

## MORE INFORMATION (CONTINUED)

- ◆ Commercial growers rely on a number of different criteria, but probably best for the home grower is good flavour. This embodies a nice balance between sweetness and acidity and development of the characteristic aroma.
- ◆ Make sure that pollination has been complete. Flat seeds indicate that it has not; they should be oval. Cut your apple cross-wise, and not length-wise, and look at the core. If pollination is complete in most cases there will be 5 compartments, each with 2 seeds.
- ◆ Look at the flesh. If it has translucent areas your fruit may have watercore, a condition which, however, doesn't always confine itself to the core area. It's related to low levels of calcium in the fruit, which can result from deficiency in the soil or insufficient irrigation to bring it up into the tree. Excess vegetative growth also competes with the fruit for calcium; it's promoted by over-zealous winter pruning or overuse of nitrogen fertilizer.
- ◆ Another sign of calcium deficiency is bitter pit, characterized by dark, sunken spots concentrated at the blossom end. The flesh is brown and corky and sometimes bitter.
- ◆ Boron deficiency can result in water soaked spots beneath the skin; these become dark and spongy and eventually dry out; the fruit may be malformed.. In the drought spot type the skin is affected; sunken spots may develop dark lesions that become corky. In the corky core version only the core is affected.

Note: The above tips are **generally applicable**; they do **not** apply to all apples.

## MEMBER INTERESTS

While the main focus is fruit, the many individual interests of members makes this organization unique. These include:

- Testing of new varieties
- Propagation of new cultivars
- Heritage variety preservation
- Commercial orchards
- Semi-tropical fruit growing
- Nuts, berry fruit, and vinyards
- 
- home made fruit products

## MEMBERSHIP

\$15 per year, per household

## HOW TO JOIN BCFTA

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/ Prov. \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

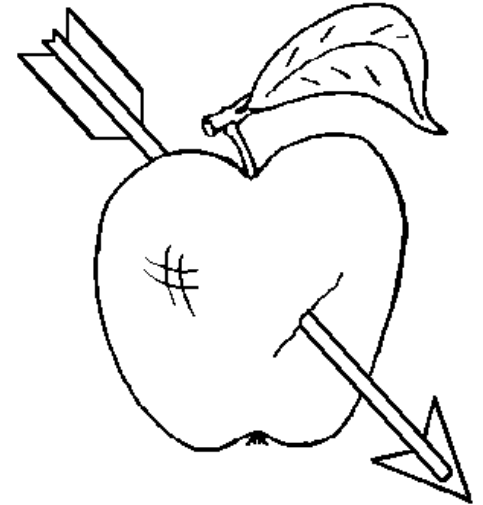
Email address \_\_\_\_\_

### Then Mail this brochure to:

B.C. FRUIT TESTERS  
ASSOCIATION  
Post Office Box 48123  
3575 Douglas Street  
Victoria, BC, V8Z 7H5

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# HOW TO help IDENTIFY YOUR APPLE



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**BC FRUIT  
TESTERS  
ASSOCIATION**

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### FIRST: A CAUTIONARY NOTE:

Never assume that you can just look at an apple and right away identify it. *Why?*

- ◆ That apple in your hand is the result of a fruit growing process, and many factors such as climate, soil conditions, pollination and sunlight all affect the size, shape and colour of an apple.
- ◆ Our experts will check these out, as well as the colour, flavour and texture of the flesh, the shape and density of the basin and seed cavity, the length and position of the stalk, the degree of openness of the eye, whether the skin is rusted or whether it's waxy.
- ◆ There are literally thousands of apples worldwide, and while not all are grown here, many different varieties have been introduced to this area from elsewhere, often without records.
- ◆ There are varieties, sub-varieties, and misnamed varieties apples. For example, the King apple, which is notoriously difficult to identify because it changes shape as it matures, has at least 27 sub-varieties. The most common on the west coast of B.C. is the King of Tompkins County - a different variety. So, which variety of King apple do you have?
- ◆ Apple trees that have grown from seed are called "seedlings" and are genetically unique. If your tree is one of these it may not have a graft scar between rootstock and scionwood because it is growing on its' own root. If your tree is a seedling, it is genetically unique and cannot be further identified.

*In that case, just enjoy the fruit!*

### THEN: SELECT YOUR APPLES:

1. Select fruit that is typical in colour, size and shape for the tree that you are trying to identify. On neglected trees it should be the largest that you can find - it's often at the top of the tree. Lack of thinning, pruning and fertilizing will mean that it is undersized.
2. Choose 4-6 specimens from each tree that you are trying to identify. Select specimens with as few blemishes as possible and with stems in place - these are important identifiers.
3. Keep the specimens from each tree in separate bags and label the bags. You'd be surprised how many people forget to do this....
4. **DO NOT** wash, wax or polish the fruit. Fruit wax is a partial identifier, for example with the King apple.
5. Refrigerate the fruit if it has to be stored for more than a week.

### INFORMATION TO RECORD:

- ◆ When was the fruit picked?
- ◆ Is it from a single tree, or from a row?
- ◆ Is it an old tree or a new planting?
- ◆ When is the fruit ripe?
- ◆ How long does it keep?
- ◆ Is it good for fresh eating?
- ◆ Is it good cooked??
- ◆ Is it borne on spurs, shoot tips or both?
- ◆ Is the tree upright, spreading or willowy?
- ◆ Does Scab or mildew damage the tree?

### FINALLY: WHAT TO DO:

See if you have any records such as a tag or a bill of sale which indicate where the tree was bought. If so, ask the supplier to check their records. While cases of mislabeled trees have occurred, supplier records are usually reliable.

Bring your samples and the information identified in this brochure, to your tree supplier or to one of our BCFTA events. We will do our best to identify the apple variety, but we do not presume to know what they all are - and we will **not** be held liable for accidental misidentification. What you can be certain of is that, if we are not 100% sure, we will tell you so.

### RELATED INFORMATION

- ◆ To pick an apple, grasp and lift to the horizontal, then gently twist a 1/4 turn. If it's ripe, the apple will come off in your hand; if it's **not**, do not tear it off - try again later. However, be aware that some varieties like Beauty of Bath can even fall before they're ripe.
- ◆ Skin colour isn't always reliable, because it is influenced by too many factors.
- ◆ Seed colour is probably a better indicator; for example McIntosh is considered ripe when 80% of the seeds have turned brown.
- ◆ The eye should have turned brown too, though with some varieties like Granny Smith it's not easy to see the eye at all!
- ◆ In some varieties the fruit is ripe when the flesh colour has turned from green to white.

[Continued overleaf]