

McIntosh News



Bar Weeks

Chuck Souther of Apple Hill Farm in Concord, New Hampshire, hangs a trap for apple maggot in his orchard in late June.

Spreading the good word about integrated pest management

New grants fund video program on IPM

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New England Apple Association

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McIntosh News is published quarterly by the New England Apple Association and distributed free to apple growers, agricultural organizations, and other friends of the New England apple industry. The nonprofit New England Apple Association is a grower-funded organization charged with raising awareness of apple varieties grown in New England.

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From Executive Director Bar Weeks

Meet Judith Podell, director of development

Please welcome Judith Podell to New England Apples! Judy has worked successfully in consultative, outside sales for more than 25 years. Her experience as a consistent top producer with multiple awards for highest revenue generation, highest client retention rates, greatest annual increases in sales volume will be a tremendous asset to New England Apples as we seek to expand our offerings and grow our membership in our new Allied Industry and Associate categories.



Judy seems as comfortable talking to managers on a production floor as to executives in a boardroom.

"I love sales," she says. "It gives me the chance to meet and speak to more people in a year than most people do in a lifetime. That's just thrilling to me.

"I'm excited for the chance to work with New England Apples. I see the association as a wonderful resource to support an important regional industry, and I hope to increase revenues so we can promote apples even more!"

Judy lives in Hebron, Connecticut (across the road from a dairy farm) with her two Corgis. She can be reached at judy@newenglandapples.org or on her cell: 860-205-3744.

Like Senior Writer Russell Powell and me, Judy will be a part-time contractor with New England Apples. We are proud of the fact that the Association's administrative costs have averaged a miniscule 6.5 percent a year over the past five years. The rest—more than 90 percent of our budget—goes directly into marketing and promotional activities. With Judy's addition and our success at writing grants, we will continue to look for creative ways to get the most out of your marketing dollars.

New England Apple Day launches fall season September 5

New England Apple Association is pleased to announce the date for 2012 New England Apple Day: Wednesday, September 5. This New England-wide apple harvest kick-off event is planned at a critical time for apple growers. Our Association, with the support of Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, launched the event three years ago in Massachusetts. Apple Day is a great way to maximize publicity and draw attention to the fresh harvest around the time McIntosh and many other popular varieties are ready for picking.

The Commissioners of Agriculture in each of the New England states will visit orchards, cider mills, or packinghouses on Apple Day to meet with growers, producers, and media, learn about the 2012 crop, and most importantly, enjoy fresh-picked apples and other apple products.

Topics of discussion may be as varied as the challenges of wholesale marketing, integrated pest management (IPM), or attracting families to orchards by offering outdoor activities. The scope can be as wide as each state wants it to be.

Fall promotions scheduled

New England Apple Association will also participate in these events to promote the 2012 fresh harvest:

Mount Wachusett AppleFest October 20-21

The 3rd Annual Great New England Apple Pie Contest will be Saturday, October 20. The contest is open to amateur bakers.

The 29th annual AppleFest also features more than 75 craft fair and farmers' market booths, scenic foliage rides, a barbecue, pony and hay rides, jugglers and magicians, a Birds of Prey raptor show, and an Oktoberfest Celebration with live music.

For more information, visit www.wachusett.com.
Summer 2012

Franklin County CiderDays

November 3-4

CiderDays celebrates all things apples in Franklin County, Massachusetts. 2012 marks the 18th year of this two-day event of orchard tours, cider-making and tastings, workshops, and more.

For more information, visit www.ciderday.org.

Member orchards will supply apples to **Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation** fundraising walks in five states in September and October.

For more information, visit www.jdrf.org



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Grants fund IPM video

With grants from the Farm Credit Northeast AgEnhancement program and the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food, work has begun on a video program about integrated pest management.

The program will be the newest in a series that began in 2009 and that has now had more than 44,000 views on topics ranging from apple pie-making to pollination to pruning and grafting. The videos are posted on the search engine YouTube and the New England Apple Association website, newengland-apples.org.

