

You were asking about...

Apples



Facts about Ontario's apple sector:

- ✓ 200: number of commercial apple growers in Ontario
- ✓ 16,000: acres of apples grown in Ontario
- ✓ 15: number of commercial apple varieties grown in Ontario

Apple farmers' environmental commitment:

- ✓ Apple farmers follow high production standards ensuring there is an emphasis on quality, freshness and flavour.
- ✓ The majority of apple farmers use practices such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) – controlling disease and pest levels with nature
- ✓ Apple farmers monitor fields/orchards for pest thresholds before spraying
- ✓ Farmers use “beneficial” insects and fungi before chemicals
- ✓ The majority of farmers complete Environmental Farm Plans to evaluate their operations and set goals for ongoing improvements

What factors can harm Ontario's apple crop?

- ✓ Weather
- ✓ Pests such as codling moth, oriental fruit moth, apple maggot, dogwood borers, leafhoppers, mites, aphids and others
- ✓ Plant disease such as fire blight, scab, blister spot, rust, powdery mildew, canker, and others
- ✓ Globalization - some pests are native to Canada, while other invasive plants and animals have spread from other regions of the world

What does organic mean?

- ✓ To be labeled and marketed as certified organic, food must be produced by farmers who are certified every year.
- ✓ Requirements can include grown without synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, genetically modified organisms, growth hormones or medications.
- ✓ All food, regardless of how it is grown, must meet the same inspection and food safety standards set by government.

Pesticide use on Ontario apple farms

- ✓ If pests are not controlled properly, they can destroy crops and make some fresh foods such as apples less available.
- ✓ Farmers are trained and certified in safe pesticide use.
- ✓ Farmers follow pesticide label directions, because they provide instructions for the safe and proper use of pesticides.
- ✓ Independent research, applicator safety, and residue monitoring/control keep our food safe.

The apple industry's commitment to food safety

- ✓ Food safety is a shared priority between farmers, industry, provinces, and federal organizations.
- ✓ Farmers use good agricultural and pest management practices.

Pesticide residues on apples

- ✓ Minute amounts of pesticide residues may stay in or on our food after it is applied. If a human health risk is found, a public recall notice would be issued.
- ✓ Before a pesticide is registered for use in Canada, Health Canada establishes a maximum residue level (MRL) for the product – to ensure that exposure to the pesticide residue presents no concerns for human health.
- ✓ Each MRL is set for a specific pesticide and food type combination.
- ✓ In the few cases where chemical residues were detected, Health Canada determined they would not pose a health risk to consumers.
- ✓ Canadians are also reminded to wash raw fruits and vegetables with clean, running water before you prepare and eat them.

How are pesticide residues regulated?

- ✓ The Canadian Food Inspection Agency monitors and enforces residue limits in domestic and imported foods.
- ✓ If tested food products contain residues that exceed pre-set limits, the food may be removed from stores, stock can be seized, and imports may be rejected and offenders prosecuted.
- ✓ The CFIA reports that over the last 10 years, residue data shows that the compliance rate is consistently very high for fresh fruits and vegetables such as apples.
 - A 2009-2010 study on pesticide residues in fresh fruit and vegetables found that 100% of apple products tested complied with Health Canada standards
 - 99.6% of fresh fruit and vegetables overall met Health Canada standards for pesticide residues.
 - *This study was funded under the Government of Canada Food and Consumer Safety Action Plan announced in 2007.*



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