



## **Maine Tree Fruit Newsletter**

**Saturday, September 1, 2018** Vol 25:16

### **Fruit Maturity**

#### **Plums**

**Japanese** - Vanier is close to being ready to pick.

**American** - Kahinta is close to being ready.

Superior, Toka (Bubblegum) and Alderman are not.

**European** - Ouillins Gage is ready now.

Castleton will be ready soon.

Most varieties have sunburn from a heat wave earlier this summer, which will favor brown rot.

#### **Peaches**

Salish has been completely picked.

Harken has been picked once.

A new variety from Canada, HW272, was ready this week and shows promise for being a good variety.

Harrow Beauty should be ready soon.

#### **Pears**

Harrow Delight has ripened.

Purple pears, an unnamed selection, pressure tested at 27 lbs., but one tested at 9 lbs., and was ripe. They could be picked for storage now before cold weather ripens the rest.

Green pears, three unlabeled varieties, pressure tested at 30 lbs. Not ready.

#### **Apples**

Zestar! is still being picked, but color and flavor have not improved.

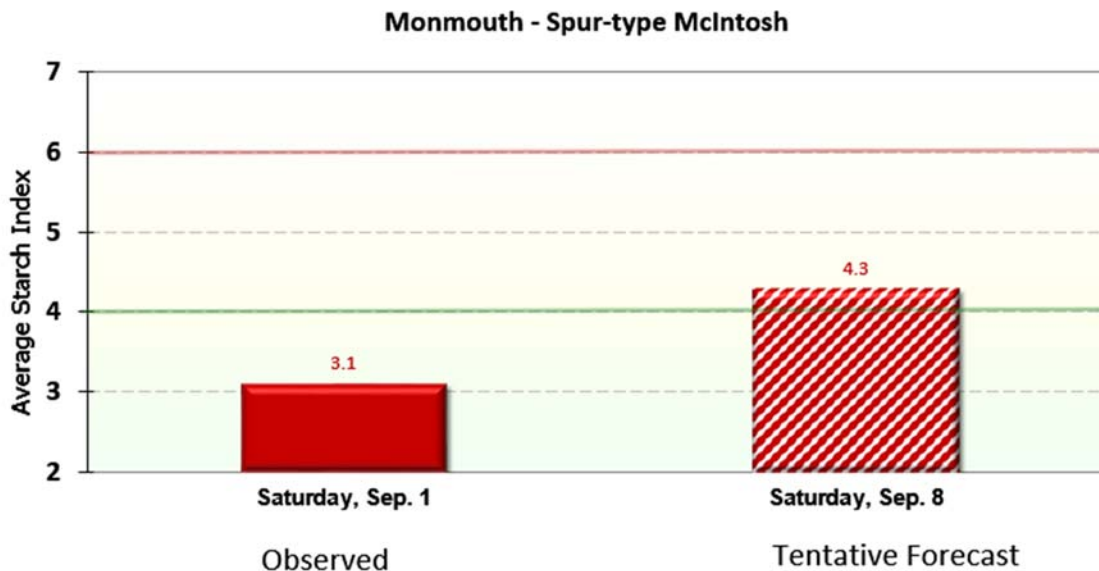
Sunrise, a summer apple from Canada, is ready to pick, and so is Sansa.

Paulared and Gingergold at Highmoor Farm should be ready now, too.

McIntosh (spurtype) starch index: 3.1. No change from August 27. It is too early to pick Macs.

Honeycrisp starch index: 1.0.

Cortland starch index: 1.0.



**Note:** Spur type McIntosh starch index on September 1 is a preliminary baseline value only, so the 7-day forecast based on it is only a general indicator. No observed value yet for regular tupe McIntosh.

**Starch Index interpretation for McIntosh**

3.0 – 4.0: Becoming suitable for long term CA storage.

4.0 – 5.0: Optimum McIntosh maturity for long-term CA storage (> 4 months).

