

Commonly Grown Cider Apple Cultivars In the U.S.

Cider apple 'Dabinett' grown at WSU Mount Vernon NWREC.



Information Sources

Growers in four different regions submitted lists of the top cider apple cultivars grown in their area. The lists are not based on replicated trials but on field observations, and not everyone has grown every listed variety.

Send us your own best recommendations for cider apple production in your area and we will include your information in the list. To submit information, contact Jacky King kingjack@wsu.edu



'Harrison,' an heirloom apple originating in colonial America, is still highly regarded and used for producing quality blended cider.

Regional Cider Cultivar Orchards

Twenty of the most common cider apple cultivars planted in cider orchards in different regions of the U.S. are listed on page 2. Information was collected from growers and researchers at 12 locations throughout the U.S.:

❖ Northeast:

- Northwestern Vermont – T. Bradshaw, University of Vermont Hort. Research & Education Center, South Burlington, VT 05403
- West-central Vermont – B. Hodges, Sunrise Orchards, Cornwall, VT 05753
- Upstate New York – I. Merwin, Black Diamond Farm, Trumansburg, NY 14886

❖ Mid-Atlantic:

- Northern Virginia – C. Shelton, Albemarle Cider Works, North Garden, VA 22959
- Northern Virginia – G. Peck, Virginia Tech Ag. Experiment Station, Winchester, VA 22602
- Southwest Virginia – J. Kuzelka, Panacea Wine Consulting, Dugspur, VA 24325

❖ Midwest:

- Northern Michigan – N. Rothwell, Tandem Ciders, Suttons Bay, MI 59682

❖ Northwest:

- Central Washington – C. Campbell, Harmony Orchards, Tieton, WA 98947
- Western Oregon – J. Kohn, Wandering Aengus Ciderworks, Salem, OR 97302
- Western Washington – D. Zimmerman, Finnriver Orchard & Cidery, Chimacum, WA 98325
- Western Washington – C. Miles, WSU Mount Vernon NWREC, Mount Vernon, WA 98273

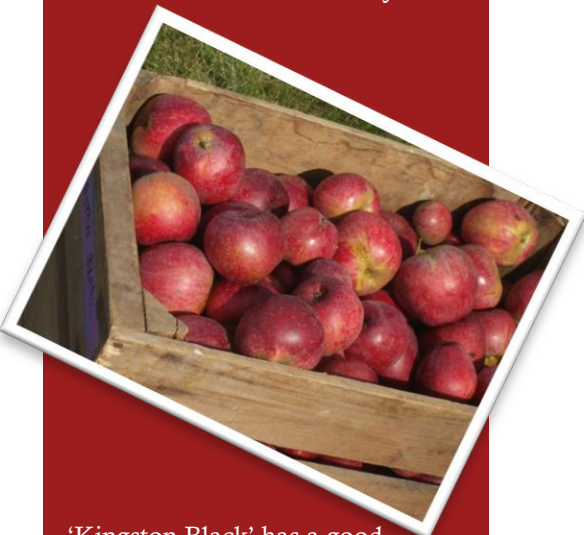




'Ashmead's Kernel' is an old English cultivar popular both for cider and for fresh eating.

APPLE CLASSIFICATION

Apple cider is traditionally made from apple cultivars that are classified by the level of acid and tannins in the pressed juice. This classification was developed by researchers at Long Ashton Research Station in Bristol, England and is used by cider makers internationally.



'Kingston Black' has a good balance of sweetness, acid, and tannins, but can be difficult to grow in some conditions.

APPLE CLASSIFICATION:

Based on tannin and acid content (Barker, Long Ashton Research Station, 1903).

Bittersweet (BSW)	Bittersharp (BSH)	Sharp (SH)	Sweet (SW)
% Tannin > 0.2 % Acid < 0.45	% Tannin > 0.2 % Acid > 0.45	% Tannin < 0.2 % Acid > 0.45	% Tannin < 0.2 % Acid < 0.45

TWENTY COMMONLY PLANTED CIDER CULTIVARS:

The cider apple cultivars most commonly mentioned for planting in different regions of the U.S. are shown below.

Cultivar	Type	Origin
Ashmead's Kernel	SH	England
Brown Snout	BSW	England
Chisel Jersey	BSW	England
Dabinett	BSW	England
Golden Russet	SH	USA - Heritage
GoldRush	SH	USA - Modern
Harrison	SH	USA - Heritage
Harry Masters' Jersey	BSW	England
Kingston Black	BSH	England
Michelin	BSW	France
Nehou	BSW	France
Newtown/Albemarle Pippin	SH	USA - Heritage
Porter's Perfection	BSH	England
Redstreak, Hereford	SH	England
Roxbury Russet	SH	USA - Heritage
Tramlett's, Geneva ¹	BSH	England
Virginia Crab (Hewes)	BSH	USA - Heritage
Wickson Crab	BSH	USA - Modern
Winesap	SH	USA - Heritage
Yarlington Mill	BSW	England

¹ Unknown variety received from Geneva, NY germplasm repository as Tramlett's Bitter (incorrectly).

GROWER INFORMATION

There are many other dessert and cider apples that can be and are used by commercial cideries in the U.S. The list above is meant to help producers identify some of the more commonly planted and used cultivars. Research is currently underway to determine additional cultivars, as well as to develop horticultural recommendations for the production of cider apples.

Some of the cultivars listed above are easier to grow than others. Factors to consider when choosing cultivars include disease resistance or susceptibility, growth and bearing habit (e.g. tip bearing, biennial bearing), and adaptability to local climate and soil conditions. Since the best apples for cider making need to be fully mature at harvest, some cultivars may need more heat, while others perform better in cool maritime regions.

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