



Join the CLUB

Some of the managed varieties available today.



KANZI

Origin: Kanzi, which is the brand name for Nicoter, is a cross of Gala and Braeburn developed in Belgium.

Characteristics: The variety is productive. The fruit has uniform size and shape, but there are reports of internal browning in storage.

Management: Kanzi is managed by Greenstar Kanzi Europe (GKE) headquartered in Belgium. Urs Luder, chief executive officer of GKE, said the commercialization strategy allows for local and regional production.



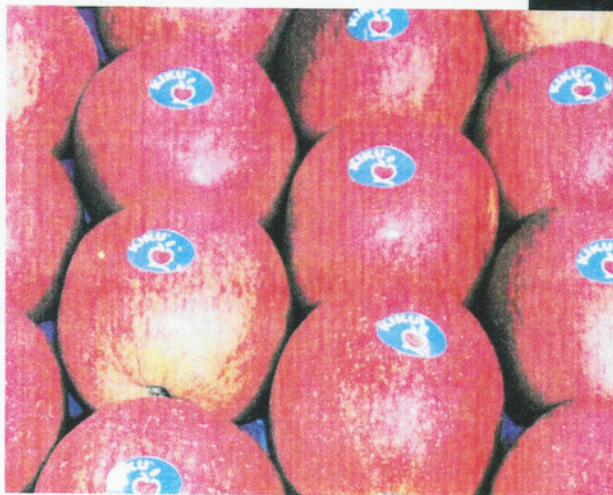
KIKU

Origin: A limb mutation of Fuji apple discovered in Japan.

Characteristics: The fruit has very high sugar levels.

Management: The variety is managed by Kiku in Italy and is available from 124 nurseries around the world. Growers and marketers don't have to join the marketing system if they sell the fruit as Fuji. To use the Kiku brand name, however, they must join the Kiku organization, which has strict fruit quality requirements.

Jürgen Braun, Kiku's CEO, said the organization wants to work with the best growers and marketers around the world. Working globally has benefits for all parties in the supply chain, and creates an 11-month marketing season.



OPAL

Origin: A cross of Golden Delicious and Topaz from the Czech Republic.

Characteristics: The variety is resistant to scab, tolerant of mildew, and crops well. The fruit has exceptionally high soluble solids.

Management: Michael Weber of Webfruit in Germany said the variety is being managed by a new company called Fruit-Select based in the Czech Republic. Shareholders are: Guy and Thierry Ligonniere in France; Starfruits in France; Rob Koning in The Netherlands; Pavel Voráček in the Czech Republic; David Deimel in Austria; and Weber.

The variety was planted two years ago in trials in 63 orchards around Europe.

Varieties International in Oregon holds the U.S. license for Opal. It is being grown by Broetje Orchards in Washington State and the fruit is marketed by L & M Companies, Inc.

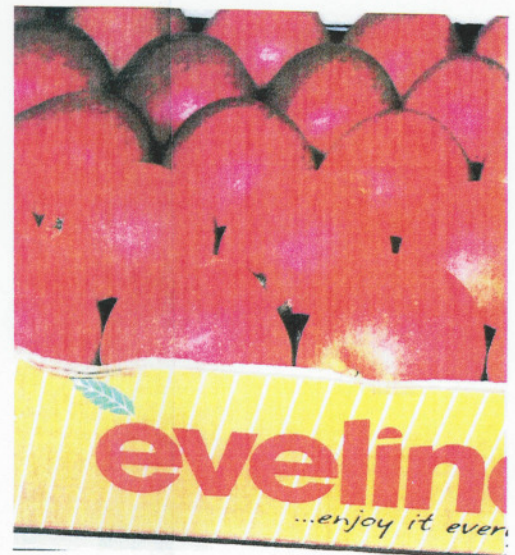
PIÑATA/PINOVA (EVELINA)

Origin: Pinova was bred at the Pillnitz research station at Dresden, Germany. It has had several names, including Corail and Sonata. Stemilt Growers, Inc., Washington, which obtained the North American license in 2003 from the Gevo Nursery Consortium, calls it Piñata. A red strain (ROHO 3615) is known as Evelina in Europe.

Characteristics: The apples are crisp, with a sweet-tart taste, and store well.

Management: Stemilt Growers, which has the production and marketing rights for Canada, the United States, and Mexico, sublicenses the variety to growers in Washington State as well as business partners in New York, Minnesota, and Michigan, reported Dale Goldy with Stemilt Ag Services.

