2023 Predicted Apple Harvest Dates – Northwest Michigan Region

Nikki Rothwell, Erin Lauwers, and Bill Shane, MSU Extension

The information below includes predicted dates for peak harvest. Actual harvest dates may begin before and extend after these dates, and it is likely to vary based on specific location and conditions. This information is intended to be used by commercial growers to start planning harvest management. Interpretation is necessary for marketing purposes and fruit may be available in retail locations at different times.

The predicted harvest dates for all Michigan State University Enviroweather Stations are now available online and can be determined using the Apple Maturity Model on the Enviroweather Website. These models for McIntosh, Jonathan, and Red Delicious calculate predict harvest dates based on full bloom date and the temperatures in the 30 days after bloom.

Most varieties are predicted to harvest one to several days earlier than normal. Harvest dates may need to be adjusted as we get closer to harvest.

Crop load is very good in most locations. In general, return bloom was good in most varieties and most locations. Gala crop load is moderate to heavy across the region. Honeycrisp crop load is somewhat variable across the state. Blocks with light croploads will mature 3 or 4 days sooner than the predicted harvest dates while heavy crop loads will mature 7 days later than the predicted dates.

Conditions during August and September will also affect harvest dates. If hot stressful weather occurs in August or September, apple maturity will be advanced, especially in early to mid-ripening cultivars.

Stop-drop materials. ReTain application should be applied 30 DBH (days before harvest). Harvista can be applied 3 to 7 DBH. Use Table 3, 2023 Predicted Harvest Dates for Other Varieties, to time ReTain applications and adjust for varieties and locations.

The tables below list the normal and predicted harvest dates for varieties across the state. Table 1 lists the predicted harvest dates for locations across the state of Michigan for 2023. Table 2 lists this year's predictions compared to normal and last year. Table 3 lists the normal harvest dates for other varieties for the Northwest Michigan area based on weather data from the Northwest Michigan Horticulture Research Center in Leeland County. This year's predicted dates for other non-modeled varieties are an estimate based on the McIntosh, Jonathan, and Red Delicious predicted dates and historical experience in the area.

Table 1. 2023 Full bloom dates and predicted peak harvest dates

Station	Full bloom date 2023			Predicted harvest date 2023			
	McIntosh	**Jons**	**Reds**	**McIntosh**	**Jons**	**Reds**	**Observer**
SWMREC	4-May	5-May	7-May	4-Sep	18-Sep	27-Sep	Shane
Deerfield*	5-May	7-May	5-May	6-Sep	26-Sep	2-Oct	N/A*
Romeo*	11-May	12-May	13-May	11-Sep	2-Oct	10-Oct	N/A*
Sparta	7-May	8-May	8-May	7-Sep	27-Sep	3-Oct	Brown
Hart	13-May	15-May	16-May	13-Sep	7-Oct	12-Oct	Lavely
NWMHRS	14-May	18-May	20-May	14-Sep	4-Oct	9-Oct	Rothwell

Dates indicated by model, not by actual observation.

Table 2. 2023 predicted peak harvest dates compared to normal and last year.

Station	Days –/+ normal*			Days -/+ last year*		
	McIntosh	Jons	Reds	McIntosh	Jons	Reds
SWMREC	-6	-4	-1	-4	-3	-2
*Deerfield**	*-4*	*5*	*-6*	*-1*	*3*	*3*
*Romeo**	*-2*	*7*	*7*	*-2*	*5*	*6*
Sparta	-9	1	-4	-5	-2	0
Hart*	-3	4	2	0	8	7
NWMHRS	-8	-2	-8	-3	1	0

Dates indicated by model, not by actual observation

* - is earlier, + is later than normal*

Variety	Predicted
Paulared	26-Aug
Zestar	26-Aug
Gingergold	28-Aug
Gala	12-Sep
McIntosh	14-Sep
Honeycrisp	23-Sep
Empire	1-Oct
Jonathan	4-Oct
Jonagold	5-Oct
Fuji	9-Oct
Golden Delicious	10-Oct
Red Delicious	9-Oct
Idared	16-Oct
Rome	16-Oct
Braeburn	1-Nov
Goldrush	8-Nov

Dates in this table were determined from average observations by industry members in the region.