



Know your grower....

Know the fruit!

Oct. 16th E-NEWS



KNOW YOUR GROWER... KNOW THE FRUIT!

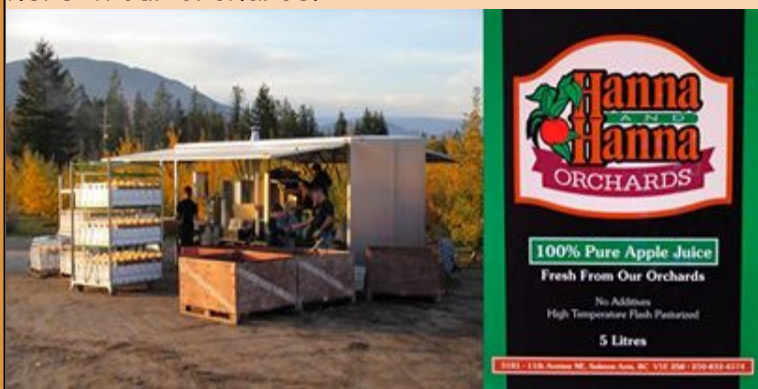
Last weekend, one of our visitors from the Lower Mainland mentioned that "Know your grower...know the fruit!" was being promoted heavily there. It's a great concept and fits right in with 'Buy Local' and 'The Hundred Mile Diet' - all designed to promote local consumption but also to demand local accountability. Hanna and Hanna Orchards has been part of the Salmon Arm community for over a hundred years and each generation of Hanna's has striven to grow the best fruit possible. Our reputation as producers of high quality fruit, particularly apples, has been hard earned and is one that we continue to uphold and improve upon. While we are not certified organic, we do use **Integrated Pest Management** which means we scout and monitor our trees/fruit, using cultural methods as our first line of defense, progressing to using the most benign products possible and, if necessary, using synthetic pesticides only when, or where, needed. We're

confident that the fruit we produce is as clean as possible (without chemical residues) because we are that careful. (As a note of interest, the Ministry of Environment has made surprise visits from time to time - usually in early fall when there is more likelihood of residues on the fruit - and have taken some of our apples to check for over 200 different chemicals. The reports have always come back showing that they found absolutely nothing!)

We grow almost 50 different varieties of apples (we lost a few to Fire blight two years ago) from old-fashioned favourites to hard-to-find heritage varieties and newer introductions. Given the tremendous variety and the quality of fruit grown in Salmon Arm, there's no need to purchase apples grown somewhere else - particularly during harvest season. Fruit grown in Salmon Arm is grown without irrigation and that, combined with the unique climate and soil conditions we enjoy here, means our fruit generally has a better, more intense flavour and keeping ability! Of course, I have a vested interest so you may think I'm speaking strictly from a sales-pitch point-of-view, but I've tasted many apples grown in the Okanagan and, while good, they're not as tasty as ours! We have customers from the Okanagan who come this way just for our apples, and they, too, will tell you there's a big difference.

The flavour difference in our fruit translates into a better, more intense flavour in our juice as well. We had planned to have the Mobile Juice Factory here last Friday and Saturday but an electronic breakdown on Saturday prevented any pressing taking place that day. I apologize to those of you who came out to watch the pressing process; for the second year

our Thanksgiving Saturday pressing was a 'no go' - disappointing for you and for us. The team is back today, however, with everything in working order and is busy pressing as I write. Our latest blend is a combination of Mac and Jonagold apples, exceptionally tasty and sweeter than either our summer blend or early September blend. Don't forget that the 'Bag-in-a-Box' technology which uses ultra-high flash-pasteurization means you can *store the juice at room temperature for a year from the date of pressing.* And because the bags are hermetically sealed, once you start using the juice, you have 3 months to use it up. There are **NO ADDITIVES** in the juice; each box contains **ONLY** the juice of 16 lb. of apples grown right here in our orchards!



With the compressed picking season we've had this year; *we have 30 different varieties of apples for sale in our market right now.* Can you name a grocery store where you will find this many different varieties of apples on hand - freshly picked? And we provide fresh samples so you can 'try before you buy' - a perk of buying local.

James and I have noticed in the thirty years we've been operating our local sales market, that consumers' buying habits have changed dramatically through that period. Thirty years ago most of our customers purchased by the boxful and then, at the end of the harvest season, purchased multiple boxes-full for winter storage. Now, most customers buy by the bagful, choosing to return each week for fresh product. The storage capability of a particular apple variety used to be a big selling feature but is of relatively little importance to today's consumer because *fresh apples from the Southern Hemisphere fill the shelves* in late winter, spring and early summer when BC apples are available only from

cold storage. (Curiously, because of this, I've also noticed that some consumers are really out of touch with the seasonal aspect of food production and not in-tune to what's available close to home.)

