has some bearing on the future taste of the product. This is conditioning and is acceptable industry practice.</p>
4	Ageing	
	(i) Somerset Cider Brandy needs to be matured for at least 3 years.	<p>(i) Check the maturer's record keeping process to understand how they log the ageing of a cask. Check that the maturer has adequate measures to ensure the ageing process is not interrupted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> leaks or evaporative losses do not cause any problems for the age of the spirit left in the cask – the contents of a cask may be re-racked into another empty cask for further ageing – topping up of casks with younger spirit is not allowed 'marrying in cask' is allowed
	(ii) It can be marketed with different maturities (ages).	(ii) Check that the maturer has a fit and proper system of tracking ages of casks.

4. Blending, bottling and labelling of final product

Serial	Check	Details
1	(a) In Somerset – duty not paid	
	(i) If Somerset Cider Brandy is to be held or received at the blending or bottling location in an oak cask, the location must be an excise warehouse or approved premises (a premises for which the business holds an Alcoholic Products Producer Approval).	(i) Check address of premises to see if it is correctly approved.
	(b) In Somerset – duty paid	
	(ii) If blending or bottling location is not an exercise warehouse or approved premises (a premises for which the business holds an alcoholic products producer approval), then Somerset Cider Brandy may only be held or received in inert containers.	(ii) Check Somerset Cider Brandy is not held or received in any wooden containers. If so, it can no longer be described as Somerset Cider Brandy as it is being matured outside an excise warehouse or approved premises.
2	Additions	
	(i) Nothing should be added during blending or bottling other than distilled water.	(i) Check procedures to ensure that no flavourings or other substances are added. Yeast cannot be added at blending stage. No colouring is permitted.
3	Age of blends	
	(i) Blenders can blend different ages of Somerset Cider Brandy. The age of the blend is that of the youngest of each constituent ingredient.	(i) Check the production and record keeping process to ensure that ages of each ingredient of the blend are recorded and that only the youngest of those ages is used to describe the blend. Check the declared ages of purchased and own product to ensure they match what is entered in the production records. If the age of the blend is not stated, the minimum age is 3 years.
4	Strength	
	(i) The alcohol strength by volume is at least 40%.	(i) Ensure that the operator has a process of checking the alcohol strength during the blending stage to assure that the addition of water does not dilute the blend to below 40% abv.
5	Labelling	
	(i) The age of product can only be expressed in years and must comply with labelling requirements for spirit drinks.	(i) Check the label template for compliance.
	(ii) The geographical indication (GI) 'Somerset Cider Brandy' must be accompanied by the sales denomination 'cider spirit'.	(ii) Check 'cider spirit' is shown on the label.