

SW MICHIGAN APPLE MATURITY REPORT

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Contact Bill Shane at SWMREC 269-944-1477 x 205 if you would like to have samples from your farm tested for maturity. See the Michigan State University apple web site (apples.msu.edu) for more information, including reports from other regions, past season reports, and additional information about apple maturity and apples in general.

General comments

Harvest of Golden Delicious and Red Delicious is the main focus of many farms in SW Michigan. Golden Delicious drop is becoming more common.

Empire (5 sites sampled, 4th and final week of sampling) Empire are showing a wide range of firmnesses and amount of starch conversion. Flavor has improved. Firmness is averaging 16.7 compared to 17.4 lb for last week. Starch conversion is averaging 4.6, about the same as last week, and brix is averaging 11 compared to 11.5 last week. The 2010 predicted harvest date for longterm CA storage Berrien County is September 9. Firmness is still adequate for medium and even longterm CA storage for some sites.

Jonathan (7 sites sampled, 4th week) Flesh firmness average is 16.5 about 1 lb lower than last week, but most still firm enough for medium to longterm CA storage. Starch conversion average is 5.2, compared to last week's average of 4.2. The brix average is 13.3 compared to last weeks 12.6. The 2010 predicted peak longterm CA harvest date for Berrien County is Sept 15 and the normal date is September 22. Starch conversion tests in the mature to overmature range with firmness still in the excellent range for most of the sites, allowing harvest to be delayed if necessary.

Jonagold (7 sites sampled, 4th week) Flesh firmness is averaging 16.4 down from 17 lb last week, starch conversion average jumped to 7.4, another big jump compared to last week's 6.4, and brix is averaging 13.4 slightly higher than last week's 13.2. Fruit firmness is in the medium range to longterm CA storage for most of the sites. Starch conversion for all sites is in the overmature range. The 2010 predicted date for Berrien County is Sept 15 and the longterm normal is Sept 22. Harvest can proceed in most sites for most uses according to these tests.

Golden Delicious (12 sites sampled, 4th week of sampling). Flesh firmness is averaging 17.5, about 1.5 lb less than last week. Starch conversion average is 3.9, a large jump over last week's 2.6, and brix is averaging 13.3 compared to 13 for last week. Firmness has drifted down to the mid range storage range for a few sites. Most sites are testing in the mature range for starch conversion. Harvesting is justified in many sites based on these tests. The 2010 predicted date for peak harvest for longterm CA storage is September 19th.

Red Delicious (10 sites sampled, 4th week of sampling). Flesh firmness is averaging 17.3, slightly less than last week's 17.6 lb. Starch conversion average is 4.7, last week's was 4.0, and

brix is averaging 12, up from last week's 11.1. Firmness ranges from excellent for longterm storage to short term storage, with starch conversion in the mature to the over mature range. The 2010 predicted date for peak harvest for longterm CA storage is September 21st. Red Delicious maturity indicates that harvest is appropriate in many sites. Some blocks may be beyond the optimum point for longterm CA storage.

Idared (6 sites sampled, 2nd week of sampling). Flesh firmness is averaging 16.8, a significant jump down from last week's 18.0 lb. Starch conversion average is 2.8, up from last week's 2.2, and brix is averaging 11.6 compared to 11.2 for last week. The 2010 predicted date for peak harvest for longterm CA storage is September 27st and the longtime average is Oct 5th. Idared firmness and starch conversion are all in the immature range but next week should see some orchards with firmness and starch conversion in the mature range for mid to longterm CA storage.

Fuji (7 sites sampled, 2nd week of sampling). Flesh firmness is averaging 19.1, compared to 20.3 lb for last week. Starch conversion average is 4, with 2.9 for last week, and brix is averaging 12.8, last week's was 12.1. The 2010 predicted date for peak harvest for longterm CA storage is October 12th and the longtime average is Oct 20th. Fuji firmness for all sites is still in the excellent range and all 6 sites are in the mature zone for starch conversion. Background color for all samples is still green but are brightening up.

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Figures 1 & 2. Apple maturity trends for SW Michigan. Each dot is the average for an orchard based on a 10 apple sample. Samples were taken in Berrien and Van Buren counties.



