

Two new apple varieties released for NYS growers only

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The juice snap of "New York 1," one of the two new releases from Cornell's apple breeding program, recalls its Honeycrisp parent, but the trees produce more reliably and the fruit stores better.

(PhysOrg.com) -- For the first time, new apple varieties developed at Cornell will be released exclusively to New York state growers, under a licensing agreement with the New York State Apple Growers group.

Apple varieties developed by Cornell are grown around the world, but the newest releases will be New York state exclusives. Cornell has forged a [licensing agreement](#) with a new apple industry group -- the New

York State Apple Growers LLC (NYAG) -- to grow and market two new, patented premium apple varieties developed by Susan Brown, the Herman M. Cohn Professor of Horticultural Sciences.

"It is important to Cornell and the breeding program to partner with our New York industry," says Brown, who directs Cornell's apple breeding program.

The two new varieties, as yet unnamed -- Cornell will trademark them with input from NYAG to ensure proper branding -- have been under development for some 14 years. Both are juicy, crisp and grower friendly. The juicy snap of "New York 1" recalls its Honeycrisp parent, but the trees produce more reliably and the fruit stores well. Sweet and tart "New York 2" is suited for baking and fresh use, and boasts the added benefit of higher levels of [vitamin C](#), according to Brown.

The new agreement is a first for Cornell's apple-breeding program, which in the past publicly released all new varieties to nurseries and growers and only recovered limited tree royalties. A new distribution model, called a "managed release," is becoming the norm for university breeding programs to advance the interests of the communities they serve.

[Commercialization](#) of new varieties can be challenging in a marketplace dominated by large grocery chains populated by brand-savvy consumers. It can take 20 years to successfully commercialize a new type of apple, says Brown. By coordinating supply and marketing, the managed release agreement will reduce that time by half. And, by receiving some of the return on investment, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS) will be better able to support its world-class breeding program.

"The New York apple industry has been a strong and supportive partner that has provided significant funding to apple research at Cornell for

many years," says Tom Burr, associate dean of CALS and director of Cornell's New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva. "To now develop a business partnership that strategically benefits the New York industry and the Cornell apple breeding program is truly a historic accomplishment."

"We want varieties that will excite our consumers," says Roger Lamont, apple grower and chairman of NYAG. "And we need varieties that thrive in New York state -- a very different growing environment than Washington state or New Zealand."

All of the nearly 600 apple growers in New York state will have the opportunity to join NYAG this year. Broad participation from growers is key to commercial success because, although large wholesale growers ultimately supply supermarkets, the farm stands of smaller producers play a significant role in introducing new varieties to consumers.

Growers will pay royalties on trees purchased, acreage planted and fruit produced. NYAG will pay licensing royalties to Cornell, determine the total statewide acreage for the new varieties, ensure quality standards at harvest and use a portion of the income generated from members to market the apples as well as some to directly fund the Cornell apple breeding program. For growers, planting new varieties is always a high-risk, potentially high-return venture. The managed variety system buffers the risk by addressing the biggest commercial hurdles -- marketing and distribution.

Cornell's apple breeding program is one of the largest in the world; the new varieties are the 65th and 66th releases since the program's inception in the late 1890s. Some of Cornell's best-known [apple](#) varieties are Cortland (1915), Macoun (1923), Empire (1966) and Jonagold (1968).

The Cornell Center for Technology Enterprise and Commercialization has worked closely with the NYAG board of directors to reach this landmark agreement.

Provided by Cornell University

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