



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Millennials drive growing demand for premium apples

Orchard and warehouse managers learn about trends during recent AgroFresh event

Yakima, Wash., March 16, 2016 – Red Delicious apples are the cornerstone variety for the apple industry, but a new generation of millennial consumers is starting to change the course of apple production. Younger consumers increasingly demand premium apples such as Honeycrisp and Gala that feature a unique flavor profile, crunch and premium color. Both varieties are increasing in production in the United States.

“Regardless of the variety, we need to continue to deliver high-quality apples to keep consumers coming back for more,” said Steve Clement, general manager for Sage Fruit Company in Yakima, Washington. “It is the quality produced in the orchard and warehouse that matters most.”

Clements was among 150 key players in the Washington apple industry who learned about consumption and other trends at the 4th annual AgroFresh Crunch Academy, held recently in Yakima, Washington.

Academy attendees heard updates from local and national experts from AgWeatherNet at Washington State University, U.S. Apple Association, USDA Agriculture Research Service Tree Fruit Research Lab and AgroFresh researchers. Topics included consumer buying preferences, new research on how weather affects apples, advanced technology to manage fruit maturity and FDA produce safety rules.

Heat is a new challenge

Brad Tukey, technical account manager for AgroFresh, reported on how hot weather affected apple quality last season.

“The 2015 growing season in Washington brought extreme heat, which manifested as a warm spring with no frost and summer with growing degree days well above average. This impacted fruit both on the tree and throughout the storage process because it ripened quickly and had a thinner cuticle, compared with typical years,” Tukey said. Common problems included carmeling, shriveling and shoulder browning in Galas; sunburn and diffuse skin browning in Golden Delicious; and peel discoloration in Granny Smiths.

If warm weather patterns continue in 2016, Tukey urged orchard managers to carefully watch apple maturity leading up to harvest and warehouses to adjust cooling practices to reduce storage issues.

Advanced pre- and post-harvest technologies

For the first time, the AgroFresh Crunch Academy focused on both pre-harvest and post-harvest technologies. Harvista™ is a pre-harvest technology tool that can be applied 3 to 10 days before harvest to extend the harvest window. It evens maturities, controls drop and minimizes watercore by preventing ethylene recognition.

After harvest, SmartFresh™ continues to be the proven, preferred technology to protect fruit quality in warehouses. Tukey said, “SmartFresh has the ability to benefit a wide range of maturity, not just the best fruits. Warehouses are embracing custom refrigeration prescriptions focusing on SmartFresh, temperature and controlled atmosphere to improve quality, handling and storage.”

Changing [FDA produce safety rules](#)

The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently announced the largest produce safety regulation changes in more than 70 years. [Mark Seetin](#), director of regulatory and industry affairs for the U.S. Apple Association, shared how the association is working with the FDA to educate officials on the advanced practices these growers already have in place.

“When it comes to food safety, you can’t really find a more ideal food than apples,” said Seetin. “We’re trying to make the impact [of the new rules] as minimal as possible for producers by trying to seek out reasonable solutions, especially in the case of water quality.”

In addition to water regulations, new rules address worker and health hygiene; equipment, tools, building and sanitation; domesticated and wild animals; and growing, harvesting packing and holding activities.

“Attendees continue to tell us how the Crunch Academy provides industry-exclusive learning opportunities, so we plan to hold the event again in 2017,” says Scott Harker, vice president of sales, North America, AgroFresh.

For more information, visit [AgroFresh.com](#) or contact your local AgroFresh representative.

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About AgroFresh

Based in Philadelphia, Penn., USA, AgroFresh Solutions, Inc. is a global industry leader that offers an innovative portfolio of products and services which enhance the freshness, quality and value of fresh produce and flowers to growers, packers and distributors. Its flagship product is the SmartFreshSM Quality System, a freshness protection technology proven to maintain firmness, texture and appearance of fruits during storage and transport. SmartFresh™ is currently commercialized in over 40

countries worldwide. In 2014, the company generated sales over \$180 million and employs over 150 worldwide. On August 1, 2015 AgroFresh became an independent publicly traded company on the NASDAQ (AGFS/AGFSW) securities exchange. For more information, please visit www.AgroFresh.com.

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