

Editorial

Managed New York Apple Varieties: Are You Ready to Control Your Destiny?

Hopefully by now you are aware of Cornell University's intent to introduce two new apple varieties under a managed license contract with an exclusive partner. Prior to this announcement by Cornell, a group of apple growers representing all major production regions in New York State met last Winter and Spring and subsequently formed New York Apple Growers LLC (NYAG) whose primary focus was to gain exclusive rights to new and exciting Cornell releases. All apple growers in New York State, who pay AMO dues, were mailed a notice in August regarding the formation of NYAG, which is a new grower-owned corporation whose primary mission and objectives are as follows:

NYAG Mission: To manage the release of new advanced apple varieties and market these varieties at an accelerated pace that delivers profit and long term sustainability to our members and licensing partners and to overwhelm our fresh apple consumers with a positive fresh apple eating experience.

Objectives

- To introduce outstanding new apple cultivars to the marketplace
- To allow any NYS Apple Grower the opportunity to become a member during the founding year
- To enhance New York State apple grower sustainability, growth, and long term competitiveness
- To secure exclusive variety contracts that allow its members and licensing partners to profit from the growing and selling of these varieties
- To invest funding directly into the Cornell apple breeding program

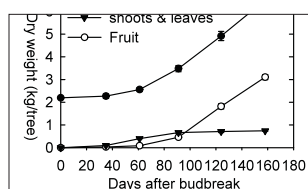
Currently NYAG and Cornell are undergoing negotiations for exclusive rights contracts and it is our desire to have these contracts completed by the end of January. After this we will begin the process of raising capital, creating a defined corporate structure, creating variety evaluation and quality programs, creating a nursery production plan, developing a detailed marketing plan and working on all other necessary details involved with the creation of a new entity. Additionally, NYAG wishes to increase our grower board by at least five new growers. If you are interested, please contact one of the current board members in your district listed below.

What Action Should New York Apple Growers Take Now?

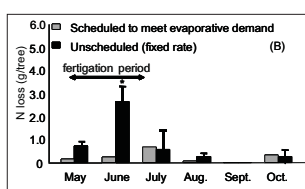
The initial grower response to the formation of NYAG has been very positive and it is the current board's goal to get as many quality growers aboard to make NYAG a success. New York growers must now begin to contemplate what their involvement will be with NYAG. All growers from grower operations of all sizes will be invited to become members of the grower-owned corporation during the founding year. Capital investments will be acreage based and the minimum and maximum amounts of acreage each grower can obtain are currently being evaluated.

The question for growers to ponder is if and by how much should they invest in NYAG? There has been a lot of interest in managed varieties over the past few months and this topic has been reviewed by many trade journals. Despite all of the opinions of how managed varieties will perform in the marketplace, the one fact that cannot be disputed is that the overall quality of the managed variety is the number one deciding factor. Although there is a tremendous amount of work to be completed in quality evaluation for the first two Cornell releases, we are very pleased and excited by the potential of these

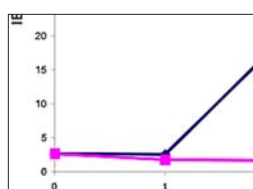
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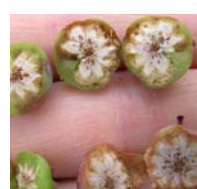
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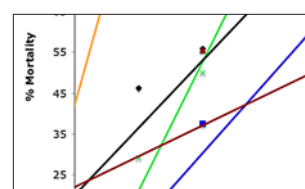
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COVER: Blueberries with Phomopsis Canker. Photos courtesy Cathy Heidenreich and Kevin Iungerman.

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(Editorial, cont.)

selections. In order to command shelf space in an ever increasing competitive market, we feel continued variety improvement will be necessary. NYAG is offering an opportunity for growers to get on board in the managed variety system; our business plan ensures continued investment into the long-term future to create superior varieties. As a result, when conducting your financial planning activities for 2010 and beyond, we pose the question: How can you not afford to get involved with NYAG?

More details will continue to evolve with NYAG through the winter so stay tuned for the communication of more information. If you have any questions or ideas for consideration, please feel free to contact a board member in your district.

Sincerely,

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