

TAKE YOUR PICK — THERE'S AN APPLE FOR EVERYONE

BC farmers grow over 20 main cultivars. Meet our most popular ones:

FUJI



Firm, dense, crisp, extra sweet

GRANNY SMITH



Neon green, very tart, crunchy

AMBROSIA



Juicy, sweet, crisp, fragrant

HONEYCRISP



Mild, sweet, crunchy, large

ROYAL GALA



Crisp, juicy, fragrant, thin-skinned

SPARTAN



Bright white flesh, sweet, mild



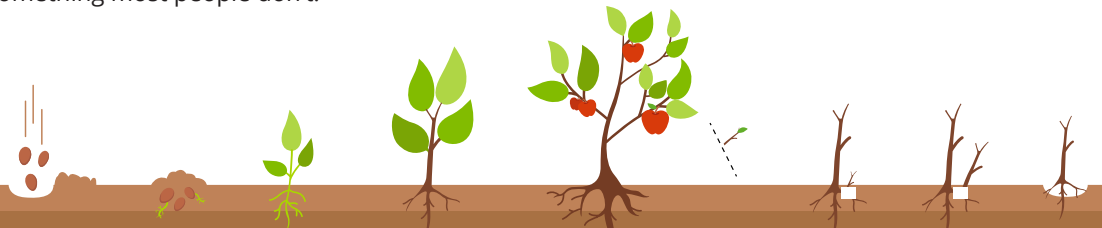
HOME SWEET HOME

Almost all of BC's apples are grown in the province's southern Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys. However, the Okanagan hasn't always been BC's biggest apple-growing region. In the late 1800's, the Gulf Islands produced more apples than anywhere else in the province.

BC apples are also grown in the Kootenays, the Fraser Valley, and on Vancouver Island. All together, BC farmers grow over one billion apples per year.

WHAT'S YOUR APPLE? YOU SAY "VARIETY" AND I SAY "CULTIVAR"

Although most people call different types of apples "varieties," they're not quite right. When any kind of plant grows and reproduces naturally from a seed, it's called a "variety." But when a plant, like an apple tree, is selected, bred, and propagated by growers for specific characteristics, it's called a "cultivar." Because commercial apples are produced through budding (grafting), with help from people, they are "cultivars." The word "cultivar" is short for "cultivated variety." Now you know something most people don't!



GROWING A TREE FROM A MOTHER TREE: FRUIT TREE BUDDING

While all orchard apples are cultivated, they first originated from a seed. And, every apple seed is unique. So, when an apple seed grows into a tree, that tree will produce apples unlike those grown on any other tree. To grow many trees that will have apples that all look and taste the same, growers make a new tree from a mother tree.

1. A tiny cutting, usually just one leaf bud, is taken from a mother tree.
 2. It is attached to the bottom of the trunk of a rootstock tree (a young tree with healthy roots). This is called "budding," or when a part of the stem is attached, "grafting."
 3. The bud is wrapped in place with tape and left to grow.
 4. The rootstock feeds the bud and once it grows into a branch, the grower trims off all the rootstock tree's original branches so only the branch from the bud is left.
- Now, all the apples the tree produces will be the bud's "cultivar."

A VERY LUCKY ACCIDENT

Most apple cultivars are developed by researchers at special plant breeding laboratories. Once in a while, however, a new cultivar originates in the old-fashioned, natural way. Meet Sally and Wilfred Mennell who are fruit growers from Cawston, BC. In 1987, a single apple seed sprouted accidentally between their orchard rows. When the sapling tree started producing fruit, the Mennells discovered apples that were crispy and sweet and stored well. So, through budding, they produced more trees, and those apples were as perfect in appearance and taste as the apples from the original mother tree. The Mennells named their new homegrown apple "Ambrosia."

Sally and Wilfrid Mennell in front of the original (mother) Ambrosia apple tree they discovered growing wild in their orchard in Cawston, BC.





FRESH STORY | APPLES

SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITY: MAPPING BC'S APPLES

Curriculum Connection: Social Studies - grades 4 to 7: Use skills to ask questions, gather, interpret, and analyze ideas, and communicate findings and decisions.

Teachers, did you know that [Grow BC](#) is a comprehensive guide to the many different commodities produced in our province, including each of the animals raised here, BC's fish and shellfish, and the plants that we grow for food? The following activity uses Grow BC and its online interactive map to further engage students in BC's apple story and the areas where our apples are grown.

More than 95 percent of BC apples are produced in the Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys. The rest are grown in the Kootenays, the Fraser Valley, and on Vancouver Island. More than half of all of BC's orchard land is planted with apple trees.

On a SMART Board (or using individual laptops/iPads), explore the Grow BC interactive map with students. Find an apple icon and click on it. Have students read the pop-up box that appears, then click on the link at the bottom of the box to see the full story of BC's apples. Scroll to "Where are apples produced in BC?" and have students copy the map of apple orchards in BC that appears on the right-hand side of the screen onto a blackline map of the province. Discuss why apples are grown in these regions.

LANGUAGE ARTS ACTIVITY: RESEARCHING APPLE CULTIVARS

Curriculum Connection: Language Arts - grades 4 to 7: Access information and ideas from a variety of sources.

There are more than 7,000 cultivars (varieties) of apples grown around the world. BC Tree Fruits cooperative's growers produce many fresh, premium apple cultivars (varieties), including Royal Gala, Ambrosia, McIntosh, Spartan, Honeycrisp, Red Delicious, Granny Smith, Pink Lady, Fuji, Golden Delicious, Nicola, Sunrise, and Salish.

Divide your class into groups of three and assign a role to each student: researcher, writer, and illustrator. (If class size requires that some are groups of two, have one student fill the role of both writer and illustrator.) Now assign each group an apple cultivar. Using individual laptops/iPads, have the researcher look up the cultivar on the [BC Tree Fruits website](#) and answer the research questions listed below (students can also use the information provided by the front side of this sheet). The writer's job is to record the answers on an index card, and the illustrator draws and colours a picture of the apple, then cuts and pastes the illustration onto the card. Attach the cards to a bulletin or poster board to display in the classroom or hallway.

A few fun facts to get students started:

Fuji: named after Fujisaki, Japan, where they were developed.

Granny Smith: discovered by Maria Ann "Granny" Smith in Australia in 1868.

Ambrosia: a BC homegrown cultivar (see "A Very Lucky Accident" on the student side of the sheet).

Honeycrisp: survives in cold climates but difficult to grow.

Royal Gala: BC's most popular apple to grow.

Spartan: Canada's first cultivar; now almost 100 years old.

Research Questions

1. Describe your apple. What does it look like? What does it taste like?
2. When was your apple first grown? Where?
3. When is your apple available in BC?

MATH ACTIVITY

Curriculum Connection: Mathematics - grade 5: Data represented in graphs can be used to show many-to-one correspondence. Grade 6: Data from the results of an experiment can be used to predict the theoretical probability of an event and to compare and interpret. Grade 7: Data from circle graphs can be used to illustrate proportion and to compare and interpret.

After completing the Language Arts activity (or after referring to "Take Your Pick – There's an Apple for Everyone" on the student side of the sheet), ask students which cultivar is their favourite, or if they haven't tried them all, which one they would like to taste. Then, have them record their answers on a data chart. For example:

Which cultivar is your favourite?

AMBROSIA	(Students place their names or a checkmark here)
FUJI	
GRANNY SMITH	
ROYAL GALA	
ETC.	

Have students create a bar or circle graph depicting the data collected. As an extended activity, students can share the collected data in ratios, percentages, and/or fractions/decimals.