



The British Columbia Fruit Growers' Association

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For immediate release

BC APPLE GROWERS GET “ROYAL RECOGNITION” AT NATIONAL APPLE COMPETITION

November 3, 2011 (Kelowna, BC) – Again this year, BC apples were showcased and competed at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair (RAWF) in Toronto, Ontario; one of the largest of its kind in Canada. On the first day of the RAWF, awards in the Royal National Apple Competition were announced, and BC growers proudly took home several awards.

Commercial Varieties

Class: Gala

- 1st Germaine, Robert Hogue – Roseridge Orchards
- 2nd Harry Shaw
- 3rd Chamkaur Gill

Class: Golden Delicious

- 1st Rick Machial – Fairview Orchards
- 2nd Jeff Marshall – Jeflor Orchards Ltd.
- 3rd Steve Brown – Happy Valley Harvest

Class: Spartan

- 2nd Jeff Marshall – Jeflor Orchards Ltd.
- 3rd Germaine, Robert Hogue – Roseridge Orchards

Class: Jonagold

- 1st Brian Machial

Class: Champion and Reserve

- 2nd Germaine, Robert Hogue – Roseridge Orchards (Gala)

New Varieties

Class: Ambrosia

- 1st Jeff Marshall – Jeflor Orchards Ltd.
- 2nd Devin Jell – Gartrell Heritage Farms
- 3rd Harry Shaw

Class: Aurora Golden Gala

- 1st Devin Jell – Gartrell Heritage Farms
- 2nd Fred & Phyllis Nelson, Nelsons Fruit Works
- 3rd Kuen Hee Jung

Class: Other

- 1st Jeff Marshall – Jeflor Orchards Ltd. (Nicola)
- 2nd Dan Taylor (Nicola)
- 3rd Oscar Kempf (Nicola)

Class: Champion and Reserve

- 1st Jeff Marshall – Jeflor Orchards Ltd. (Ambrosia)

Best Collection of 5 Varieties

- 3rd Steve Brown – Happy Valley Harvest

“BC apples rank among the finest in the world”, proudly said Joe Sardinha, President of the BC Fruit Growers’ Association. “The quality of our fruit is a simple reflection of the quality of our labour, land and horticultural techniques.”

Growers from British Columbia, Ontario and Nova Scotia entered some of their best apples to the competition by submitting them in five distinct categories: heritage, new and commercial varieties, as well as best collection of any five varieties, and heaviest apple. Apples were nicely displayed for the competition where they were judged according to several criteria by John Gardner, a retired apple specialist from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture.

“BC fruit growers take great pride in working hard all year to produce deliciously safe and nutritious apples consumers can enjoy each day”, reiterated Fred Steele, Vice-President of the association. “BC’s tree fruit industry is important in this province and needs to be showcased. The National Apple Competition is a great opportunity for us to do just that.”

The BC Fruit Growers’ Association represents over 760 commercial growers in BC, with a mandate “to foster a business environment for the long-term prosperity of BC tree fruit growers”.

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BACKGROUNDER

Grower Biographies

Steve Brown – Happy Valley Harvest

Happy Valley Harvest is located in Summerland, B.C. Steve has been farming for 10 years and also works in field service for Okanagan Tree Fruit Company. The orchard is 15 acres, of which 12 are planted to apples. The major varieties include Gala, Ambrosia, Fuji and Pink Lady; there are also test trees of several other varieties.

“Quality and Quantity are king. One without the other in this day and age of farming doesn’t work.”

Kuen Hee Jung

Kuen Hee Jung farms in Osoyoos, B.C. He has been farming for 14 years in the same location. His farm totals 12.6 acres and he grows apples and soft fruits. The apple varieties include Aurora Golden Gala, Ambrosia, Early Fuji, Gala and Regular Fuji. He also has cherries, peaches, nectarines and apricots.

Oscar Kempf

Oscar farms 30 acres in Rutland, B.C. His farm is 30 acres of which 20 acres are planted in apples and 10 acres are planted in soft fruit, including cherries, peaches, plums, pears and grapes. Oscar has been farming for over 20 years.

