

# McIntosh News

The newsletter of the New England Apple Association

## Association receives grants to complete video project

The New England Apple Association has been awarded Specialty Crop grants totaling \$12,200 to complete a series of short video programs about New England apples. The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources awarded the association \$7,000

### Annual meeting December 15

The annual meeting of the New England Apple Association will be Tuesday, December 15, at 8:30 a.m., on the opening day of the New England Vegetable and Fruit Conference. The event will be held at the Radisson Hotel in Manchester, N.H., December 15-17.

All New England apple orchard owners and employees are invited to attend. The meeting is an opportunity for growers to give feedback to the board of directors and staff, and to learn more about the association's activities.

For more information about the conference, visit [www.newenglandvfc.org/](http://www.newenglandvfc.org/).



Chuck and Diane Souther of Apple Hill Farm, Concord, New Hampshire were interviewed in October for a video program on New England apple varieties.

for the project, with \$5,200 from New Hampshire's Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food.

With the funds, a team of videographer John Browne, Russell Powell, executive director of the association, and Bar Weeks visited Apple Hill Farm in Concord, New Hampshire, in late October to videotape owners Chuck and Diane Souther about the apple varieties available in their farmstand. The footage will be combined with similar shots taken in October 2008 at Rogers Orchards in Southington, Connecticut, to create a program describing many of the apple varieties grown in New England. The varieties program should be completed by January 2010.

Plans are to videotape at Carlson

*Continued on page 10*



## New England Apple Association

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Chuck Souther  
Apple Hill Farm, Concord, New Hampshire

Executive Director  
Russell Powell

McIntosh News is published by the New England Apple Association and distributed free to grower members and affiliates throughout New England. The New England Apple Association is a nonprofit, grower-funded organization charged with raising awareness of apple varieties grown in New England.

For information regarding membership, editorial submissions or advertising, please contact us at:

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413-247-9966  
info@newenglandapples.org

[www.newenglandapples.org](http://www.newenglandapples.org)

## Orchard Run

from the executive director

## Our most talented team

I'm now in my 13th year with the New England Apple Association—more than a decade as its executive director—and as you see on these pages, it may be the most exciting yet. Our best year ever at the Big E. Two new grants to enable us to complete a dynamic video project about apple growing, harvesting, and processing. An Internet website that is already strong and continues to get better—and attracts more traffic—every month.

And the most talented team of communication professionals working on your behalf than ever before:

**John Browne** is our videographer and editor for the video project. As many of you know, John has been a video producer for more than two decades, and he continues to produce educational programming for WGBH-TV in Boston. His work in video is first-rate. What you may not know is that John is also a very talented furniture builder, guitar maker, and musician. The music on the pick-your-own video (<http://www.newenglandapples.org/index.php?id=51>) was not only composed and performed by John, he also made the acoustic guitar on which it was played! By the way, that's John's voice narrating the piece as well.

**Bar Weeks** joined the association this past summer, and has had an immediate impact. She comes from apple country—

**Visitors to  
[www.newenglandapples.org](http://www.newenglandapples.org)  
have multiple paths back to  
your website.**

Cheshire, Connecticut—and has lived in southern Maine, central New Hampshire and eastern Massachusetts as well. She knows and loves New England and its apple orchards.

Bar did an outstanding job managing our booth at the Big E—no easy task, especially for a newcomer. For the person managing the booth, the pace is relentless: 17 consecutive 16-hour days. I know that many of you were keeping a similar schedule, especially during the fair, at the peak of the fresh harvest. But hopefully you can take some comfort in knowing that Bar was working equally hard during that time.

Before the fair ended, Bar learned of the passing of her brother-in-law, to cancer. The sad news did not prevent her from fulfilling her task, however, and she managed the unusual feat of keeping costs down while revenue went up. She is already think-

This photograph of a Spigold apple by Bar Weeks appears in the 2010 New England Apples calendar.



ing ahead about how she can make improvements to the booth for next year. By the way, she can credit some of her stamina to her experience as a backpacker—in 2008 she “thru-hiked” the entire length of the Appalachian Trail, 2,176 miles from Georgia to Maine.

Bar is also a terrific photographer, and her photos will grace our 2010 New England Apples calendar (see back page), as well as the website. She’s also a writer, and her subject is cooking in this newsletter. Her versatility, dedication, and creativity have added greatly to our efforts, and will be felt to an ever greater degree in the months ahead.

**Kevin Russell** is the person who manages the infrastructure of the website. He is unusual in at least two respects: he is very reliable, and he brings a positive attitude to his work. In the world of web designers, these qualities are often lacking. Web technicians often either fail to deliver their services on time because they overcommit, don’t know how to estimate a job or manage their time, or tell you that “it can’t be done” whenever you ask them to try something new or outside the box.

Kevin is prompt returning emails and phone calls, and he seeks solutions to the website’s editorial needs. Kevin’s firm, Right Angle ([www.rightangleinc.com](http://www.rightangleinc.com)), developed the interactive database that member orchards use to create their own listings. Right Angle also added expanded search features this summer, which allow visi-

tors to find an orchard by location, apple variety, or farm product. These expanded searches make it even more important that orchards keep their listings up to date, so consumers can find the apples and products they sell.