A \$4,000 grant from the Northeast AgEnhancement program funded a day of videotaping at Rogers Orchards in Southington, Connecticut, May 9. A \$4,897.50 grant from the New Hampshire De-

partment of Agriculture, Markets & Food, made through its Division of Pesticide Control, funded a day of videotaping at Apple Hill Farm in Concord, New Hampshire, June 26. Additional videotaping is planned for the summer so that the program can be produced in time for the 2013 fresh harvest season.

Many consumers have questions about food safety and how their fruits and vegetables are grown, says Bar Weeks, executive director of the New England Apple Association. While most growers today use some form of IPM—a series of practices that reduces the need for chemicals—few consumers are familiar with it. “We have a good story to tell about how growers manage pests and disease,” says Weeks, “and video is an excellent way to tell it.”

The video project has been a regional effort, funded



John Rogers of Rogers Orchards in Southington, Connecticut, inspects a tree for signs of woolly apple aphids during videotaping in May.

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with Specialty Crop grants from Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont, and a previous grant from Farm Credit Northeast AgEnhancement Program. An experienced team comprising John Browne, Russell Powell, and Bar Weeks will produce the IPM program.

Powell, senior writer for the New England Apple Association, will direct the program, and Bar Weeks, the association’s executive director, will write the script, as they did for the previous series. Browne, who has worked for many years as a producer for the education division of WGBH-TV in Boston, will videotape and edit the program on IPM. In addition to the apple videos, Powell and Browne previously collaborated on the award-winning video documentary *Shack Time*, about the artist shacks in the dunes of the Cape Cod National Seashore.



Photos by Bar Weeks

Videographer John Browne records Chuck Souther of Apple Hill Farm in Concord, New Hampshire, as Souther answers questions from producer Russell Powell during videotaping June 26.

Specialty Crop grants to pave way for new apple varieties in New England

The New England Apple Association has been awarded Specialty Crop grants of \$29,800 from Rhode Island and \$16,000 from Massachusetts to develop a program to enable New England's growers to introduce new, trademarked apple varieties into the region. As a result of the national industry trend toward trademarking varieties, New England currently lacks access to grow and market new apples.

Growers must be able to add new varieties to their orchards to remain competitive, says Bar Weeks. There are several apple varieties under development that are unsuitable for a national market, but they might excel in New England's climate and soil. The association will work with Cornell University to de-

velop protocols and begin growing trials with one or more of these new apple varieties.

Most consumers are unfamiliar with the relatively new system of trademarking, through which production of newly developed, mass-marketed apple varieties is controlled by the holder of the trademark. The two main reasons for this are to control quality and supply, and to return more revenue to the breeding programs that develop the varieties. But trademarking favors larger farms growing fruit for the mass market, and medium to small orchards like those in New England currently are left behind as a result.



Mutsus in the bin at Hackett's Orchard, South Hero, Vermont, last fall.

Russell Powell

its own, so any new varieties (other than chance seedlings) will be developed—and controlled—by programs outside the region. There are only a few active apple-breeding programs in the United States, all at major universities (Cornell in New York, Washington State, University of Minnesota, and a cooperative comprising Rutgers in New Jersey, Purdue in Indiana, and the University of Illinois). To gain

As a result of the national industry trend toward trademarking varieties, New England growers currently lack access to new apples.

access to new varieties, New England growers will need to negotiate working agreements with them and other apple breeders from around the world.

There are a number of as-yet-unnamed apple varieties under development that lack widespread commercial potential. The tree producing a juicy, flavorful apple might grow poorly in warmer, dryer climates. Perhaps the apple doesn't travel or store well, or the trees produce a heavy crop just every other year. Yet some of these varieties might thrive in certain climates and soil, similar to McIntosh, which needs New England's cold nights to develop its characteristic flavor. A biennial-bearing variety might flourish in the context of a pick-your-own orchard where it is just one of many options.

"On a small scale and on a regional basis," says Weeks, "some of these new varieties could offer New England's growers an exciting new way to attract customers to their orchards."

