

MSU Fruit Team Apple Maturity Report 2014

Northwest Region, Report Number 2:

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Emily Pochubay and Nikki Rothwell, Extension Fruit Educators

Gingergold harvest continues, and many growers are waiting on McIntosh harvest to begin. Apples are coloring nicely with the cool temperatures.

Cool temperatures have hit the northwest region, and apple maturity has slowed but these conditions have been beneficial for coloring up apples. With the overall cool season, insect pest numbers have been low, and as a result, we have little pest damage to fruit. Diseases have also been hard to find, and we have observed very little apple scab in orchards, even in blocks where scab was present in 2013. We have reports of hail damage in isolated apple blocks in the middle of Leelanau County. We have collected apples from many processing blocks, where apple size is smaller than in fresh market blocks, as to be expected. Quality is excellent in all orchards, and with the cool weather, apples are really starting to come into their own. Most varieties we have tested still eat a little green, and we expect that we will start picking in earnest close to the predicted harvest dates that were set in the spring.

Summary of northwest Michigan apple maturity samples taken on 16 September

Variety	Color % (range)	Firmness lbs. pressure (range)	Starch (range)	Brix (range)
Gala	63.7 (25 – 95)	22.7 (19.0 – 23.5)	1.0 (1 – 2)	10.8 (10.0 – 12.2)
McIntosh	55.0 (20 – 90)	16.9 (14.5 – 22.0)	2.2 (1 – 4)	11.4 (10.0 – 13.2)
Honeycrisp	47.3 (10 – 80)	16.8 (15.0 – 18.0)	1.5 (1 – 3)	12.1 (10.5 – 13.6)
Spartan	81.5 (65 – 95)	17.8 (15.0 – 22.0)	1.3 (1 – 2)	10.8 (10.0 – 12.0)
Empire	65.0 (40 – 95)	19.3 (16.0 – 22.5)	1.6 (1 – 2)	10.9 (10.0 – 11.6)
Cortland	49.2 (25 – 65)	17.1 (15.0 – 20.0)	2.5 (1 – 4)	11.2 (10.2 – 11.6)

Gala – Immature (3 samples). Galas are coloring up and holding firmness. Starch levels and low brix indicate that galas are not yet mature.

McIntosh – Immature; possibly mature for long-term storage (5 samples). We are seeing orchard to orchard variability in percentage of color on McIntosh. Average firmness is comparable to last week. Starch index levels are also variable and brix levels are similar to last week.

Honeycrisp – Immature (2 samples). Percentage of color is increasing in Honeycrisp. Firmness is down slightly compared with last week and starch indexes indicate that these apples are starting to ripen. Average brix levels are also up to 12.1 compared with 11.2 last week.

Spartan, Empire, Cortland – Immature (1 sample each).