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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

NEW SCAB-FREE APPLE VARIETY

Prima, the new scab-immune apple variety, is now available at several nurseries specializing in fruit trees. Scab is the most severe disease problem in most Illinois home apple plantings. Susceptible apples and crabapples were severely infected by scab this season and some trees have few leaves even this late in the year. Scab will not infect Prima, thus Prima does not require as many pest control sprays as other varieties.

Prima also is resistant to apple mildew and fire blight diseases, but is not immune to them. Like other varieties being grown today, it is somewhat susceptible to blotch, bot rot, black rot and other diseases. But these latter diseases are easier to control than scab.

A medium to large size red apple, Prima is crisp and juicy with a moderately tart flavor. It most nearly resembles Jonathan, but is not as tart and does not have any Jonathan in its parentage. It is both a dessert and cooking apple.

Prima ripens about September 5 in the Chicago area (3 weeks before Jonathan). Classed as a late summer apple, Prima is not a "good keeper." When picked at the proper stage of maturity, it will keep under refrigeration for three to four weeks.

Prima performs on dwarfing rootstocks. Dwarf trees are suggested for gardeners as well as commercial orchardists.

Prima was developed by the cooperative breeding project among the University of Illinois, Purdue University and Rutgers University. Scab immunity was obtained from a wild crab apple species bearing fruit about the size of a small cherry. Several other scab-immune selections from the breeding program are now in the final testing stages. Some of them may be named and released during this decade.

James A. Fizzell,
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