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SCAN ME

Apple education

Pies, cider and applesauce need different varieties

By S.N. BRIERE
Staff Reporter

sbriere@cortlandstandard.net

Although the pies haven't begun baking at Anderson's Farm Market on Route 281 in Homer, the introduction of apples back into the market is a sure sign that fall isn't too far away.

Although the market and others offer a variety of apples for people to purchase, not every apple is the perfect apple for whatever festive fall food or drink you might be making.

"It depends on your pallet," said Jennifer DeHart, the manager of the bakery at Anderson's.

Some people like really sweet apples, but others love apples that are a little more tart.

That's why apple education is important, she said, and that's why the store usually has a sign indicating how sweet the variety is.

She said many people will use a Granny Smith apple in their pies. However, she said she doesn't like using those.

"In my opinion, a Granny Smith apple doesn't cook down enough," she said.

DeHart said the bakery usually uses Cortland or MacIntosh apples in its pies.



Matt DeHart positions a bin of apples next to one of pears at Anderson's Farm Market on Route 281 in Homer.

Todd R. McAdam/managing editor

"They will hold their shape and have a nice texture in the pie," she said.

For Matt Hollenbeck at Hollenbeck's Cider Mill in Virgil, the tarter and firmer the apple the better it is for baking — the

kinds of apples your grandparents talked about using in their baking recipes.

"Very rarely do the best fresh-eating apples make the best processing/baking/hard cider/sauce apples," Hollenbeck

said in an email. "Anything with a '™' after the name, a punctuation mark in the name, or a cost that is higher than the average classic variety (a 'club' apple) is almost certain to be a bad apple for baking."

"In general, the best available baking apples are older varieties, not that older apples are better baking apples, but that new varieties are bad baking apples" Hollenbeck added.

Hollenbeck said some of the greatest apples for baking are the older varieties like Northern Spys, Gravensteins, Wine-saps, 20 Ounce or Rhode Island Greenings.

"Some of those are almost exclusively processing apples, while some like Northern Spys are excellent for everything from fresh eating to hard cider," he said.

However, DeHart said she really likes Honeycrisp apples for the apple crisp she makes at home. The sweetness of the apple means she can use less sugar, noting she only uses a little to get "the apples juicing."

She also said they're great apples because they're offered for most of the season.

If you're making applesauce you should use a mixture of apples.

"A good applesauce has a variety," she said.

Hollenbeck said a softer, flavorful apple is good for sauces

See APPLE, page 3



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APPLE

continued from page 2



Todd R. McAdam/managing editor

Apple sellers typically sell a number of varieties, which change through the season. Each variety has its strengths and weaknesses depending on whether one wants to eat it, cook it or press it into cider.

and the first that came to his mind were Cortlands and MacIntoshes.

“But almost all early or ‘summer’ apples are good candidates for applesauce,” Hollenbeck said.

Hollenbeck’s, which is also known for its cider, uses less marketable apples to make its cider.

“The fruit that is asymmetrical, too green, too small, too large, etc. fruit that consumers won’t pick to eat fresh, is still safe, healthful and delicious,” Hollenbeck said. “Sweet cider is just a way to help people be able to appreciate those qualities over their aesthetic deficiencies. That’s not to say that varietal selection and blending choices aren’t important or greatly considered, they are, otherwise people wouldn’t have a preference for one mill’s cider over any other.”

However, Hollenbeck said the apples they pick to use in cider or pies at the mill depend on what’s in season.

“While Macs are perfect straight from the tree, not all apples are best right when they are picked,” he said. “For instance, Northern Spys are at their best if left for a few weeks and Ruby Frost shouldn’t be eaten until December.”

Flavor changes with time, even after an apple is picked, Hollenbeck said. “Apples are still alive even after being picked, so sugars and starches continue to be metabolized and the flavor and texture evolve as they sit. We have a pretty standard progression of varieties that we use throughout our season, one variety for the first week or two of pies, a second until mid-November, another for Thanksgiving, and yet another in December and beyond. Our sweet cider follows a similar progression.”

Orchards: a top pick for fun

Apple picking is the quintessential fall activity. From climbing ladders to browsing stalls packed with seasonal goods, there’s fun to be had at any age. Simply grab a basket and start picking. Here are a few apple varieties to look for at your local orchard:

- Cortland
- Empire
- Gala
- Honeycrisp
- Lobo
- McIntosh
- Melba
- Paula red
- Spartan

cious moments you share with family and friends.

Apple everything

There’s no shortage of ways to enjoy freshly picked apples. Before you leave, remember to stop in at the

orchard’s market for a selection of specialty products including apple sauce, cider, donuts and vinegar. Alternatively, you can bring your harvest home for an afternoon of baking pies, crumbles and tarts.

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3 types of DIY costumes anyone can make

Whether you waited until the last minute or simply want to make your own, here are a few ideas for Halloween costumes you can easily create at home.

1. Sandwich board outfits

All you need are two large pieces of cardboard and string to build your sandwich board. Use markers, paint or other craft supplies to turn yourself into:

- A chocolate bar. Use tin foil to mimic the classic wrapper texture.
- A social media post. Choose a funny celebrity tweet or pretend you're a photo on Instagram.

2. Character impersonations

Comb through your closet or borrow pieces from family members to recreate the iconic look of a fictional person. Here are a few options:

- Mario. You'll need a fake mustache, denim overalls, white gloves and a red T-shirt and hat.
- Wednesday Adams. Put on a black dress and wear your wig or hair braided. To nail the look, be sure to smear on white face paint.

