



Healthy Fruit

Volume 12, 2004

Prepared by the University of Massachusetts Fruit Team

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Upcoming meetings/events

| Date | Meeting/Event | Location | Time | Information |
|----------------|---------------------------|--|------|-----------------------------------|
| November 15 | Fireblight Workshop | Goffstown, NH (UNH Cooperative Extension, Hillsborough County) | TBA | George Hamilton (603) 641-6060 |
| December 15-16 | New England Fruit Meeting | Manchester, NH | TBA | Duane Greene (413) 545-5219 |

Horticulture

Needless to say, apple harvest has begun in earnest in all but the 'mountainous' regions of Massachusetts. Last week, starch-iodine values of 3-4 for **McIntosh** have progressed to 4-5 this week. Pre-harvest drop has been minimal, and fruit seems to have tightened up a little with the cool weather of late. Still, most growers should be harvesting McIntosh as quick as possible as warmer, humid weather with rain and wind are predicted for this week. McIntosh with starch-index values of 5-6 are in the ideal range for long-term CA storage. Starch-index values usually increase by one point per week, so late this week into next week we will be in this range for sure. **Honeycrisp** at Belchertown were starch-iodine testing almost 6 early this week, and for some blocks, color was fantastic. Honeycrisp is definitely ready for a 1st-pick this week, based on color, with the remainder to be harvested next week. Large **Gala** were starch-iodine testing in the 4-5 range, with significant variability (3-7). Gala could easily be spot-picked this week in many orchards based on background color change from green to cream or yellow. Brookfield and Buckeye Gala strains are solid red in Belchertown and will be picked this week.

Following are the results from apple maturity testing early this week in Belchertown. Note that apple maturity test results will also be posted on the UMass Fruit Advisor as they become available:

- <http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/clements/articles/2004harvest/2004harvest.html>

| Date | Location | Cultivar | Drop | Size (in.) | Color (% red) | Firmness (lbs.) | Soluble Solids | Starch Index* | Taste | Disorders | Comments |
|------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------------------------|------------------|---|
| 9/7 | Belchertown | Buckeye Gala | none | 2.9 | 95 | 13 | 13 | 4.5 | good, could be a little sweeter | | very nice first pick |
| 9/7 | Belchertown | Honeycrisp | few | 3.4 | 65 | 15.5 | 13 | 5.9 | good | | absolutely ready for 1 st pick; good color |
| 9/7 | Belchertown | Golden Supreme | significant | 3.2 | yellow | 17.2 | 12 | 2.9 | a little green | pre-harvest drop | nice |
| 9/7 | Belchertown | Redmax McIntosh | none | 3.1 | 85 | 14 | 13 | 5.1 | good | | nice, still tight |
| 9/7 | Belchertown | Marshall McIntosh | few | 3.1 | 75 | 13.5 | 13 | 5.1 | ok | | mature, tail end of pick |

* using the Cornell 'Generic Starch-Iodine Index Chart for Apples'

Finally, a reminder that NAA (Fruitone-N, etc.) can be used for stop-drop control. Guidelines for use include:

- Apply at the onset of drop – limb tapping, where several fruit are noticeably loose and fall off upon tapping the limb, is an effective way to judge timing application of NAA. Do not apply too early or too late, but at just the onset of fruit drop.
- Use 10-20 p.p.m. NAA with good coverage, concentrating no more than 4X. Be aware higher rates may increase drop control, however, they may also result in advanced ripening compared to a lower rate. Use a compatible surfactant to increase uptake.
- Plan on 7 days of drop control from application. After that fruit may ripen (and drop) rapidly. Careful harvest planning is essential when using NAA!
- Be wary about putting fruit treated with NAA in long-term CA storage. Sound fruit picked early enough (starch-index less than 6) with firmness at least 14 lbs. could be put in CA, but do not exceed these parameters with NAA treated fruit.

Note: The next (and last for 2004) Healthy Fruit will be published September 22.

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