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C Squared Ciders to Leave Denver for Historic Apple Region

Farmhouse Facility, Agricultural Opportunity and Rising Denver Costs Prompt Move to Penrose, CO

(Denver, CO) -- After four years at its original location in the River North (RiNo) neighborhood of central Denver, C Squared Ciders is relocating its cidery to Penrose, Colorado, about 100 miles south of Denver in Fremont County.

Founders Andy Brown and Chad Hatlestad are now dismantling their equipment at 2875 Blake Street and preparing to move it to a five-acre rural property Brown has purchased in Penrose.

The new property provides C Squared with a larger facility where it can expand production, grow cider apples, and connect with the region's once thriving apple agriculture. Apples had been grown and processed on a large scale in Penrose since the late 1800's, until a severe drought in the early 2000s and extreme weather patterns ended that fruitful run.

"With this move," Brown says, "we can grow our business and create a meaningful connection to the land and local agriculture. We can also help resurrect a vital bygone part of the agriculture economy in Fremont County, which deserves a second chance. By leaving Denver," Brown adds, "we can also save about \$12,000 a month on our rent and pay off our own mortgage instead of someone else's."

"We're going to create," Hatlestad says, "a farmhouse-style destination cidery much like an estate winery. It will be a unique addition to Colorado's cider culture. Our increased capacity will also allow us to expand our distribution into more states."

The centerpiece of the new property is a 5,750-square-foot barn that previously served as an apple processing facility. The barn has a wealth of features perfect for a cider maker, including an apple loading and washing system, truck-loading docks, high ceilings, floor drains, and a drive-thru cooler.

The property also includes a freestanding home, an apartment attached to the barn, and acreage that C Squared intends to plant with heirloom cider-specific apple trees. The trees will come from local growers and C Squared will use the resulting apples to create varietal ciders. Brown will live on the property and manage the cidery and orchard.

The location is especially welcoming: One day after discovering the property was for sale, Brown traveled to the Fremont County Commissioner's Office to attend a zoning hearing in which the city legalized tasting rooms attached to limited winery licenses at agriculturally zoned properties such as his. "That seemed like destiny to me," Brown recalls.

Brown and Hatlestad say their Denver location was valuable in helping the company create a presence in Colorado and reach local cider fans and retailers. The company's shared tasting room in the Rackhouse Pub (which also serves acclaimed German-style beers from on-site brewery Bierstadt Lagerhaus) also greatly helped the company build a solid fan base.

But property taxes at the Blake Street facility have risen by nearly 300% since 2014 and were being passed along to the tenants, and the rising rent led C Squared to look for another home.

"We've had a really good run in RiNo," Brown says. "But commercial property tax increases in RiNo are much higher than those for residential property. That's good for real estate developers and residents, but it's bad for manufacturers like us and our landlords. Unfortunately the system is broken and neither of us could change that."

But the upside from the move is much bigger than the downside of having to relocate.

"I'm ready," Brown says, "to begin pressing more of our own apples and make a lifestyle change to a more rural setting, with a true connection to our trade. That's a happy place for a cider company. And it gives us a whole new range of stories to be a part of and tell down the road."

C Squared Cider distributes its creations in Colorado, Minnesota and New Mexico. Crooked Stave distributes C Squared ciders in Colorado. In Minnesota and New Mexico distribution is handled by Artisan Beer Company and National Distributing Company respectively.

Members of the media seeking more information on C Squared Ciders and this news can contact Marty Jones at 720-289-9345 or marty@martyjones.com .

For more information visit www.csquaredciders.com .
