

The Fruit Industry Today

When Knouse Foods celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1999, the cooperative was processing nearly 12 million bushels of apples, about 6500 tons of cherries, 2 ½ million pounds of peaches, and over 260 tons of blueberries, resulting in over \$200 million in annual sales. Knouse Foods is one of the largest apple processing companies in the world, having numerous plants and producing multiple name brands, including *Lucky Leaf* and *Musselman's*. The cooperative is also credited as the first to sell ready-to-use pie filling. Over the years, Knouse Foods has earned many state and national awards—a sign of their continued success.

Cadbury Schweppes Americas Beverages of Aspers is well known for its *Mott's* brand apple products. *Mott's* has been selling apple sauce since 1930 and apple juice since 1938. *Mott's* is the number 1 nationally branded apple juice. Utilizing modern technology, the company produces apple juice and apple sauce in various sizes from single serving to family size packages. Today, Cadbury Schweppes Americas Beverages is more energized and focused than ever on developing great tasting, healthy, and convenient apple-based products such as *Mott's* organic apple sauce and *Mott's* Plus juices.

Rice Fruit Company is the largest packer of fresh apples and peaches in the eastern United States. The company was started in 1913 by Arthur Rice, a 5th generation apple grower in Adams County. The present generation of family owners take pride in packing and marketing premium fresh fruit for about 50 local fruit farms. The packing and storage facilities have state-of-the-art equipment to ensure gentle and efficient handling of the fruit.

Modern controlled atmosphere storage rooms have made packing fresh apples into a year-round activity. There are about 8 fresh fruit packing companies in Adams County and more than 30 retail farm markets.



Invaluable support for the fruit industry, locally and statewide, has been provided throughout its history by Penn State University. The Fruit Research and Extension Center, established in 1918, has highly trained scientists who observe orchard conditions first-hand and study the problems encountered by growers. The Capital Region tree fruit team, located at the Penn State Extension Office in Gettysburg, collaborates with research faculty to develop education and outreach programs.

Over time, the orchard and fruit industries scattered throughout the countryside have allowed collective growth and prosperity within Adams County, all while maintaining a quaint and beautiful area tucked away in south-central Pennsylvania.



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Apple Country, USA

Heritage & Innovation



Adams County, Pennsylvania

“Although it is just a short drive from the Carlisle and Gettysburg Pike exits of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, a trip to Adams County is a trip back in time with quaint villages and festivals that recall America's agricultural past. In Adams County apples are everywhere. In fact more than five million bushels of America's favorite fruit are harvested in this one county alone. Everywhere you turn somebody is harvesting, selling—or eating apples!”

*~Fall Harvest Beckons Travelers to Adams County, PA
by Lowman S. Henry*

Welcome to Adams County's Orchards

The fruit growers of Adams County take great pride in their orchard operations. Many of the orchards are family operated and have been passed down four or five generations.

In 2003, there were 1,265 farms in Adams County, occupying a total of 180,000 acres of land and of these farms, 180 were orchard operations. The Pennsylvania landscape has numerous apple, peach, and cherry orchards.

Growers have found that innovation is key to the continued viability and success of their family orchards. To ensure the fruit industry's sustainability, many growers have become active leaders in state and national organizations to advocate progressive research, extension, and legislative priorities. The Adams County Fruit Growers Association organizes and conducts the annual spring Apple Blossom Festival, participates in the annual fall Apple Harvest Festival, and helps to choose the national Apple Queen.

The Adams County fruit industry has been extremely fortunate throughout its history. The farming operatives, diverse collaborations, and excellent resources have created a dynamic rural community. Take time to enjoy the scenery and fresh fruit markets of "Apple Country U.S.A!"



When to Buy Fresh Pennsylvania Fruit

Apples.....	August—October
Grapes.....	September
Nectarines.....	July—mid September
Peaches.....	July—mid September
Pears.....	mid August—September
Plums.....	July—mid September
Cherries.....	June—July
Strawberries.....	June

Local History

While fruit growing was termed "commercial" in some areas of Pennsylvania as early as 1840, it was 1878 when Noah Sheely established a 23-acre orchard considered the first commercial operation in Adams County. His orchard has been identified with the Historic Round Barn which was constructed in 1914. The barn is one of only three remaining round barns in Pennsylvania; the landmark is now owned and conserved by Knouse Fruitlands.

Noah Sheely is also credited with making the first commercial shipment of apples outside of the county. He ordered 1500 barrels of apples (at \$1.50 per barrel) when he went to the Chicago World Fair in 1893.

By the turn of the century, many of the new orchards were yielding excellent harvests because of the region's frost-resistant hillsides, drought-resistant soils, and adequate rainfall. These incentives influenced many livestock, poultry, and field crop farmers to make the transition to fruit production.

With the abundant fruit in Adams County, small canning operations, known as "dry houses" or "evaporator plants," quickly became established. One canning company that succeeded was a Biglerville cannery purchased by Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Musselman in 1907.

The Musselman Company expanded from 1921 to 1961 after purchasing over 20 different orchards for their processing plant. In 1984, Knouse Foods Cooperative bought the Musselman Company and since has had a major influence on the fruit industry in Adams County.

