

PADDOCK *to* PLATE

a history of food and wine in Orange and district

Learning Resources for Teachers

APPLES

The Process

The seasons, summer, autumn, spring and winter are very important for fruit especially apples.

In winter the apple trees are pruned so that they are ready to grow new apples. In spring the new apples will start to grow. In summer orchardists must watch for bugs that might want to eat the fruit before it can be picked. Finally in autumn the apples are ready to pick. Apples bruise easily so they must be picked by hand.

Pickers use ladders to reach the tops of the trees and place the picked fruit in cloth buckets worn over their shoulders. The apples are transferred from the buckets to large bins and taken to a packing house. Here they are stored in a refrigerated warehouse. The cold warehouses keep the apples fresh and mean we can eat apples all year.

The apples will be washed, sorted and packed into boxes before heading to a market or grocery shop.

The Resources

The resources below contain games, activities and lesson ideas for students.

Orange Apples, includes history of apple industry in the Orange region.

<http://www.orangeapples.com.au/ourstory/ourhistory>

Orange Apples, includes information on local apple industry.

<http://www.orangeapples.com.au/ourstory>

Aussies Apples, includes general information about the Australian apple industry as well as resources for kids.

<http://www.aussieapples.com.au/>

ABC Splash, learning resources for primary school students, includes video, activities and information for teachers.

<http://splash.abc.net.au/home#!/media/86042/picking-and-processing-fresh-apples>

The History

From the earliest days of European settlement in the Orange district, it was recognised that the soil and climate were excellent for growing fruit. The first commercial fruit growing enterprise is attributed to George Hawke of 'Pendarves', Byng, east of Orange. Hawke settled at Byng in the early 1840s and returned to his native Cornwall in search of root-stock suitable for Australian conditions. His first trees did not survive so he obtained a variety of fruit trees including apples, cherries, plums and peaches from elsewhere in Australia.

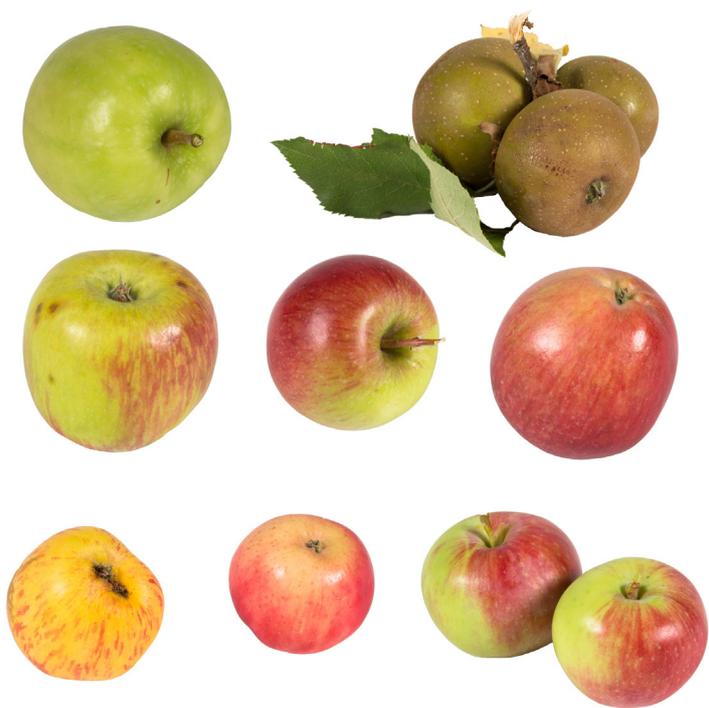
George's first apple harvest yielded only two apples. However, he persisted and a few years later, he was making 600 pounds a year profit, about \$40,000 in today's money.

He continued to grow his orchard and by the 1880s many other orchardists had joined him in Orange. In 1899, the local railway was shipping 76,000 cases of fruit from the region and by 1927 this had grown to 170,525 cases.

In the first half of the 20th century, Orange was the largest apple producer in NSW. In 1945, there were 380 orchards with over 4000 acres of apples planted. While droughts in the 1980s proved difficult for orchards, the 21st century has seen a steady increase in the Orange apple industry. Today the combined areas of Orange and Batlow produce 16% of the national apple and pear crop, valued at over \$95 million for apples and \$300,000 for pears in 2014-15.



The Evidence



Images from top left to right.

1. Local heritage apples grown at Borrodell Vineyard, image courtesy of Borrodell Vineyard. More information on apples: borrodell.com.au/story-of-borrodell.
2. The slopes of Mt Canobolas under hail and bird netting to protect fruit, image courtesy of Sandra McEwen.
3. Panoramic view from Mount Pleasant showing Sam Hawke's orchard c. 1920s, E.B. Studios, Sam Hawke was a relative of George Hawke, he established an orchard in the early 1900s after George's success, image courtesy State Library of New South Wales.

If you require high res copies of any of these images please contact Orange Regional Museum on 02 6393 8444.