

Apple maze will consist of 3,000 trees trained to grow on a horizontal set of wires.



## First-Of-Its-Kind Apple Tree Maze

In 2015, the most unique farm maze in the country will open in Illinois. Royal Oak Farm's apple-shaped maze was planted in 2012 and consists of 3,000 trees planted on about 4 1/2 acres.

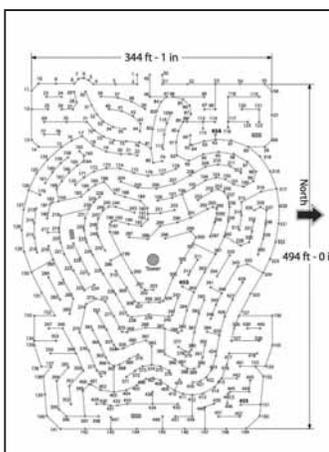
"We'll have 9 varieties of apples in the maze," says Dennis Norton, Royal Oak Farm Orchard. "People will be able to wander through and pick the apples that are ripe at different times of the harvest season."

Norton credits his father-in-law Peter Bianchini, founder of the orchard, with the idea for a maze. They turned to Maze Play, a maze design company, for a plan ([www.mazeplay.com](http://www.mazeplay.com)). They received a computer printout with GPS coordinates for each tree and began planting. Trickle irrigation lines and landscape fabric for weed control were also laid out.

"The trees are being trained espalier fashion to grow on a set of wires," says Norton. "When fully grown, the maze walls will be 7 ft. tall and 2 to 2 1/2 ft. thick. There are four wires strung at 1 1/2 ft. intervals on 456 posts. Trees are spaced 3 ft. apart, and alleys are 8 to 12 ft. wide."

From the air, it will look like a Red Delicious apple with leaves at the stem. Each variety is planted in several areas, ensuring plenty of apples for visitors. The alleys are planted to a grass mix bred for heavy traffic. This is vital, as the farm's U-pick operation attracts 4,000 to 5,000 people per weekend from mid-August through October. After the maze opens, they expect even more traffic.

Before the first tree was planted, a system of pipes was laid in the new orchard area to deliver pesticides. The Solid Set Spray Delivery System was developed by Trickle-irrigation, St. Joseph, Mich. It is being



Plan marked with GPS coordinates shows that maze will look like a Red Delicious apple.

evaluated by Washington State University, Cornell University and Michigan State University.

The maze is broken into two zones, each with its own manifold. Each manifold is connected to 8 risers spread throughout the maze. They in turn connect to waterlines that run up and across the top wire of the trellis, above the tree height. Emitters on the line will spray down, over and inside the tree canopy.

The maze will require lots of hand pruning to keep the dense, compact shape. Workers have practiced on a demonstration apple tree hedgerow planted earlier.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Royal Oak Farm Orchard, 15908 Hebron Rd., Harvard, Ill. 60033 (ph 815 648-4141; [service@royaloakfarmorchard.com](mailto:service@royaloakfarmorchard.com); [www.royaloakfarmorchard.com](http://www.royaloakfarmorchard.com)).

## Pet Crematory Takes Horses, Too

When James Scheffler, one of the owners of Midwest Cremation Service of Mn, Inc., (MCS) says they cremate pets, he means *all* pets - including horses. The Anoka, Minn., facility has a crematorium large enough to accommodate a draft horse.

While burial is allowed in most areas (with regulations regarding depth and distance from water), Scheffler says his clients want something more.

"Some clients have had their horses for 30 years or more," he says.

Instead of paying someone to haul the carcass away, they prefer a respectful end for their horse and a keepsake - a Minnesota-made oak box that contains their pet's ashes.

For \$1,600, Scheffler picks up the horse (within 50 miles), cremates it and returns with the ashes. For additional mileage, he

has traveled as far as northern Minnesota and South Dakota to pick up horses.

