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### Ledyard orchard grows pears in bottles

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**All Bottled Up**

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LEDYARD, CT (WFSB) - An orchard in Connecticut has been growing fruit in bottles for years.

Russ Holmberg and his family have been farming fruit in Ledyard for more than 70 years. They're mostly known for their apples, but they also grow peaches, grapes, and even pears in a bottle.

Holmberg said they've been doing it about 10 years for Westford Hill Distillers in Ashford.



(WFSB)

The thumb-sized Bartlett pears are trained to grow on a wired trellis starting in June. It makes it easier to secure the bottle that way.

"We kinda figured out, you gotta pick out the right pear early in the season, kind of knowing," Holmberg said. "Looking at it that it's going to live in the bottle. Not all pears live."

There's about a 30 percent loss every year. When they harvest the bottles in the beginning of September, they'll end up with about 200 bottles. The distillery, then, cleans everything before adding the pear brandy.

"We don't interfere with them too much. They seem pretty content in the glass," Holmberg said.

Holmberg said they'd like to expand the fruit in the bottle crop. Holmberg said he's considering it as long as he'd be able to produce a consistent product.

For more on Westford Hill Distillers, [click here](#).

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