Germaine and Robert Hogue – Roseridge Orchards

Roseridge Orchards is located in Kelowna, B.C. They grow 25 varieties of apples, 12 varieties of peaches and 9 varieties of plums on 15 acres of land. Roseridge Orchards was established in 1996 by Jean and Germaine Hogue and the orchard is now operated by Germaine and her son Robert. They were the recipients of the B.C. Fruit Growers’ Association Golden Apple Award in 2001.

Brian Machial

Brian Machial is leasing 16 acres of apples and cherries in Oliver, B.C. He has been leasing the cherries for 3 years and the apples for 2 years. The orchard is a certified organic and biodynamic farm.

Rick Machial – Fairview Orchards

Rick Machial took over his dad's orchard and has been operating the same farm in Oliver B.C. for 30 years. He runs 11 acres of orchard and produces McIntosh, Spartan, Golden Delicious, Gala, Braeburn, Fuji and cherries. Rick is also a co-owner of fruit packed under the Fairview Gold Label with his brother, Joe Machial. They have been packing fruit since 1991.

Jeff and Lori Marshall – Jeflor Orchards Ltd.

Jeflor Orchards Ltd. is located in Winfield, B.C. Jeff and Lori farm 30 acres and produce Nicola, McIntosh, Gala, Golden Delicious, Spartan, Ambrosia, Granny Smith, Braeburn, Aurora Golden Gala and Fuji. Jeff is a third generation farmer.

Fred and Phyllis Nelson – Nelson Fruit Works

Fred and Phyllis Nelson farm 10.5 acres in Cawston, B.C. under the name Nelson Fruit Works. They have been farming for 36 years, the last 22 years organically. They grow 7 varieties of apples; Sunrise, Akane, Gala, Ambrosia, Aurora, Granny Smith and Fuji. They also grow Shinseki Asian pears, Ar-i-ang Asian pears, 4 varieties of peaches, 2 varieties of nectarines and 1 variety of plum. Their orchard is home to Fred and Phyllis as well as their son, Pharron and his wife Josee-Anne & baby Leo. Over the 36 years that they began farming, the entire orchard has been renewed with replanting to newer varieties - some more than once. Each spring there is usually a block that is being replanted. Almost their entire crop is stored, graded, shipped & sold by their dedicated organic packing facility, Cawston Cold Storage. Due to the delicate nature of the Auroras, this year they will grade, pack, ship & sell their Aurora crop from their own storage facility.

Harry Shaw

Harry Shaw has been an orchardist for 50 years. He has been farming in this present location for 47 years. The 4.5 acre orchard is made up of 3 acres of Gala and 1.5 acres of Ambrosia.

Devin Jell – Gartrell Heritage Farms

Gartrell Heritage Farms is located in Summerland, B.C. Dave Gartrell and his family farm 27 acres, which includes their original home place pre-empted in 1887 by Dave's great grandfather, James Gartrell. Dave farmed full time for 30 years, then leased out the orchard to one of his daughters and her husband,

Janine and Devin Jell, who have been running the orchard for four years. Janine is the fifth generation of her family to farm this land. The apple varieties they grow include Royal Gala, Ambrosia, Aurora Golden Gala, Sunrise, Ginger Gold, Granny Smith, Fuji and Spartan. Dave's family has farmed the same property for over 120 years. Dave's great grandfather was one of the first commercial orchardists in Summerland. He participated in Agricultural Fairs as far back as 1897, receiving diplomas from the Spokane, Washington Fruit Fair in 1897 for "individual exhibitor taking the greatest number of first prizes on plates of apples". He also received a medallion from the Royal Horticultural Society for a collection of apples sent to London, England in 1905. This memorabilia is currently displayed in Dave's home. Dave Gartrell was one of the winners of the Compact Apple Orchard Centennial Trophy in 2001.

"Orchard practices have changed a lot in 120 years, but our family still takes great pride in working the land and producing fruit of excellent quality."