Ditmars Orchard & Vineyard: 2023-2024 Value-Added Grant

DITMARS ORCHARD & VINEYARD

Lyle Ditmars

Ditmars Orchard & Vineyard, which is located in Council Bluffs, began in the spring of 1994 with a few orchard trees. Now, the operation includes an orchard, vineyard and pumpkin patch and sells apples, peaches, pumpkins, strawberries, flowers, cider and wine. The orchard includes a café, retail room, sweet shop, small kitchen, cider room and playground area, and hosts several events throughout the year.

Ditmars Orchard & Vineyard's Choose Iowa grant project will purchase equipment to improve production efficiency, including a sprayer with photoelectric sensors, picking platform and "universal dump-all." By utilizing this new technology, the orchard will expand its market.

The orchard anticipates a 25-30 percent increase in the number of apples harvested, as well as an increase in sales and retailers/customers. Ditmars expects chemical usage will decrease by 40 percent and hours of spraying by 40 percent. The project will support Ditmars Orchard & Vineyard in its efforts to provide local Iowa produce to consumers and provide a place "where families go to be together."



Ditmars Orchard & Vineyard produces all kinds of value-added apple products such as apple cider and apple cider donuts.



The apple trees at Ditmars Orchard & Vineyard make the prettiest blooms in the spring and summer.

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