

SELAH, Wash., Oct. 16, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- It's time for apple harvest and the fact that Americans love apples is no surprise. What's surprising is how in a relatively short period of time, new apple varieties have changed consumers' perception of an old-fashioned fruit. Apples are no longer a fruit to be taken for granted with the advent of new apples introduced by growers like Rainier Fruit Company. Varieties such as Honeycrisp, and brand apples like Lady Alice® and Junami™, have sparked a new generation of enthusiasts, and changed what consumers are willing to spend on a coveted, delicious apple.

"A few decades ago, we began a concerted effort to expand the base of apples we grow, and look to discover new apples that consumers could not only appreciate but seek out," said Suzanne Wolter, Rainier spokesperson. "One standout variety is the Honeycrisp. We can't recall another variety that has achieved this kind of popularity and demand so quickly."

Since its introduction, the Honeycrisp has far exceeded expectations and captured the imagination of retailers and consumers alike. Washington state is expecting a 13% increase in Honeycrisp volume this year over last year and double the volume just three years ago. Honeycrisp has quickly become a consumer favorite and nationally it's one of the top five selling varieties during prime apple season, September through March, contributing 15% of the apple category retail dollars and 9% of the volume. Honeycrisp also garners a higher price than most other apple varieties, frequently selling for \$1.00 more per pound. Given that a consumer is willing to spend that much for an apple says a lot about the flavor of Honeycrisp and how it is changing the category.

Rainier takes extra steps to ensure that it's providing the best Honeycrisp apples on the market, a difficult feat to achieve. Honeycrisp are not the easiest to grow, requiring significant additional labor, discipline and just the right microclimate to produce the taste and texture consumers have come to love.

"The most flavorful apples come from growers best prepared with practices and specific orchard locations to get this particular apple to market, especially after the first of January. We share

Rainier Fruit Offers a Variety of Apples That Appeal To Consumers Changing Tastes

Written by Australian Business

consumers' high expectations when it comes to Honeycrisp, so we go beyond industry standards to deliver a satisfying experience," said Wolter.

In addition to well-known, popular apples such as Fuji, Gala, Granny Smith, Red and Golden Delicious, Rainier grows less well-known apples including Lady Alice®, and Junami™ brands that excite consumers.

The unique Lady Alice® is like a fine wine – this apple gets more flavorful and complex with age. The apples are harvested in the fall, then stored and delivered to market at the peak of their flavor, generally February – May. They are characterized by a distinct pink stripe over a creamy-yellow background, which deepens to an orange-yellow with time. Lady Alice has a sweet, crisp, dense flesh with a hint of tartness. It was discovered, quite by chance on a farm in Eastern Washington

in 1978 when a grower accidentally cut an apple tree with his farm equipment. A chance seedling grew from the base and over the next 25 years, steps were taken to preserve and propagate the unique characteristics of Lady Alice® apples. Production of this apple has increased since its introduction just five years ago as its appeal with consumers has taken off. Rainier Fruit Company is the exclusive supplier of the Lady Alice® apple.

The Junami™ apple is best described as having a special crisp, fruity character and is a real thirst quencher with its invigorating flavor. Until recently, Junami™ were only grown in northwestern Europe under stringent and controlled conditions. Now, Rainier Fruit Company is the exclusive North American grower/shipper of Junami™ brand apples and has been distributing them on a limited basis nationally over the last few of years.

About Rainier Fruit Company Rainier Fruit prides itself in being growers first with their orchards benefiting from Central Washington's rich volcanic soil, snow-fed irrigation supply and long growing season to produce crisp, flavorful fruit. Highly trained horticulturists continue to artfully select premier orchard sites and choose the most environmentally sustainable practices in order to maintain its high quality standards. It offers a year-round supply of conventional and organic [apples](#) and [pears](#), and seasonal supplies of conventional and organic [cherries](#) and [blueberries](#)

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