

GOOD FRUIT

GROWER
GROWER

A new sport of this popular variety is in big demand.

A redder HONEYCRISP

Richard Lehnert // Jun 1, 2012 // Apples // New Developments // Varieties



PHOTO BY RICHARD LEHNERT

New sports of popular apples—especially if they're redder—always attract plenty of attention from growers.

So, you can imagine the kind

of interest growers show in Royal Red Honeycrisp, the first sport of this hugely popular variety that has been trademarked and patented and is in the process of being commercialized.

There is so much interest, in fact, the folks at Willow Drive Nursery in Ephrata, Washington, which owns exclusive rights to it, are reluctant to talk about it.

It was patented a year ago. Growers saw the apples on plates in Willow Drive displays during the Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable, and Farm Market Expo in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and the Washington State Horticultural Association Show in Wenatchee in December and also during the Mid-Atlantic Fruit & Vegetable Convention in Hershey, Pennsylvania, in February.

Neal Manly, the chief marketing officer of Willow Drive, said the nursery has done no promotions and no advertising of Royal Red Honeycrisp and has not included it in its catalog.

"Frankly, we are afraid of starting a feeding frenzy," he said. "We don't want to create demand we can't fill for eight years. But growers have found out about it, and orders have been coming in like crazy. I have a folder with enough orders to last through the year 2020.

"I've never seen anything like this. The demand is crazy."



GOOD FRUIT GROWER

In 2006, scion wood was removed and grafted onto other Sansa trees, and this second generation has been continually observed since.

Willow Drive purchased exclusive rights to produce and market the apple, and began the processes of observing it and collecting budwood to begin the long process of increasing the amount available to make trees for commercial sales—providing it continues to show its merit. Some will be sold to growers in 2013.

The new cultivar was described as having “earlier color” that was “overall more intense” and also having “greatly enhanced storage characteristics.” It has been kept in common cold storage for six months with no deterioration in quality.

Willow Drive trademarked the name, Royal Red Honeycrisp. The patent name of the cultivar is LJ-1000 and the patent number 22,244.

In the patent description, the time of ripening was given as the same as Honeycrisp, about September 16 in central Washington, but it states that sugar levels, date for date, were “noticeably elevated.” On an equal-sugar measure, that would make Royal Red Honeycrisp about five days earlier.

By Richard Lehnert | June 1st, 2012 | Apples, June 2012 Issue, New Developments, Richard Lehnert, Varieties

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: RICHARD LEHNERT



After growing up on a Michigan dairy farm, Richard Lehnert began writing about farming in 1962, while still a junior studying journalism at Michigan State University. He worked at newspapers for a year before joining the staff of Michigan Farmer, where he spent 26 years, the last 15 as chief editor. He joined the staff of Good Fruit Grower in 2010. **Read his stories:** [Story Index](#)

ONE COMMENT



Dave Hershberger December 20, 2016 at 1:01 pm - Reply

Could you please provide a point of contact for Willow Drive regarding additional details I would like to seek out for this new variety of Royal Red Honeycrisp?

I am a home and small orchard owner and would like to obtain additional details regarding this new variety of apple tree.

Thanks,

Dave Hershberger

Burr Oak, MI 49030





Stay Up-To-Date With The eFlash

Receive updates from Good Fruit Grower's bi-monthly newsletter.

Sign up to receive our free eFlash with the latest news from the tree fruit and wine grape industries.

[Sign Up](#)

View Our Archives

There are now many ways to view content on Good Fruit Grower.

Explore articles by topic or category in the main navigation links on every page, such as Production or Pest Management. Or, you can view articles by issue by clicking the Archives by Issue page.

[Archives by Issue](#)

Upcoming Events

June 10

Wine & Music Festival

June 12 @ 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm PDT

Improving Sprayer Performance – Cashmere

[View All Events](#)

Receive Our Print Publication!

Order now by visiting our online subscription department, or by calling Maria, (509) 853-3515!

- Serving growers for over 67 years
- Trusted industry resources
- Award winning editorial content

[Subscribe Now](#)

Copyright 2017 Washington State Fruit Commission. All rights reserved. [Privacy Policy](#)