Cornell was chosen due to the reputation of its apple breeding program, says Weeks, its proximity to

New England, similar climate (Zones 5 and 6), and "because we have a history of working together."

The \$29,800 Specialty Crop award from Rhode Island includes funds for photography of existing varieties to focus consumer attention on the apples currently grown in the state, plus funding toward a 2014 New England Apples wall calendar. The \$16,000 award from Massachusetts will be used exclusively for the managed varieties project.

"We are grateful for this support," says Weeks. "While most of our efforts are directed at promoting the current crop, it is essential for the region's apple industry to also plan for the long-term."

"If we don't start working now on the barriers to introducing new varieties in coming years, we stand to fall behind other regions. We could not undertake a project of this magnitude without the support from Specialty Crop funds."

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You may have a little trouble finding good, tart



Bar Weeks

Spring bloom at McDougal's Orchard, Springvale, Maine, this May.

apples this time of year, but the Knotweed is certainly abundant. Try this pie with the most tender shoots you can find; best are about 6 to 8 inches tall. Discard the leaves, and peel off any tough rind.

Apple Knotweed Pie

Preheat oven to 425° and oil a 9" pie plate.

Oil Pie Crust

- 2 c buckwheat flour
- 1/2 t salt
- 1 t dried spearmint, ground
- 1 t coriander, ground
- 1/4 c almond oil
- 1/2 c apple juice

Keep crust ingredients cold until ready to make. Blend dry ingredients. Stir in the oil. Add apple juice and briefly knead until somewhat elastic. Press into oiled pie plate. Any leftover dough can be used on top of the filling.

Filling

- 2-1/4 c tart apples, sliced
- 1/4 c Japanese Knotweed shoots, sliced
- 1/2 c apple juice
- 2-3 T sugar
- 1 t cinnamon
- 1 t ginger
- 1/4 t nutmeg
- 1/8 t cloves
- 1/2 c sunflower seeds, optional
- 1/4 c walnuts
- 3 T tapioca

Mix all filling ingredients together. Use a fork to prick holes in the crust, then add filling. Decorate top with leftover dough.

Bake 10 minutes; reduce heat to 350° and continue baking 30 minutes more, or until the crust is crisp and golden and the filling is bubbly.



Presents....

2012

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New England Apple Pie Contest



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- ★ Two Pie Categories: Apple Only and Apple & Other Ingredients
- ★ Criteria include: appearance, presentation, crust, texture and flavor!
- ★ Celebrity judges will be on hand, including: chefs, authors and local representatives
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For contest rules or to register with recipe, go to www.wachusett.com or www.greatnewenglandapplepiecontest.com

Web hits up 93 percent

Activity on the New England Apples website, new-englandapples.org, continues to soar through the first six months of 2012, with an increase in hits of more than 93 percent from 2011, from 193,638 to 374,605.

The dramatic increase is probably the result of a number of factors, says Bar Weeks. “We publish the website address on everything we do,” she says, “from our wall calendar to recipe cards to our web-log, newenglandorchards.org. Behind the scenes, we have invested in improving our search engine optimization. These efforts no doubt have a cumulative effect, but we are still surprised at the level of increase.”

The site experienced an increase of 17 percent in 2011, from 652,725 hits to 763,743. The bulk of the activity on the site has traditionally come during the second half of the year, especially during the months of the fresh harvest.



Bar Weeks

Preparing for the 'Big E'

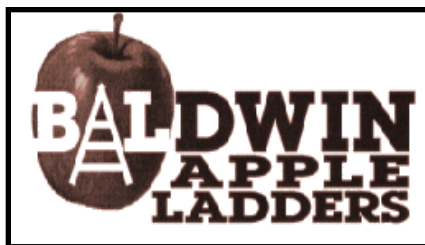
Once again New England Apple Association prepares for the 17-day Eastern States Exposition (“The Big E”), selling fresh apples and cider, plus cider donuts, apple pies, and other baked goods. Visitors to the association’s booth in the Massachusetts State Building ask questions, view an apple slideshow, receive free recipe cards, a list of pick-your-own orchards, and the “New England Apples” brochure/poster, as well as brochures from orchards.

