



Healthy Fruit, Vol. 29, No. 19, September 14, 2021

Prepared by the University of Massachusetts Amherst Fruit Team

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The way I see it...

Jon Clements

Nothing much here except for my apple maturity report. Some observations, other than the numbers you see below:

- Rots, whether black rot or bitter rot, are of great concern (abundance?) in some (many?) orchards. Would love to hear from you if you are seeing it. Been a banner year with conditions for it to develop, and to quote from Diseases of Tree Fruits in the East (Jones and Sutton) “of the three rot diseases -- bitter rot, white rot, and black rot -- bitter rot has the potential to be most destructive in warmer climates.” I expect we will be doing a post-mortem and hear more about it this winter.

- Apple maturity is progressing about on schedule in my opinion, no big surprises here. The weather has been a little more seasonal (vs. hot and wet), however, it looks like we are heading into another period of clouds, mugginess, and on-and-off precipitation for a while. Night time temperatures will not be favorable for good red color development. Brix (sugars) have been low, I'd like to see them at least 12.
- McIntosh harvest should be going in earnest and lasting for another two weeks before tapering off. Starch-index is about 4-5 right now, more towards the 4 side, but in a block of Macs Duane Greene is using for an experiment, he is seeing a lot of 5-6's. (Often the validity of the starch-index test is questioned, apples have no or little starch to begin with, I am not sure what to say, it looks like it is doing good this year for me?) Drop is not bad yet, especially where ReTain was used.
- Honeycrisp is all over the place in terms of maturity, depending on strain, orchard, block, crop load, etc. Just pick based on the red color and hopefully the background color is not too green. The Royal Red Honeycrisp I looked at, although not real pretty yet, tasted very good. Honeycrisp seems to be the poster child for fruit rots this year.
- Gala seem to be struggling, but the larger apples on modestly cropped trees are definitely ready to harvest. Still seeing green background color though on smaller apples, but by the end of this week we should see some movement in maturity.
- I know Cortland are economically ripe, but really should not be harvested for another week or so. Still I know you are doing it :-). A reminder, probably too late now, but Duane Greene has had good results with ReTain on Cortland, but the timing is more in line with McIntosh. If you are outside a 7 day pre-harvest window, you could still try some, but the longer you wait with ReTain, generally the less effect it has.
- Macoun, please, let's not even go there right now, maybe next week?

What important apples did I miss? We are clearly smack-dab in the middle of McIntosh, Honeycrisp, and Gala harvest, that should be enough!

One more thing, I want to mention 'Crispie' pear, pictured below. A real nice pear IMO. Early, have to watch pre-harvest drop, but generally clean, tree seems resistant to pear psylla. Here are some numbers on 9/13: 2.8 inches diameter, firmness 6 lbs, brix 9.6, DA index 0.71, ready for harvest ASAP.








'Crispie' pear at the UMass Orchard on 13-September, 2021 ([available from ACNursery](#))



Apple Maturity Report

Jon Clements

All observations from UMass Orchard, Belchertown, MA unless otherwise noted. Target maturity numbers: red color, >50%; firmness, >14 lbs.; soluble solids, >12; DA, 0.60 to 0.40 for Honeycrisp, 0.65 for Gala, 1.00 for Golden Delicious, 1.15 to 1.00 for Red Delicious (higher DA = more "green"); starch index, 4-6.

2021 Date	Variety	Drop	Diameter (inches)	Color (% red)	Firmness (lbs.)	Brix	Starch Index	DA Meter	Comments	Picture
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9/13	Buckeye Gala	none	3.0	90	16	11.1	3.5-7	0.71	Larger, more mature fruit with some background color change ready to harvest	
9/13	Marshall McIntosh	some	3.0	65	NA	10.6	3.5-5	NA	Economical ripe based on color, normally an early McIntosh	
9/13	Lindamac McIntosh	nil	3.1	75-80	13	10.5	4-6	NA	Had ReTain, little drop so far so no big rush although look nice	
9/13	Rubymac® McIntosh	nil	3.1	95+	14	9.9	4-5+	NA	Don't like the brix, hold on a week to pick if you can	
9/13	Honeycrisp	some	3.4	50+	15.5	12.2	3-4-6-7-8	0.89	Had ReTain, not quite there yet in terms of flavor but variable maturity based on	

									starch-index	
9/13	Royal Red Honeycrisp	few	3.2	75-80	15	10.2	7.5-8	0.64	Color a bit muddy, not 'Royal Red' yet, but flavor is good	
9/13	Cortland	nil	3.4 large	85	15	11.4	1-4	NA	Seeds not fully brown, hint of watecore, need another week	

Insects

Jaime Piñero

Jaime says nothing new to report this week so he won't bother you given you are in the middle of harvest :-)

Horticulture

Jon Clements, Editor

See [apple maturity report](#)

Guest article

No Guest article this week...

Facebook Me

No Facebook Me this week...

Useful links

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

[UMass Extension Fruit Team YouTube Channel](#)

[UMass Fruit Loop IPM Podcast](#)

[Scaffolds Fruit Journal \(1995-2020\)](#). With the retirement of Dr. Art Agnello from Cornell University, this publication has come to an end. See Peter Jentsch's blog below.

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

Follow me on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/jmcextman>) and Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/jmcextman>)

[Acimovic Lab at Hudson Valley](#)

[Peter Jentsch's Blog](#)

The next (and last forever for me!) Healthy Fruit (apple maturity report) will be published (maybe) on or about September 28, 2021. In the meantime, feel free to contact any of the UMass Fruit Team if you have any fruit-related production questions.

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