While we are the only agricultural client of Right Angle, much of their work has been around environmental issues, so he is a natural to help guide the website of our region’s apple industry.

The website continues to evolve as a marketing tool for all growers, large and small. John’s videos appear there, as well as Bar’s photographs, and you will see more of their work in 2010. Behind the scenes, Kevin is working to improve our Search Engine Optimization (SEO), to ensure that people can find our site quickly using a large number of key words and phrases. Once on the site, visitors not only have access to a wide range of beautiful images and practical information about New England apples, they have multiple paths back to your own websites.

You can help improve our SEO, and in the process get more people to your own sites, by simply adding a link from your website to the association’s ([www.newenglandapples.org](http://www.newenglandapples.org)). They will be mutually reinforcing. If you are unsure about how to add the link, Kevin or Bar can help. Just give us a call at 413-247-9966, or email Bar at [bar@newenglandapples.org](mailto:bar@newenglandapples.org).

—Russell Powell

# Raising awareness of juvenile diabetes

For the second year, the New England Apple Association partnered with the Juvenile Diabetes Research

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Foundation to provide apples to volunteers participating in fundraising and awareness walks throughout the region. The goal is to help promote healthy eating and support the efforts of the foundation to improve understanding and treatment of what in recent years has become a major public health problem.

Member orchards **Apple Hill Farm** of Concord, New Hampshire; **Carlson Orchards** of Harvard, Massachusetts; **Hill Orchards** of Johnston, Rhode Island; **Holmberg Orchards** of Gales Ferry, Connecticut; **McDougal Orchards** of Springvale, Maine; **Rogers Orchards** of Southington, Connecticut; and **Tougas Family Farms** of Northborough, Massachusetts supplied apples to ten events in September and October, in New Haven, Niantic, and Norwalk, Connecticut; Portland, Maine; Boston and Worcester, Massachusetts; Concord, Exeter, and Manchester, New Hampshire; and Providence, Rhode Island.

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# 'Big E' better than ever

The New England Apple Association had its biggest year ever at the Eastern States Exposition ("The Big E") in September. Visitors to the association's booth in the Massachusetts Building received free recipe cards, a McIntosh apple pin, a list of pick-your-own orchards, and the "New England Apples" brochure/poster.

The Big E, the largest fair in New England, drew 1,260,487 visitors during its 17-day run September 18 through October 4, an all-time record.

This was the seventh year the association has sold apple products and handed out promotional items in the Massachusetts Building. Bar Weeks managed the New England Apple Growers booth, which featured items from a number of Massachusetts orchards and businesses:

Many varieties of fresh apples from **Atkins Farm**, Amherst; **Breezlands Orchards**, Warren; **Carlson Orchards**, Harvard; **Cold Spring Orchard**, Belchertown; and **Dowse Orchards**, Sherborn.

Cider was supplied by **Carlson Orchards**; apple pies from **Cook's Orchard**, Brimfield; cider doughnuts from **Atkins Farms**; and apple crisp and apple pie pockets by **Dimitria Delights**, Grafton.



This Big E customer does a good job handling a crunchy Cortland.

## New varieties added to website

Improvements continue to be made to the New England Apple Association Internet website, [www.new-englandapples.org](http://www.new-englandapples.org), with new photographs and descriptions of more than 40 apple varieties grown in the region added since September. Visitors to the photo gallery can click on the image of any pictured apple to learn about its characteristics and history.

New images will be added to the photo gallery throughout the year and into next season.

Next up: a revamped recipe section.

Member orchards can play a role in enhancing the association's website's Search Engine Optimization (SEO), by adding its link to their websites. This will direct more users to the site, and in turn drive them to the web pages of individual orchards. If you need assistance, contact Bar Weeks at [bar@newenglandapples.org](mailto:bar@newenglandapples.org) or 413-247-9966.

Traffic to the new website continues to grow since it was launched in September 2008. This fall, visitors to the site more than doubled compared to 2008:

	2008	
	Visitors	Hits
September	3,302	124,126
October	3,784	128,858
November	1,531	22,385
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,617</b>	<b>275,369</b>
	2009	
	Visitors	Hits
September	8,604	144,437
October	5,594	93,155
November	3,673	38,823
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17,871</b>	<b>276,415</b>





# Can you identify them?

*Name all 39 apples in this picture, and win our 2010 New England Apples calendar!*

There are 39 varieties of apples shown in the picture on the left, all grown in New England and harvested this fall. Can you name them? Anyone who correctly identifies all 39 wins a 2010 New England Apples calendar. If no one gets all 39, we'll choose the person with the highest number of correct answers.

Hint: all 39 are pictured in the photo gallery on our website, [www.newenglandapples.org](http://www.newenglandapples.org).

