

Don't Put All Your Apples in One Basket

by James A. Fizzell, Sr. Extension Adviser
Horticulture

More and more people are growing fruit in their back yards. Also the availability of fruit such as apples at Community Farm Markets (and at surprisingly good prices in volume) makes trying to store them an attractive idea.

Fresh apples will last longer if they are stored in lightly sealed plastic bags instead of the perforated bags frequently used in stores.

As fruit matures, the sugars turn to starch, a process that requires oxygen and produces carbon dioxide. When apples are sealed in sealed plastic, the oxygen supply runs low and the ripening process is greatly slowed down.

Fresh apples should be graded before they are stored. Bruised or damaged apples can be used immediately for eating or cooking, and the perfect apples can be stored for use in the winter.

Thin plastic that is strong enough to hold apples is the best material to use for storage because it allows just enough gas exchange to prevent the apples from fermenting. It is suggested to loosely apply a twist tie to the bag to allow minimum oxygen flow into the bag.

Perforated bags are used by retail stores because the apples are exposed to changing temperature which can cause water condensation and encourage storage rots. Bagged apples also may be bruised by rough handling and can then begin to rot if adequate air flow is not provided.

Apples stored in sealed bags in the refrigerator may last for several months. They also can be kept in other areas of the house that do not freeze, such as a basement or crawl space. The ideal storage temperature is between 33 and 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

In the ripening process, apples give off ethylene gas which can cause carrots to turn bitter and lettuce to develop brown spots, so vegetables and apples should be stored separately.

When storing a large quantity of apples, it is probably better to keep them in several bags of about 20 apples each. If a rot problem develops, the loss will be less.

Apples should be used as soon as possible once the bag is opened.

Mid-Year Turfgrass Conference & Show GCSAA Today!!!

Have you ever seen so many press releases coming out of GCSAA before? The "Golf Course Management" seems to be nothing but a huge press release for this show in September. I have received a tape recording and a video-cassette which runs 44 minutes and 45 seconds. I've talked to John Schilling and Jim Prusa and they both feel that the show will be a success if they get 1,000 people there. They don't have any feel for the attendance when I talked to them in mid July since you don't have to register since registration is free. They state that the distributors are picking up the tab thru the cost of their booth space. My feeling is that the show is at the wrong time of year and that if the GCSAA would put as much time and effort into the February show it would be outstanding.

Fred D. Opperman, Editor

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