

Dudley

This widely planted variety in the late 1800s in the north bears heavy annual crops and is hardy, firm, aromatic, with a just picked tart flavor. An 100+-year-old Dudley orchard in Bayfield, Wisconsin, is still bearing.

Duchess Of Oldenberg

Its origin is Russia's upper Volga region. Imported in 1835, this medium-large, with red stripes over yellow, is pleasantly aromatic and a rich, tart flavor, is hardy and disease resistant. Most commercial apple in early 1900s.

Chestnut Crab

U of MN 1946 release; with parents of the Siberian crab and Malinda. It is yellowish brown, odd shaped, but slightly larger than most crab apples; it was called "the lunch bucket apple" because of a preference by children during that era. The Chestnut is favored by children visiting Gibbs Farm.

Frostbite

This is a key apple in the U of MN breeding program since it's development in 1921, but it was introduced in 2008 and named by a contest with thousands of entries. Originally Malinda open-pollinated, it ripens in late September with a dark red with some yellow. This sweet baking apple is also great eating raw.

Black Oxford

This chance seedling, popular in Maine, has a mild sweet-tart taste and sweetens with storage, somewhat aromatic and a deep red color. It is good for eating and baking. It has good disease and pest resistance.

Our Founding Fathers fondness for the Yellow Newtown Pippin:

George Washington preferred the Newtown Pippin apple, which was introduced to him by **Thomas Jefferson** and is still a sweet-tart favorite with antique apple connoisseurs. Washington may have dealt with stress by pruning the trees of his Mount Vernon orchard.

Benjamin Franklin was said to have shipped barrels of carefully cached Newtown Pippins to Europe to help establish American trade abroad. Later, when **Andrew Stephenson**, America's foreign minister to the Court of St. James, presented the new Queen Victoria with several casks of Newtown Pippins, she pronounced it the royal favorite and exempted American-grown Newtown Pippins from British import taxes.



The Gibbs Farm Heritage Orchard was researched, planned, and planted by Ralph Thrane, Master Gardener and resident horticulturist for the Gibbs Farm at that time. We are also indebted to our apple orchard volunteers Ann Aurelius, Joe Baltrukonis, David Downes, Pat Jarvis, Jennifer Porwit, Ray and Le Schreurs for the generous sharing of their time and talent.

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Gibbs Farm Heritage Orchard



Welcome to the Gibbs Farm Heritage Apple Orchard.

When Heman and Jane Gibbs and their family lived on this site, (1849 – 1940s) they eventually had a large apple orchard. Apple cultivars that may have been part of their orchard are the Wealthy, Wolf River, Northwest Greening, Fameuse Snow, McIntosh and maybe the White Winter Pearmain. Others would be available from traveling salesmen. RCHS has planted a representative orchard that gives a range of apples - starting even before Washington and Jefferson's days - that might also have been planted by pioneers in our region. Apples provided quick and easily-stored food for early settlers year round.

Origins:

Apples likely originated in the Tian Shan Mountains, a system of ranges separating Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and China in an area still hailed as "the original wild apple forest." Apple horticulturists and enthusiasts (generally called pomologists) disagree on the exact time frame, but all apples introduced before the beginning of the twentieth century are considered antiques, also called heirloom, heritage, and historical apples. These early varieties were high in flavor and stressed usage, rather than many later varieties which were bred for high and dependable production, bruise resistance, shelf life, and cosmetic perfection.



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Some of the varieties you will see thriving in the Gibbs Farm Heritage Orchard:

Haralson

Most famous release by the U of MN; selection date: 1913; public release date: 1924. Number one in acreage and consumer appeal. With a distinctive tart flavor and very crisp, it is an offspring of the Malinda and Wealthy varieties.

Noble Golden

Large, round, clear bright yellow with a few red spots; cooks into a richly flavored frothy puree. An English variety from 1820, it surpasses other eating apples in Vitamin C.

Yellow Newtown Pippin

Seedling was discovered in Newtown, Long Island, in 1759. Bred by early colonists, it is a high quality dessert apple that ripens in late October.

