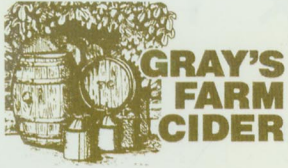


# Devon Cider Producer

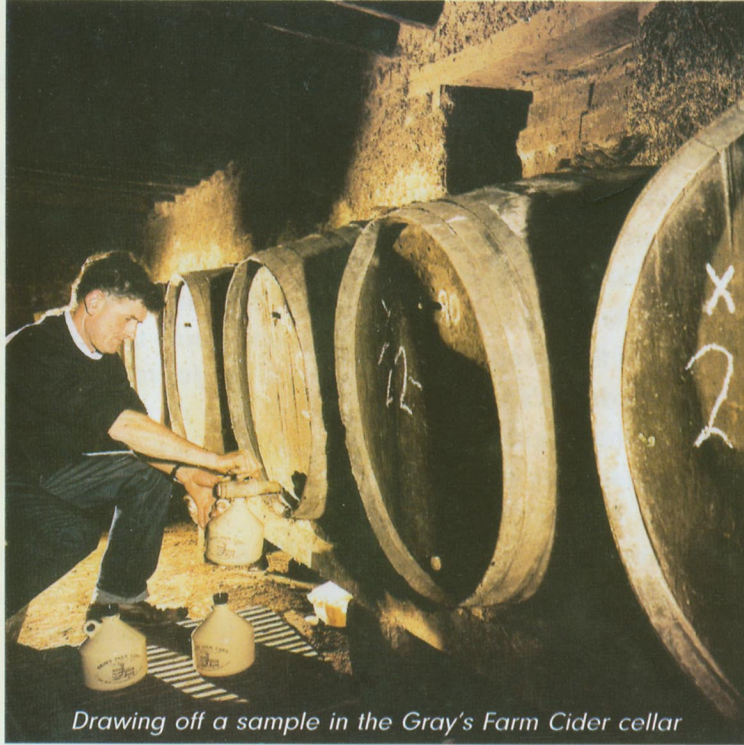
## BENEFITS FROM KEY



The Gray's have farmed their steep grassland between Exeter and Dartmoor for over 300 years. Ben Gray is helped by his father, who reduced his role to one of support in 1997. Baby John is just 5 months old and is lucky to have Ruth as his mother, who is a professional children's entertainer! KEY Accounts was introduced as part of the hand-over process, as both men realised that the daunting suitcase full of computer sheets, produced off farm, could be improved upon.

Ben says: "I had seen KEY through some former Seale Hayne colleagues who were early users. I was impressed, but debated whether with time I could find a cheaper High Street accounts program. However, with so much going on I had to have a guaranteed success, so I chose a company with a proven product."

Enterprises entered into KEY include the suckler cows, ewes and 45 acres of cereals complemented by the 20 acre cider orchards. Cider production is for direct sale, to pubs and farm shops and through the popular local farmers' market stalls. In true Devon tradition supplies of mixed variety apples are boosted from neighbouring farms for the annual production of twenty thousand gallons. "For over 300



years 15 generations of the Gray family have been making cider at Halstow Farm," explains Ben. "The original slanting buildings are built of cob and slate, and set on a hillside for ground level access; apples move downwards through the system starting at the top in the Pound Chamber. They are pressed in the Pound House and the cider is finally stored in the Cellar lower down the hill."

Landmark's agent John Graham trained and supported Ben in 1997 to ensure the smooth integration of KEY at such a hectic time in the farm's history. Ben started half way through his financial year and his accountants

have been happy to rubber stamp the results. He is delighted with the management benefits, and comments: "Of course I'm looking for a reduction on professional fees, but that was not the prime motivation for taking accounts on-farm. More of my time is gainfully spent on office work as I know the figures before the bank, I have accurate cost analysis and my management reports are accessible and clear. The simple VAT and Bank reconciliation saves me time and when it comes to decision making I know that I have access to the right information." Ben reflects: "As for the cost, I worried initially but I now know that I have paid for a tool which works for my business, is simple to set up and comes with first class support."

*For more information on Gray's Farm Cider please contact Ben Gray on (01647) 61236.*