

PREDICTED 2011 APPLE HARVEST DATES

Erratic weather conditions set predicted apple harvest days two to seven days behind normal. Published July 12, 2011, MSU-E News for Agriculture - Fruit
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This season started out slow and late with considerable cold temperatures and above normal rainfall. Frost events were few and only minor in scope. Harvest dates appear to be about normal to a few days behind normal. The state experienced short bouts of near record hot temperatures and then below normal cool temperatures around the bloom stage. The whole state experienced these wild fluctuations in temperature. Bloom dates were behind normal this year, but not by much. Apple maturity for 2011 is expected to be two to seven days behind normal. Southeast Michigan has the greatest delay in predicted harvest dates due to the extreme rainy cool period near bloom and during the fruit set period.

The delayed bloom and erratic weather following bloom give us predicted harvest dates (Table 1) about two to seven days behind normal. These predicted harvest dates are for the center or peak harvest of these varieties for CA storage. This year, the 2011 predicted harvest dates are 9 to 23 days behind last year's predicted harvest dates (Table 2). Last year was a very early year.

Hot temperatures during July and August will hasten the maturity of some varieties. Gala is notorious for ripening early when late summer temperatures are above normal. Other varieties are less prone to hot temperatures, advancing fall maturity. Still, other varieties ripen when cold temperatures occur near harvest time.

The normal harvest dates for other varieties are listed in Table 3 for the Grand Rapids area. This year's 2011 predicted dates are a rough estimate based on the McIntosh, Jonathan and Red Delicious predicted dates. Other areas of the state should adjust non-predicted varieties based on their own history.

Table 1. 2011 predicted peak harvest dates.

Full bloom date				Predicted harvest date			
Station	McIntosh	Jons	Reds	McIntosh	Jons	Reds	Observer
SWMREC	5/11	5/12	5/12	9/12	9/26	10/2	Shane
Deerfield	5/13	5/15	5/17	9/15	9/29	10/5	Tritten
Romeo	5/19	5/21	5/21	9/17	10/2	10/8	Tritten
Peach Ridge	5/18	5/19	5/20	9/16	9/29	10/6	Schwallier
Ludington	5/21	5/22	5/22	9/20	10/4	10/10	Danilovich
NWMHRS	5/23	5/27	5/27	9/24	10/10	10/16	Rothwell

Table 2. Predicted 2011 peak harvest dates compared to normal and last year.

Days ahead of normal				Days ahead of last year		
Station	McIntosh	Jons	Reds	McIntosh	Jons	Reds
SWMREC	-5	-5	-4	-13	-10	-11
Deerfield	-7	-8	-3	-15	-10	-9
Romeo	-4	-7	-5	-16	-14	-14
Peach Ridge	-2	-3	-2	-14	-13	-14
Ludington	-2	-1	4	-16	-20	-19
NWMHRS	-2	-4	1	-20	-23	-23

Table 3. Normal peak harvest dates for varieties for the Grand Rapids area.

Variety	Normal date	2011 predicted date
Paulared	8/24	8/26
Gingergold	8/26	8/28
Gala	9/10	9/12
McIntosh	9/14	9/16
Honeycrisp	9/18	9/20
Empire	9/22	9/24
Jonathan	9/26	9/29
Jonagold	9/28	9/30
Golden Delicious	10/2	10/4
Red Delicious	10/4	10/6
Idared	10/10	10/12
Rome	10/15	10/17
Fuji	10/25	10/27
Braeburn	10/25	10/27
Goldrush	11/1	11/3