I've had otherwise-sane Canadians tell me that food sovereignty is NOT important, that what IS important is that food must be produced in abundance *where it can be produced as cheaply as possible.* And if that's means it's not grown in Canada, that's fine with them. From where I stand, growing food locally IS ESSENTIAL as witnessed by the jump in the price of products grown in drought-stricken California. We cannot afford to depend on other parts of the world to fill our shopping carts - or our bellies - and that means that we all have to support local agriculture in every way possible to not only support those who grow our food but to maintain a healthy economy.

The fruit industry in BC is dwarfed by that in Washington State and you've no doubt learned that it is often difficult to find BC grown fruit in grocery stores. In fact, many customers from the Prairies say that they can NEVER get BC fruit in their local stores. Last week, our daughter, a staunch supporter of BC grown fruit and produce, purchased some apples in a Kelowna grocery store that were advertised as BC-grown but, once the bag was opened, were found to have *stickers indicating that they were from Washington State!*

Those of us who have been involved in the fruit industry for any amount of time have been struggling for years with poor prices (believe me, the returns we get are only a small fraction of what you are paying at pay at the store) but also with poor demand. Buyers for major grocery chains are interested in one thing only: they want to purchase needed product at the lowest price possible to sell it at the highest price possible, to make the greatest profit possible, and they are NOT loyal to local producers if they can get the commodity cheaper elsewhere. Any fruit we ship to the packing-house system is subject to the whim of global market pricing and because there's SO much fruit available now from countries like China that were not traditional fruit-producing nations, we have very little control over whether our fruit sells and therefore little control over the returns we can expect from year to year. As a result, many growers

have gone out of business and, unless there is a strong LOCAL demand for BC fruit, the fruit industry in this province is in real danger of disappearing.

Fruit growers in Canada have the capability to produce what's necessary for the domestic market, and if the domestic market would demand locally-grown fruit, the industry could once again thrive. As things stand, that is unlikely to happen. On CBC Radio yesterday, I listened as an economist with BC Central Credit Union stated that he did not see agriculture as a growing (i.e. successful) industry in this province. Isn't that a sad prognosis!

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to write about what's happening in the fruit industry. I'm presenting the situation as I've seen it evolve in the past forty years and how it stands today. Growing fruit has NEVER been an easy way to make a living but I've always been optimistic that with hard work and by changing with the times, that we could continue in business and that perhaps, in time, a fifth generation of Hanna's would be able to carry on the family business if they wanted to. *The optimism is fading* - we've been innovative; we've changed with times; we've done everything we could to make this operation work - *and will continue to do so* - but in the meantime, the world economy has changed. Quite frankly, we can't compete on the world stage so the only way we can succeed is with local support.

We grow a top quality product; last year our Red Delicious apples were ranked #1 and our Galas #2 in BC! Our Honeycrisp apples are considered top-notch! You don't have to settle for poor quality when you buy local! And because you know us, you know who's growing your food; you can ask us questions and hold us accountable - something not possible with the fruit and produce grown elsewhere in the world.

**KNOW YOUR GROWER...
KNOW THE FRUIT!**

Have you heard of the UBC APPLE FESTIVAL?
<http://www.botanicalgarden.ubc.ca/apple-festival>

The Friends of the Garden (all volunteers) put on this fund-raising event each year on the weekend following Thanksgiving in order to raise funds for the operation of the UBC Botanical Garden. They purchase apples from fruit growers throughout the province but many of the unusual varieties come from Salmon Arm - from us and from Peterson's. Last weekend, we (Hanna's) packed 7000 lb. of apples comprised of 15 different varieties that will be on sale at the festival this weekend! A botanical garden in British Columbia is important and I'm proud that our apples play a small part in keeping it operational.

FEATURED THIS WEEK

Oct. 17th - Oct. 23rd

All Nursery stock.....50% off
Fall mums, pansies, etc..... 50% off

Apples in stock right now:

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| Ambrosia | Idared |
| Bramley's Seedling | Jonamac |
| Boskoop | Jonagold |
| Calville Blanc d'Hiver | McIntosh |
| King/Tompkins County | Elstar |
| Empire | Newtown |
| Fuji (Sept. Wonder) | Northern Spy |
| Gala | Orin |
| Golden Delicious | Pink Pearmain |
| Golden Nugget | Red Delicious |
| Granny Smith | Senshu |
| Hanna Special | Sinta |
| Honeycrisp | Spigold |
| Hubbardston Nonesuch | Spartan |

We have: Bosc & Anjou pears
Garlic Squash Pumpkins

Best regards,

Harriet

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