He uses a tilt bed trailer with a winch to load and transport the horse, covering it with a tarp. After the horse is transferred to the crematorium using a forklift with special forks, it takes about 13 hours at 1,800° F for total cremation. The remaining ashes in the wooden urn average 50 lbs.

Ideally, Scheffler says he prefers to be called before a horse is euthanized, so he can be present and remove the horse immediately. But he picks up horses wherever they are throughout the year.

MCS also has a Wisconsin location. Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Midwest Cremation Service of Mn, Inc., 20323 St. Francis Blvd., Anoka, Minn. 55303 (ph 763 753-5510; [www.mcs of mn.com](http://www.mcs of mn.com)).



Lanman water press uses a flexible rubber bladder to produce as much as 3 gal. of cider from a bushel of apples.

## Water Press Makes Cider Production Easier

The Lanman water press can get as much as 3 gal. of cider from a bushel of apples. This is significantly more than most small cider presses, according to Sukie Kindwall, OESCO, Inc., North American distributor of the Lanman press. All it takes to operate is a water hose with normal pressure.

"The yield from the Lanman is surprisingly high," says Kindwall. "It is also quite fast. You can do 2 pressings of 4 1/2 bu. of ground apples per hour."

Most presses use hydraulic or screw pressure to squeeze juice out. The Lanman uses a flexible rubber bladder in the center of a slotted, cylindrical, stainless steel basket. Ground fruit is dropped into the filter sleeve around the bladder. Once the basket is full, a hose is attached to the valve on the bladder. As water fills the bladder, it presses on the surrounding fruit.

"There are no electrical connections and no levers or wheels applying force," says Kindwall. "The water does all the work. It yields about 90 percent of the juice that you'd get from a rack and cloth press at a fraction of the cost."

OESCO offers 4 Lanman models, ranging from 4 1/2 to 13 bu. in size. Prices for the stainless steel presses range from \$1,865 to \$3,225. Grinders are extra. OESCO makes a 1/2 hp., 115-volt motor grinder priced at \$1,925 and a 1 hp., 220-volt grinder with an

elevator for loading a large press. It's priced at \$5,770.

OESCO also manufactures large, commercial cider presses as well as a press with a built-in grinder for small-scale hobbyists. When company representatives saw the Lanman, made in Slovenia, they recognized it fit between the two types of presses they were already selling.

She warns that the biggest challenge with cider making is to give the press time. "If you increase pressure too fast in any press, it actually locks the juice in the apple tissue," says Kindwall. "A slow, steady pressure increase releases more juice. It also releases less sediment into the juice."

Kindwall reports that the press also works with grapes and other fruit, such as strawberries, and is expected to work equally well on vegetables like tomatoes.

"We had a customer buy one for use with almonds," says Kindwall. "They intend to make almond milk with it."

The press is easy to empty and clean. It rotates into a horizontal position, and the filter with the pressed fruit pulp easily slides out.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, OESCO, Inc., P.O. Box 540, Conway, Mass. 01341 (ph 413 369-4335 or 800 634-5557; [info@oescoinc.com](mailto:info@oescoinc.com); [www.oescoinc.com](http://www.oescoinc.com)).

## He Switched From Crops To Shelving

By Rex Gogerty

When his allergies gave him problems a few years ago, John Ward rented his 200-acre farm to a neighbor and sought a second career. He found it at a local Wal-Mart store that was having a sale on metal shelving he needed for his farm shop.

"I bought their entire sale stock and started in business by selling shelving to neighbors," says Ward. "With a little advertising and word of mouth references, it expanded to a profitable on-farm enterprise."

Ward sells and installs new and used equipment, including shelving, racks, pallets, filing cabinets, containers, tables, carts, security fencing, and even skid-proof metal flooring. For custom jobs, he measures the available area and offers advice, then delivers and installs the needed equipment. His travels and experience have also sparked design for equipment modifications.

"Farmers are building headquarters that are bigger with more electronic controls and equipment," says Ward. "With my warehouses full of inventory here on the farm, I can supply or build just about any equipment they need."



John Ward makes his living selling and installing all types of shelving.

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