



APPLES: WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO GROW AN APPLE?

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Fall is the perfect time of year to take a bite of a nice crispy, juicy apple, but have you ever wondered where do apples come from? There are over 7,500 varieties of apples and they can be all shapes, sizes, and colors. All apples have several things in common: they all grow on trees and are ready to pick in the late summer and fall. But what happens to the trees in an apple orchard the rest of the year?

If you visit an apple orchard in the winter what would it look like? In the winter, the trees are dormant. When the trees are dormant, they are “sleeping” and have just branches with no leaves or apples. As the weather starts to warm towards the end of winter it is time to start getting the trees in the orchard ready for another growing season. In the late winter, the trees are pruned so that the trees will be able to get sunlight and airflow to keep them strong and healthy. As winter turns into spring, the days start to get longer, and the temperature rises causing the orchard to begin to come to life. Spring is a very important time of year for the apple trees. The buds on the trees begin to burst open revealing the fresh new green leaves. Shortly after the leaves appear the trees become covered in pink or white blossoms. Bees will then come and visit the blossoms to collect nectar. As the bees fly from flower to flower collecting nectar, they also carry pollen from one flower to the next. This process is called pollination. Flowers that have been pollinated will begin to develop into apples. Over the summer the leaves will collect sunlight to give the trees energy and the apples will continue to grow. By the end of summer, the apples trees will be covered with nice big, juicy apples that are almost ready to pick. Come fall the apples are ripe and ready to pick and leaves on the trees begin to change color. Once all the apples are picked and all the leaves have fallen off the trees, the trees will start the cycle all over again by going dormant again for the winter.

Once the apples are picked, they can be eaten as they are or used to make other products. Apples that have fallen off the trees onto the ground are known as windfalls. The windfall apples are collected and used for making apple cider. Apples are also used to make applesauce, pie filling, apple butter, and many other apple products. How many different ways have you eaten an apple?

ACTIVITIES TO TRY!



Go Apple Picking:

Visit an apple orchard to pick apples and see how apple cider is made.

Visit <https://www.ctapples.org/> to find an apple orchard near you.



Apple Art:

Cut an apple in half. Can you find the star shape inside the apple? Apply some paint to the apple half and use it as a stamp to create your apple art.



Apple Taste Test:

Sample a variety of different types of apples. As you try ask yourself is it crunchy or mushy? Is it sour or sweet? What is your favorite one?



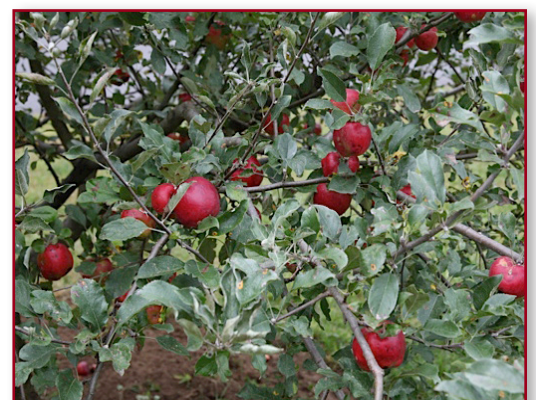
WINTER



SPRING



SUMMER



AUTUMN



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