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The way I see it

Apple maturity appears right on track to be of "average" timing. See maturity report below for more details. With this weather, brown rot in remaining peaches is running rampant unless controlled by fungicide sprays. Fortunately, the peach harvest season is winding down, although I find some of the best peaches are just ripening now. JC

Horticulture

Apple fruit maturity report for September 2, 2013

Note: all observations from UMass Cold Spring Orchard, Belchertown, MA and prepared by Jon Clements

Date	Variety	Drop	Diameter (inches)	% Red Color	Firmness (lbs.)	Brix	Starch Index	Comments
9/2	Lindamac	nil	3.0	65	17	10.9	3.5 (3-4)	seeds white; not ready to pick, need another week
9/2	Silken	few	2.8	yellow-green	17	11.5	4 (3-6)	eats OK, variable maturity, could use another 5-7 days on tree to develop best flavor
9/2	Buckeye Gala	none	2.8	95	20	9.3	2 (1-3)	seeds dark, needs another week to develop sugar despite some background color change from green to yellow
9/2	Honeycrisp	few	3.1	55	18	12.3	5 (4-7)	further along than expected, some background color change, ready for 1st pick this week based on red color

Some notes on the varieties:

Lindamac ([picture](#)) is a McIntosh strain that develops red color early. The red over-color is a striped-blush. Early red color, however, does not mean earlier maturity than most other McIntosh. Trees have been very productive, and Lindamac is recommended for planting and first-picking of McIntosh because of early red color.

Silken ([picture](#)) is an early yellow apple with delicate texture and mild flavor. Bruises easily so only recommended for direct-market sales. Trees have been productive, but are susceptible to scab. Limited planting recommended. Trees will have to be custom-budded.

Buckeye Gala ([picture](#)) is a nearly full-red color Gala strain. If more striping is preferred, Brookfield Gala is recommended. Otherwise, other than light-cropping in the early years, Buckeye Gala sets full crops of bright red fruit and is recommended for limited planting.

Honeycrisp ([picture](#)) needs little introduction. It is the apple you need to grow but like to hate because of various production issues. At harvest time, look for bright red-orange overcolor and slight change of background color from green to yellow. Prone to pre-harvest drop in some years. Prone to calcium deficiency symptoms (bitter pit, breakdown) during storage. "Pre-condition" harvested Honeycrisp at ambient temperature (50-60 degrees F. ideal) for 5 days before putting in long-term storage. Store at 36-38 degrees, no colder.

Useful links

UMass Fruit Advisor: <http://umassfruit.com>

UMass Fruit Notes: <http://umassfruitnotes.com>

Scaffolds Fruit Journal: <http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/ent/scaffolds/>

Network for Environment and Weather Applications (NEWA): <http://newa.cornell.edu>

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UMass Vegetable & Fruit IPM Network (on Facebook, <http://www.facebook.com/umassipmteam>)

2013 New England Tree Fruit Management Guide (<http://fruit.umext.umass.edu/2013netfmg/>)

The next Healthy Fruit (maturity report) will be published on Tuesday, September 10 or thereabouts, 2013. As always feel free to get in touch with any member of the UMass Fruit Team (<http://extension.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/team-members>) if you have questions or comments.