5.0 – 6.0: McIntosh suitable for short-term CA storage, (2 – 4 months).

## Dry Weather, Scab, Flyspeck and Sooty blotch

Drought status over the past two weeks has remained unchanged. The late July and early August rains were enough to keep drought severity from increasing, but not enough to overcome reduction in soil moisture by high evapotranspiration (ET) characteristic of late summer when plants are operating at full capacity.

There is not much rain in the 10-day forecast. While ET losses will gradually decline as temperatures and solar intensity gradually decline, a lack of rain over the next week would result in soil moisture loss. If so, the area affected by abnormally dry soil in Maine, and drought intensity where stage 1 drought is already present, could increase.

That's the bad news. The good news is that dry weather helps reduce reemergence of apple scab (where present) as apple foliage ages. September is the time to check a mix of 100 vegetative shoots, fruit clusters, and water sprouts per block and count the number of leaves with scab lesions. It only takes about 30 minutes per block (up to 15 acres). You do not study each branch, that would take too long. You just quickly look at it to see any leaves have scab lesions. Recording the number of scab-infected leaves will be important information for scab prevention next spring.

More good news is that dry weather delays and reduces risk of flyspeck and sooty blotch, and extends the date range between the final fungicide application and the date until which that application can be expected to prevent visible colonies on the skin of apples.

## Earliest safe final application dates for fungicide protection to prevent visible flyspeck and sooty blotch before harvest.

Dates assume protection against flyspeck development was adequate during June and July. Dates are based on observed weather, the 10-day forecast, and climatic averages beyond 10 days.

Preharvest intervals: captan and Pristine: 0 days, Topsin: 1 day, Flint: 14 days, Sovran: 30 days.

For protection against visible Flyspeck through:	Earliest safe final application date for Captan	Earliest safe final application date for Flint, Sovran, Topsin.	Earliest safe final application date for Pristine
<b>Sept. 20</b>	Sanford: Aug. 15 Monmouth: Aug. 10 Newport: Aug. 5	Sanford: Aug. 13 Monmouth: Aug. 5 Newport: Aug. 5	Sanford: Aug. 12 Monmouth: Aug. 5 Newport: Aug. 2
<b>Oct. 10</b>	Sanford: Aug. 18 Monmouth: Aug. 15 Newport: Aug. 17	Sanford: Aug. 15 Monmouth: Aug. 10 Newport: Aug. 15	Sanford: Aug. 13 Monmouth: Aug. 8 Newport: Aug. 10
<b>Oct. 31</b>	Sanford: Aug. 24 Monmouth: Aug. 21 Newport: Aug. 20	Sanford: Aug. 17 Monmouth: Aug. 14 Newport: Aug. 16	Sanford: Aug. 17 Monmouth: Aug. 14 Newport: Aug. 13

## Sunburn and Bitter rot

Weather data from August 28-29 indicates that temperature, relative humidity, sunlight, and wind speed did not lead to fruit surface temperature exceeding the 113F threshold at which sunburn can occur. The current forecast does not show any sunburn threat weather.

## Cider apples survey

Dr. Terence Bradshaw, University of Vermont, is requesting grower responses to a very short survey about apple cider cultivars.

“Cultivation of specific cider apple cultivars, including European bittersweets, heirloom North American cultivars, and other dual-purpose fruit is a small but growing component of the New England apple industry. I am collaborating with faculty from UMASS and University of Maine to conduct a short-medium term research and education project supporting increased or improved production of specialty cider apple cultivars on New England farms. We will submit a grant shortly, well before the end of the harvest season, and wish for grower input to rank specific research goals that we will address in the project.

The survey is quite short, as is our turnaround time- we would appreciate all responses to be submitted by **Friday, September 7.**”

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BFD6LQ7>

## Closing Words

"Just don't give up trying to do what you really want to do. Where there is love and inspiration, I don't think you can go wrong."

~ Ella Fitzgerald

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