Spitzenberg

Dates back to 1790, New York. When Jefferson returned from his years as America's minister to France, he planted more Spitzenbergs at his Monticello orchard. Red, crisp, fragrant and a rich sweet-tart flavor; it is marginally hardy.

Roxbury Russet

An excellent old American cider apple. Hearty with large fruit, blooms late. Originating in the Massachusetts town of Roxbury in the early 1600s.

Wolf River

A teacher's desk apple, the Wolf River originated near Wolf River, Wisconsin, about the time of the Civil War. Vigorous, extremely cold hardy, this red over a yellow skin is a premier drying apple; good for pies and other cooking.

Malinda

A yellow apple of Vermont origin from an unknown seedling, in 1860. Excellent eating, sweet and very hardy. Considered the number one ancestor or parent of many U of MN varieties, including Haralson, Chestnut Crab, Sweet Sixteen, and Honeycrisp, and thus deserves a place in our Heritage Orchard.

White Winter Pearmain

There's a mystery about where it originates. Is it the oldest known British apple from 1200 A.D. or discovered in Indiana in 1849 with an antique British parent? This yellow apple is not tart, crisp and aromatic for eating or cooking.

Honey Gold

Its parents are Golden Delicious and Haralson and is golden to yellow-green. Bred by U of MN, it ripens early October and is sweet. Like its parents, the Honey Gold is crisp and slightly aromatic for eating, cooking or baking.

Red Prairie Spy

An U of MN cultivar selected in 1923 from seeds, introduced in 1940. Parents are unknown, except possibly the Northern Spy. This red apple is a sweet-tart baking and cooking apple but turns sweeter during long-term storage.

Red Astrachan

An ancient Russian apple, known in America for 150 years. Ripens in early August; tart for eating out-of-hand, just picked. It is treasured for apple pie and sauce. Very hardy, but bears in alternate years.

McIntosh

Discovered in Canada as early as 1810; number one eating apple in Canada in 1990. Bright red, tender, thin skin, sweet-tart taste, appetizing aroma, and white flesh. Hardy, ripens early to mid-September in the Twin Cities area.

Dolgo Crab

Russian ancestry; in America since 1897. Premier variety for jelly; heavy pollen producer, attracts bees. Ripens in late August; very hardy and resistant to mildew, many apple diseases and somewhat insect resistant.

Fameuse Snow Apple

Canadian origin by seeds brought from France in 1730; It is great for eating and is one of the McIntosh's parents. This apple was favored in the U.S. for over 150 years. Deep crimson, tender, aromatic, sweet, not tart and hardy.

Cox's Orange Pippin

This 'pippin' is a chance seedling in 1825 from the orchard of Richard Cox, a retired English brewer; in America. It's a dull orange red fruit; firm, juicy, sweet with a pleasant smell. It is a 'grand' parent of the Gala.

Wealthy

Raised from a seed in 1860 by Peter Gideon in Excelsior, it's an early fall apple. Crisp with a sweet, not tart flavor, it is excellent for eating, cooking and baking. Though susceptible to disease, it is extremely long-lived and hardy.

Northwest Greening

Originated in Wisconsin in 1872 this yellow-green apple is hardy. Similar, perhaps related to 1650 Rhode Island Greening variety, a favorite American cooking apple in Colonial times. An excellent cooking and drying apple.

Priscilla

From Purdue University, this apple's pedigree includes Golden Delicious, McIntosh, Rome Beauty and Starking Delicious. A crisp, red with yellow apple with a mild sweet-tart taste for eating and aromatic for cooking.

Yellow Transparent

A well-known heirloom apple ripening early to mid August that originates as a chance seedling from Riga, Russia in 1850. Very tart, it's a sought after cooking apple with a luminescent pale yellow skin.

Sops of Wine

This British apple is firm and a mild, sweet, vinous flavor which ripens in early August. Its parents are unknown. This apple has yellow skin with a deep red blush. It was discovered in 1832 and is highly aromatic.