The fair, held during the height of the fresh apple harvest, runs from September 14 through 30. The Big E is the largest fair in New England and has drawn more than one million visitors in years past.

The New England Apple booth features items from a number of Massachusetts orchards and businesses, including:

- Many varieties of New England apples
- Fresh apple cider from **Carlson Orchards** in Harvard
- Homemade apple pies and crisp from **Cook’s Farm Orchard** in Brimfield
- Cider donuts from **Atkins Farms** in Amherst

For more information, visit www.thebige.com.



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New apple book due in September

America's Apple, a new book about apple growing in the United States written by Russell Powell, senior writer for the New England Apple Association, will be published by September.

Powell stepped down as executive director of the association after 13 years last summer to research and write the book, which includes photographs by Powell and Bar Weeks, the association's current executive director. Internationally known illustrator Barry Moser is collaborating with Powell on the book's design.

Powell visited more than 50 orchards in 11 states during the past year interviewing growers and gathering information for *America's Apple*. A number of New England orchards are featured in the book, as well as orchards in Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Washington. Powell also interviewed apple researchers at Cornell University and the University of Minnesota.

The book's ten chapters are presented in three sections, The Orchard, The Table, and The Market:

The Orchard

"Sex and graft (or how apples are grown)" introduces readers to the apple orchard and describes an annual cycle of apple growing, including the weather-related challenges with which growers contend.

"The real John Chapman (aka Johnny Appleseed)" examines how generations of Americans have fictionalized the exploits of this real-life figure, and it speculates on the reasons.

"In search of heirlooms" relates the histories of some of our oldest, most unusual, and celebrated apple varieties.

The Table

"A multitude of flavors" explores ways to cook and

prepare apples to maximize flavor and nutrition, with a number of recipes.

"A multitude of juices" looks at apple drinks and the people who make them, from fresh to hard cider, from hobbyists to commercial producers.

"How safe are our apples?" describes the measures growers take to ensure that apples are both healthy and safe as they move from orchard to packing-house, store, and table.

The Market

"The attack of the leaf-rollers (and other orchard plagues)" shows how growers manage pests and disease, especially using principles of integrated pest management.

"Who will pick our apples?" reveals the complex, fragile system of labor that America relies on to harvest its apples and fresh produce.

"The race for the next Super Apple" tells the fascinating history of Honeycrisp, and how this popular apple has influenced apple-breeding programs around the world, with implications for both growers and consumers.

"Apple futures" looks at where the United States apple industry is heading, from fresh-sliced apples to exports, new developments in horticulture, funding and research, and the succession plans at a number of orchards.

A varieties index features photographs and capsule descriptions of more than 120 apples grown in the United States.

For information on ordering the book or to schedule a book signing, write to powellr2@comcast.net or call 413-247-3232.

Plenty of apples expected

While much of the apple crop in Michigan and western New York state was devastated by a hard frost following an exceptionally early bloom this spring, there should be plenty of apples at New England orchards this fall.

While New England anticipates a smaller than normal crop, the region avoided the extensive damage experienced in other regions. Most orchards in southern New England were spared the extreme cold that can kill the blossoms, while bloom had not yet begun at many orchards in northern New England. Region-wide, there was damage at some orchards, but overall the crop looks promising.

Any effects of a smaller crop will not be felt by consumers until next spring, when the supply of apples in storage could run out sooner than usual. But with more than one month to go before the earliest varieties are harvested, New England's orchards expect to have lots of apples ready for picking this fall.

The season is running a little early at this time; barring a cool summer the harvest is likely to begin a week or more early, meaning that the fresh harvest could be in full swing by September. Look for weekly updates about the crop in our weblog, newenglandorchards.org, beginning in mid-August.



Russell Powell

Macouns at Cold Spring Orchard, Belchertown, Massachusetts, last fall.