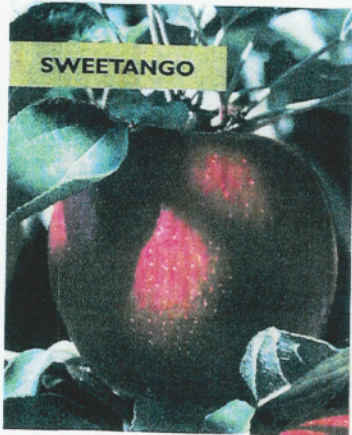
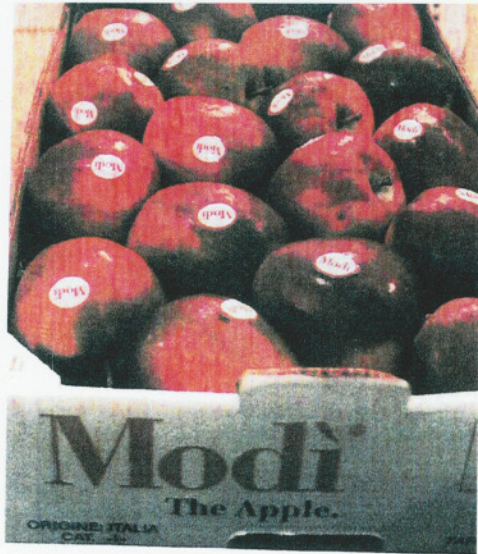
Stemilt leases trees to growers to maintain ownership of the plant material. Growers must agree to use the



trademark and Piñata packaging and to be bound by acreage restrictions. Growers are obligated to revert ownership of any sports and mutations they find back to Stemilt and the variety owners.



COURTESY OF MICHAEL WEBER



COURTESY OF PEPIN HEIGHTS ORCHARDS



Growers and breeders aren't always in agreement as to whether or not club varieties are a good thing for long-term profitability. Some promising club varieties are shown in photographs at left and described below.

Europe. There are test plantings in North America, New Zealand, Chile, and South Africa.

JULIET

Origin: Juliet (Co-op 43) apple was developed at the cooperative Purdue-Rutgers-Illinois breeding program in the United States.

Characteristics: The apple is large and flat, with a subacid flavor, and is scab and mildew resistant.

Management: Benoit Escande Editions (BEE) of Saint Vite, France, has the exclusive rights for this variety and has licensed Cardell Export, a division of the French apple and pear marketing company Pomanjou, as the marketer. Escande said all fruit of the variety must be grown organically, and growers must join the Friends of Juliet Association, which provides technical advice. Children are the target consumers.

A hundred hectares (250 acres) of Juliet have been planted in France. Plantings will increase to 250 hectares (617 acres) by 2011. Trees have also been planted in New Zealand, to provide fruit in the off-season, and there are plans to grow the variety in South Africa, Escande said. He is looking for partners in the United States.

JUNAMI

Origin: This variety (Milwa) was bred at a Swiss research station. It is a cross of Idared x Maigold and Elstar made in 1982. It is sold under the brand names Diwa in Switzerland and Junami in the rest of Europe.

Characteristics: The fruit develops a luminous red color before maturity. It is small and stores well.

Management: In Europe, Junami is managed by Inova Fruit in the Netherlands. The Co-operative Fruitveiling Zuid Limburg in Margraten is the exclusive marketer.

Karel Van der Linden of Inova Fruit said the name Junami is a combination of words meaning "young friend." Target consumers for the variety are aged between 18 and 35.

The variety can be stored until June. Inova Fruit is seeking partners in New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa to lengthen the sales period until September. However, it is not looking for year-round supplies, van der Linden said. "We want to emphasize that it's a currently available product."

The company wants to work with as few partners as possible, rather than many small producers, to reach a large part of the market, he added. ●

By this spring, 219 hectares (540 acres) of Modi will be in the ground. Members will expand their plantings in the next three years.

SWEETANGO

Origin: A cross of Zestar and Honeycrisp from the University of Minnesota.

Characteristics: It has the same texture as Honeycrisp and a sweet flavor.

Management: Pepin Heights Orchard in Lake City, Minnesota, has an exclusive license to commercialize the variety. A cooperative called the Next Big Thing, which has 47 grower members across North America, was formed to manage Sweetango and other varieties. So far, 400,000 trees have been planted. The cooperative has set a limit of 600,000, said Dennis Courtier chief executive officer at Pepin Heights. Fruit will be handled by packing houses in Washington, Minnesota, Michigan, New York, and Nova Scotia.

MAIRAC

Origin: A cross of Gala and Maigold made at a Swiss federal research center. The variety name is La Flamboyante.

Characteristics: The fruit colors easily, has high sugar levels, and stores well. The variety might be prone to alternate bearing.

Management: In Switzerland, the trademark is managed by five Swiss fruit packers, and the variety is protected, but not managed. Since the variety came from a publicly funded program, every Swiss grower has the right to buy trees. Elsewhere in Europe, the trademark is managed by VariCom, whose shareholders protect the variety and license trees, said managing director Michael Weber. About 126,000 trees have been planted in Switzerland and about 85,000 trees have been planted in other parts of



"We feel strongly we need to be able to go to market with a strain and get that clear through the life of that product without having more strains and mutations and so on showing up," Goldy said.

MODI

Origin: Bred by Consorzio Italiano Vivaisti, Ferrara, Italy, which also developed the Rubens apple.

Characteristics: Scab resistant and tolerant of aphids. Fruit may russet in some areas.

Management: Alessio Martinelli, director of CIV, said Rubens is rated highly for taste but requires specific growing areas. CIV regards Modi as more of a global, general-purpose apple and has established Modi Europa, an organization of nurseries,

growers, and marketers, to commercialize the variety. Modi will have global intellectual property protection and brand identity, but production and commercialization will be handled on a regional level, Martinelli said.



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