3. Balloon creations

If you have a bag of birthday balloons lying around, all it takes is a little creativity and a strong set of lungs to turn yourself into:

- A bunch of grapes. Cover your body in dark blue or purple balloons. Top off the creation with a green hat and scarf to represent the stem and leaves.
- A bubble bath. Use white balloons and accessorize with a bath brush and rubber duck.

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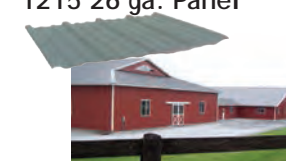
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Family activities for a Halloween at home

If you want to celebrate Halloween with your kids from the comfort of your home, here are a few on-theme activities the whole family will enjoy.

1. Play board games

There's no better time to play games like The Werewolves of Millers Hollow, Cauldron Quest and Ghost Blitz than on Halloween. You can also play monster-themed charades or Pictionary.

2. Sing karaoke

Choose a selection of songs that suit the occasion and belt out the lyrics on your own or as a group. Your playlist can include Monster (Lady Gaga), Zombie (The Cranberries) and Ghostbusters (Ray Parker Jr.).

3. Organize a photo shoot

Make a creepy backdrop and show off your costumes in a makeshift photobooth. Alternatively, you can host a fashion show in your living room.

4. Make a home movie

Recreate scenes from classic Halloween movies like The Nightmare Before Christmas and Hocus Pocus or write your own script. Make sure every-one has the chance to play a fun role.

Once your little mons-ters are in bed, wrap up the evening in your pajamas with a bowl of popcorn and a scary movie.



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The magic OF FALL

Fall in love with the outdoors this autumn

From the golden hue of corn fields to the vibrant red of forest foliage, there's immense beauty to be found in the fall. Are you ready to make the most of the season? Lace up your hiking boots, put on a comfy knit sweater and set out to explore the wilderness.

Breathe in the crisp air and admire the changing scenery as you stroll through local green spaces. Gather your thoughts alone or enjoy the company of family, friends or a pet. If you're feeling adventurous, there are landscapes to discover by bike, car, motorcycle or horseback.

From vineyards and orchards to mountain trails and lakeside parks, there's no shortage of breathtaking backdrops for outdoor activities. Remember to slow down and take your time. Pack a picnic, unwind with a novel, ease your mind with meditation or fill the pages of a sketchbook.

Whether you're a novice or dedicated birdwatcher, be sure to also listen for the signature calls of geese and other migratory species. Watch as they soar far overhead by the hundreds — a hallmark of this transitional season.

By the time you settle in for the evening with a bowl of hearty root vegetable stew or a warm mug of cider, you'll have no doubt that fall is a magical time of the year.



Creamy butternut squash soup

This fall-inspired dish brings together aromatic spices and freshly harvested vegetables. Enjoy it after a stroll through the park or an afternoon raking leaves.

Start to finish: 1 hour (30 minutes active)
Servings: 6

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 butternut squash, peeled, seeded and diced
- 1 potato, peeled and diced
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 1 400-millilitre can coconut milk
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- A few sprigs of chives, chopped

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large pot, melt the butter. Add the onion and cook at medium-high heat until translucent. Add the garlic and cook for another minute. Add the curry and cinnamon, and cook for an additional minute. Salt and pepper generously.
2. Add the squash and potato. Mix until the vegetables are evenly coated in the spice mixture.
3. Add the chicken stock, coconut milk, tomato paste, maple syrup and lemon juice. Bring to a boil, lower the heat and let simmer for 20 to 30 minutes.
4. Use a hand blender to purée the soup. Add salt and pepper to taste. Garnish with chives.



MAKE IT VEGAN!

For a plant-based version of this soup, replace the butter with olive oil and use vegetable broth instead of chicken stock.





Eye on HUNTING

September 26 is National Hunting and Fishing Day

Hunting waterfowl: a brief guide to decoys

When it comes to hunting waterfowl, setting up the right decoy spread is crucial to your success. Here's what you need to know about luring in snow geese, Canada geese and ducks.

Snow geese

Since these birds tend to move in flocks of hundreds, you'll need to set upward of 1,000 decoys to attract them. If you're relying solely on full body decoys, however, about 200 to 400 should suffice to create a realistic setup.

Canada geese

Early in the season, about 20 to 30 decoys dispersed in groups of five to seven is enough. Once these birds be-

gin to migrate, however, their flocks increase in size and you'll need closer to 120 decoys. Toward the end of the season, reduce the number of decoys and opt for lifelike, full body options.

Ducks

When you hunt ducks, the appropriate number of decoys depends on the body of water where you're set up. A more expansive area will require a larger decoy spread to look realistic. For example, a dozen decoys will suffice for a pond, but you'll need several dozen on a large lake.

Remember to check for changes to your regional hunting regulations before the start of each season.

How to share the forest safely with others

Hunting is a popular activity that primarily takes place on public land. Since game within this territory is a collective resource that must be shared, there are certain rules you must respect.

First, it should be noted that your right to hunt doesn't give you priority access or exclusive use of public territory. It's also prohibited to infringe on the right of others to hunt legally. To ensure courteous collaboration and ethical conduct among hunters, you must:

- Respect the right of other hunters to access legal hunting sites
- Refrain from damaging a hunter's lookout or blind

- Never purposefully disrupt someone else's legal hunt

- Leave the bait, lures and traps set by other hunters intact

- Move around discreetly to avoid frightening nearby animals

- Wear a fluorescent orange garment that's visible at all times

If you wish to hunt on private property, you must first be granted access by the property owner. To ensure there isn't a miscommunication, it's advisable to request written authorization.

Finally, remember that you must also share public territory with other outdoor enthusiasts such as hikers and mountain bikers.



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