



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

All About Apples in New York State

PATTY RITCHIE September 14, 2015

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Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

For people in New York State and beyond, if there's one thing that signals the start of fall, it's apples. Here in New York State, apple growers harvest a whopping 29.5 million bushels of apples annually, making New York the second-largest apple-producing state in our country.

Apples are more than just the key ingredient of fall favorites like cider and apple pie. From boosting our health to impacting the economy, here's a look at the importance of apples in New York State:

Orchard overload: Did you know New York is home to nearly 700 apple orchards? Many of these orchards—including dozens throughout the Central and Northern New York region—allow visitors to pick their own. To locate an orchard near you, visit the New York Apple Association website at www.nyapplecountry.com.

Packing a nutritional punch: Apples aren't just delicious, they're a great source of the nutrients we need to stay healthy, including dietary fiber, vitamin C, potassium and the mineral boron, which promotes bone health.

An abundance of apple varieties: In the United States, more than 2,500 varieties of apples are grown. While New York is home to more than two dozen varieties, the most popular are Empire, Red Delicious, McIntosh, Golden Delicious, Cortland, Rome, Crispin, Idared, Paula Red and Gala.

In NY, apples equal jobs: New York's apple industry is more than just fresh fruit, it's a major job creator too, providing employment opportunities for thousands of people across our state including 10,000 direct agricultural jobs—involving things like growing and packing—as well as 7,500 indirect jobs involving marketing, distribution and other activities.

As Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I'm working not only to support apple growers, but also to connect people with fresh foods. This year, I was proud to advocate for record funding in our state budget to support programs that help farmers market products—like apples—as well as initiatives like my “Grown in New York” plan, which aims to better link consumers with locally grown products.

From festivals to foods, apples are one of the focuses of fall in New York State. For more information on New York grown apples and upcoming apple events in our region, visit www.nyapplecountry.com.