

Some Observations on Apple Varieties in Vermont

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McIntosh and Cortland are the two standard apple varieties generally grown in Vermont orchards. Northern Spy and Delicious are also grown commercially in Vermont.

Early McIntosh has been planted in recent years to supply an excellent roadside market trade during the two to three weeks preceding Labor Day. Prices received for this variety have often been the highest of the year, due to the heavy tourist demand at this time.

Wealthy has lost ground in recent years chiefly because it overlaps the McIntosh season and because of its tendency to bear biennially.

Milton has not gained much in popularity, since it must compete with the McIntosh from southern New England and the Hudson Valley. However, the first picking of Milton, if ready for Labor Day, has brought very satisfactory prices.

We have fruited the Davey (from Massachusetts) for some years and think well of it. It is picked about one week after McIntosh, keeps well in storage, colors well and can be used as a substitute for Baldwin. When proper vigour is maintained, the younger trees of Davey appear to be annual bearers. As the trees get older, a thinning spray may be needed to maintain annual production. The only faults we have noted with Davey are a tendency for the fruit to shrivel in storage when proper humidity is not provided, and cracking at the calyx end during one season.

The Spartan (from British Columbia) and Monroe (from New York) both look promising for Vermont. In 1952 Spartan was as attractive as our most highly colored McIntosh, but in 1953 its color was

darker and not quite as attractive. It can apparently be picked about a week after McIntosh. Monroe shows promise of being an early and heavy bearer, as well as a good quality winter apple. Its color, however, is more like that of Jonathan and not as attractive as the red color of our Vermont McIntosh.

Webster (from New York) has been a heavy bearer, but we believe it is suitable primarily for the processing market, which we do not have in Vermont. Because of its size and productivity, the Webster might be sold profitably as a baker.

Sweet Delicious is an excellent sweet winter apple, and has been a heavy producer for us. However, our local demand is for the Pound Sweet and we have had some difficulty in substituting anything else.

We have had some fruit of the Franklin (from Ohio) and Melrose (from Ohio), but have not handled them enough to even guess at their probable value for this section. The Franklin, at harvest time in 1953, looked very attractive. It was harvested on October 5th, along with Spartan.

We also have grafts of Idared, Victory, Crandell, Ruby, Fireside, Prairie Spy and others. But these have not as yet fruited.

Perhaps I should also mention the Red Duchess or Van Buren (from New York) as a highly colored, attractive, early cooking apple. It ripens about with the standard Duchess and has a very attractive red color. It requires two or three pickings for best results. Although it is a cooking apple only, consumers may buy it for dessert purposes and be disappointed in its quality.