To play:

1. Print out the photo, tape it together, and write your name on it;
2. Write each variety's name on the corresponding apple with a dark felt pen;
3. Send your answers to: New England Apple Association, POB 41, Hatfield, MA 01038.

Entries must be postmarked by Friday, December 18.

The winner or winners will be announced Wednesday, December 23, and the answers will be posted on the website.

# New ways of apple pie-making

By **BAR WEEKS**

Maybe it was the recent death in the family, maybe that we were just three at the table this Thanksgiving, but change was in the air. At least, we felt there was no need to maintain tradition when it came to each and every recipe, apple pie included.

This Thanksgiving we threw out the notion that the perfect apple pie has three of these (McIntosh, typically) and four of those (usually Cortland). Who came up with that anyway? Why confine ourselves when there are so many choices? Actually, that was the most difficult part, deciding on a good combination of sweet and tart, firm and soft.

These were the finalists for our two apple pies:

five Akane, two Northern Spy, and one each of Rhode Island Greening, Esopus Spitzenburg, Jonathan, Baldwin, and Mac (despite our sense of adventure, we couldn't resist the classic New England apple). Our source apples came from orchards in three states: Apple Hill Farm in Concord, New Hampshire, Scott Farm in Dummerston, Vermont, and Breezlands Orchards in Warren, Massachusetts (we loved their Spencers, but kept them for fresh eating).

Were we just lucky, or could we have picked any 12 apples and had such delicious results? We don't know, so we'll just have to keep trying!

In an ongoing effort to make the Thanksgiving pies more nutritious as well as delicious, I stumbled upon a





few easy secret ingredients. To one pie I mixed in a cup of uncooked cranberries, giving each bite extra texture, flavor, and a boost of antioxidant power. It also added a little more color to our dessert plates. This pie was given a crumble topping, much like an apple crisp.

A second change was replacing the sugar in the pies with an equal amount of Splenda, an artificial sweetener. No one could detect the difference. No one was the wiser (same for the pumpkin pie). Even if you stick with sugar, chances are you can use less than most recipes call for. For the applesauce we made this fall, for example, we omitted sugar altogether, and it was outstanding. It's not just about health; too much sugar masks the natural flavors of the apples, and cutting back on it allows more of the wonderful and complex taste of the apples to emerge.

The third and biggest change was the piecrust. We substituted a 50-50 mix of whole-wheat flour and white flour for the usual all-white flour, and an oil/butter combination for straight butter. I'm not going to say it

rolled out smooth and like elastic, but for the improved flavor and nutrition, it won hands-down.

For Christmas, we're adding a new pie to the menu: mincemeat—that is, meat-free, sugar-free mincemeat pie. It will use several apples to substitute for the beef called for in traditional recipes.

So, here's to trying new ways of doing things, even if you're unsure of the results, even if you've seen better times, even if it's a holiday.





***I mixed in a cup of uncooked cranberries, giving each bite extra texture, flavor, and a boost of antioxidant power.***

## **Video on varieties underway**

*Continued from page one*

Orchards in Harvard, Massachusetts, this winter for a program on cider-making. Browne and Powell already have footage for programs on grafting and pruning (with footage from Tougas Family Farm in Northborough, Massachusetts), and the packing house from Sunrise

***As of December 1,  
the pick-your-own program  
had been viewed 5,791 times***

Orchards (in Middlebury, Vermont) taken last winter. At least one other program will be planned.

Four video programs currently are posted on the Internet search engine YouTube and uploaded for viewing

through the home page of the New England Apple Association website, [www.newenglandapples.org](http://www.newenglandapples.org). The videos cover the topics of visiting a pick-your-own orchard and how to make a perfect apple pie in three steps: preparing the filling, making the crust, and assembling the ingredients for baking.

As of December 1, the pick-your-own program had been viewed 5,791 times since it was completed in early August. The apple pie segments, which were added at the beginning of September, have been viewed 774 times.

The video project has been funded to date with grants from the Northeast Farm Credit AgEnhancement program, and the departments of agriculture in Connecticut and Vermont.

***Were we just lucky,  
or could we have  
picked any 12 apples  
and had  
such delicious results?***



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Order your 2010 New England Apples Calendar now! The calendar features 12 stunning images of New England apple varieties, ranging from classics such as the McIntosh to heirlooms like Baldwin to newer up-and-comers like Spigold. Russell Powell, executive director of the association, took the cover close-up image of several apples (above). Bar Weeks took the photographs of the individual apples, harvested from New England orchards this fall.

Each calendar month will include information about the featured variety, plus a recipe using it.

The calendars are available for \$14 apiece, including shipping and handling. Discounts are available for quantities greater than five; for details email us at [Russell@newenglandapples.org](mailto:Russell@newenglandapples.org).

To place your order, send a check for the appropriate amount to:

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Hatfield, MA 01038

Be sure to include a shipping address and a phone number for each calendar ordered. Orders can also be placed via email; send your request to [Bar@newenglandapples.org](mailto:Bar@newenglandapples.org).



Golden Supreme is one of the varieties featured in the 2010 New England Apples calendar.