

California Apple Varieties

Braeburn

This apple is available from California mid-August through December. Braeburn is from New Zealand where it originated in 1952 as a chance seedling. Its coloring is similar to a Fuji with its pale pink stripes over a yellow-green background. It has a sweet taste with a moderate tartness and is crisp, firm and juicy.

Cribs Pink (Pink Lady® Brand)

This variety boasts a bold hot pink color and is shaped like a Golden Delicious. Originally from Australia, it was developed by crossing a Golden Delicious and a Lady Williams. It has a unique sweet-tart flavor and is very crunchy. Some people say it is like a Gala with a zing! It is a very dense white apple internally and stores extremely well. This variety is grown in the San Joaquin Valley and the Cuyama Valley of California. This is a late season apple with availability from California from mid-October through April.

FUJI

This Ralls Janet/Red Delicious cross was bred in Japan where it is the number one seller. Fuji apples are remarkably tasty. Sweet and aromatic, they have 16 to 18 percent sugar content and a taste just bursting with sweet, juicy flavor. Their texture is crisp and rich, promising an explosion of flavor with every delicious bite.

Fuji apples have a round shape and are generally large to extra-large in size. They range in color from golden-hued to red and often show a red striping or blush. Fuji apples are excellent for overall eating quality and baking. They store and travel well due to their dense crisp interior. Look for California Fuji apples from mid-September through April.

Gala

Anyone who remembers perfect apples from their childhood will love Galas. With 14 to 16 percent sugar they have a fine, sweet taste that is fresh, fruity, and full of apple flavor. Gala has Kidd's Orange Red and Golden Delicious as parents and Cox's Orange Pippin and Red Delicious as grandparents. Gala was raised in Wairarapa, New Zealand by J.H. Kidd and named in 1965. It was brought to the United States in 1972.

Gala apples have a light texture that is crisp and refined. They have a nicely rounded shape and can vary in color from cream to bright cherry-red. The typical Gala has a creamy hue with up to 50% red blush. Gala apples are the first apples of the season and are available from mid-July through December.

Ginger Gold

In 1969, Hurricane Camille ripped through Nelson County, Virginia. In its destruction, it took most of the orchards of Clyde and Ginger Harvey. Several years later, the Harveys found a tree of golden apples amongst their replanted Winesaps. The seed of the tree had apparently been washed into the orchard from somewhere else, perhaps during the hurricane since nothing like it had been previously planted. It was later established that they had a true chance seedling. After calling it Harveylicious, the apple was later named Ginger Gold after Mrs. Harvey. Ginger Gold has a yellow appearance that might come from its probable Golden Delicious parentage. Pippin is also thought to be one of the other varieties in its genetics. It has a crisp, tart flavor with a sweet aftertaste and is good for both eating and cooking. California has Ginger Gold from mid-July through October.

Golden Delicious

These popular apples have earned their name and their reputation. Sweet and flavorful with 11 to 15 percent sugar, Delicious apples have a tasty and crisp juicy texture that is familiar to everyone.

With their distinct strawberry shape and golden yellow color, Delicious apples are easy to identify and hard to miss. California Delicious apples are harvested in late August, can generally be found in the market in fall and early winter, and are known for their sweet taste.

Golden Delicious was discovered as a chance seedling in Clay County, West Virginia in 1914. It was named Mullin's Yellow Seedling to later be changed to Golden Delicious by Stark Brothers as a companion to Red Delicious. The parentage of Golden Delicious is thought to be Golden Reinette and Grimes Golden.

Granny Smith apples offer a delicious combination of tart, sweet favor and crisp texture that's like a perfect autumn day. Their 12 to 18 percent sugar content gives them a bold and spirited taste.

Granny Smith

Granny Smith apples are medium to large in size and slightly larger at top than bottom. They can be easily recognized by their signature green color. Excellent for eating, Granny Smith apples are also great for cooking. They keep well and are available from mid-August through June.

Granny Smith apples were raised from a chance seed thrown out by Mrs. Thomas Smith in New South Wales, Australia in the mid-1860s. The seeds were thought to be from a French crabapple that had been open pollinated.

Gravenstein

This red-striped, tangy, sweet-tart variety is one of the few volume varieties in America introduced by Europe. Gravenstein was planted as early as 1820 in Bodega, north of San Francisco. Most early California plantings began about 1850. Gravenstein apples can be found in California in late July through November.

Jonagold

This Jonathan and Golden Delicious cross has a yellow background with an orange-red blush. Jonagold is an excellent apple for almost any use with its firm, juicy flesh and tart to sweet flavor, and its popularity continues to grow in the United States. California Jonagolds are available beginning mid-August through October.

Jonathan

Farmer Phillip Rick first discovered Jonathan as a chance seedling in Woodstock, New York in 1800. It is a beautiful brilliant red apple of excellent fragrance and flavor. The apple was originally known as the Rick apple, but later named Jonathan after Jonathan Hasbrouk who first focused horticultural attention to it in 1826. It is believed that the Esopus Spitzenburg is one parent of the Jonathan with the other unknown. Jonathan apples are available from California from late August through November.

Pippin

The Pippin is a medium-sized, light green coated antique American variety. It is believed that the origin of this chance seedling was near a swamp on the estate of Gersham Moore, in Newtown, Long Island, New York. It is grown almost exclusively in California and Oregon, with a few still produced in Virginia where it is known as Albermarle Pippin. The Pippin was the first American variety exported in volume to Europe. California offers this variety from late August through mid-November.

Red Delicious

These popular apples have earned their name and their reputation. Sweet and flavorful with 11 to 15 percent sugar, Delicious apples have a tasty and crisp juicy texture that is familiar to everyone.

With their distinct strawberry shape and deep red color, Delicious apples are easy to identify and hard to miss. California Delicious apples are harvested in late August, can generally be found in the market in fall and early winter, and are known for their sweet taste.

Jesse Hiatt discovered the Red Delicious chance seedling on his farm near Peru, Iowa. As it was growing out of place with the row of Yellow Bellflower apple trees, he tried chopping it down twice. After it sprouted a third time, he decided to let it grow. The fruit was first displayed as the Hawkeye variety at an 1893 fruit show in Louisiana, Missouri. It was later renamed Delicious but is best known as Red Delicious to distinguish it from the Golden Delicious.

Senshu

This Toko and Fuji cross apple was introduced in 1980 and is heavily planted in Japan. This Fuji-type apple has a wonderful sweet flavor with a crisp, juicy texture. California Senshu apples are harvested beginning in mid-August.

Sommerfeld

The Sommerfeld was raised from a chance seedling growing in the Central Valley of California in 1984. The seedling was found in a Gala, Fuji orchard. The parents are believed to be standard Fuji and Royal Gala. The Sommerfeld apple is a large, sweet tasting apple of excellent eating quality. The Sommerfeld's ground color is yellow-green with a reddish, slightly striped blush that can cover up 80% of the fruit's surface. Sommerfeld apples are available the first of August through February in California.

Sundowner

This round crimson apple was originated in Australia by crossing Golden Delicious with a Lady Williams. One bite into its crisp, juicy flesh and you will notice its very sweet but tart flavor. Sundowner is an excellent apple for eating out of hand, salads and baking. Look for Sundowner apples from California beginning in November and available through March.