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Pazazz club apple performs well in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley

Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley has a long history of apple growing. The Pazazz is the newest variety to prosper in the region. The Nova Scotia Fruit Growers' Association is the oldest in Canada, established in 1863.

Renowned regions

Growing regions become known for what they grow – and what it is they grow best. "I think every apple growing region has their own history and I think what's good to recognize is like wines: each region can do things differently," says Michael Van Meekeren of Van Meekeren Farms. Pazazz and Honeycrisp are the varieties that find the valley's climate to their liking, but Van Meekeren says it's not the best for growing Red delicious. "We can't get them sweet enough," he explained. "You have to capture everything in an apple now. You can't just bring out a new apple because it's new. Color is only part of it, and growers have to be able to grow it. You can't ignore the important aspects."



Club variety

Pazazz was developed in a test nursery in Minnesota; one of its parents is Honeycrisp. Van Meekeren's orchard is the Canadian grower for Pazazz; it's their exclusive club variety. "It's about flavor," he said. Not necessarily just sweetness. He says the Pazazz has so much flavor that when it's first picked it's too powerful to eat right then. "But in order for it to taste the way it does (for the consumer) we have to harvest them in October and let them mellow out in storage. It stores very well." The company is able to sell the apples all winter as long as they have supply.

Supply & production

Supplies so far have been good. Van Meekeren says production is directed by actual customer sales. "We don't go out and produce as much as we want," he said. Instead they determine how much customers are looking to carry beforehand. "Then we move forward together and the plans are all put in place."



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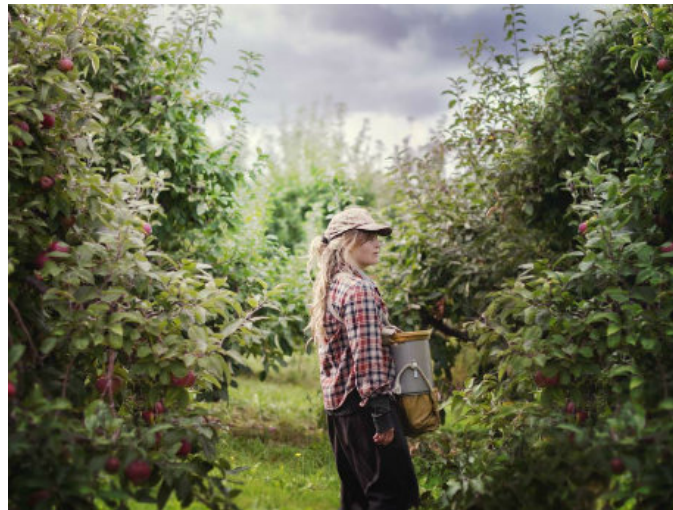
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Even though until now Van Meekeren says Canadians eat more gala apples than any other kind, he attributes that to price and availability. "There's no question that Honeycrisp is growing every year. People love them and they have a lot of fantastic qualities that I think consumers are realizing now: they stay crunchy, kids love them because they don't get soft and mushy, etc. and we think Pazazz will be one of those as well." It's a Honeycrisp with a lot of taste and both sweet and tart – the texture is crunchy, and it's juicy.

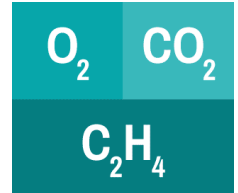
Coastal benefit

Since the valley is close to the ocean, that means it's never 100 per cent dry. "It can be a little extra wet, sometimes we struggle with that," he said. "In the Annapolis Valley it's warmer and sunnier than the rest of the Maritimes." It's generally a natural advantage for Honeycrisp and Pazazz – with the cool nights the area experiences in the fall and most orchards don't need to irrigate.



Grading, quality & usage

Pazazz garners a higher price because it's an exclusive club variety. "The intention is not to be high priced – we want to be higher quality and we want to be different," Van Meekeren said. He has high standards in terms of how they're going to pack them, how they grade them. "We have a machine that can tell how sweet an apple is. Every single apple. That's a big advantage." It measures brix through light. In the past it was a given that there were bound to be some bad apples in the bunch, but now they can be put aside. "If you're paying for your apple you want every one of them to be good if you can help it." He says there are lots of uses for the seconds. "Pazazz is excellent for cider production because it's sweet and tart. Also pie plants like them. There's always a home it's just a question of what's the best option."



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USD: 1.1193

JPY: 125.15

GBP: 0.86340

AUD: 1.4970

BRL: 3.6442

CAD: 1.5109

CNY: 7.7119

NZD: 1.5908

ZAR: 14.4977

Euro foreign exchange reference rates

Source: ECB

Pazazz club apple performs well in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley

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