

Heirloom and cider apple survey results

The Northwest Cider Association recently surveyed cidemakers from the Pacific Northwest and across the country, to better understand the cider apple varieties that are in highest demand, how much volume they are expecting to purchase, and the average price they pay for heirloom and bittersweet apples. The surveys were conducted in January and February 2016, with 54 responses collected. Results were compiled by Emily Ritchie, NWCA Program Manager.



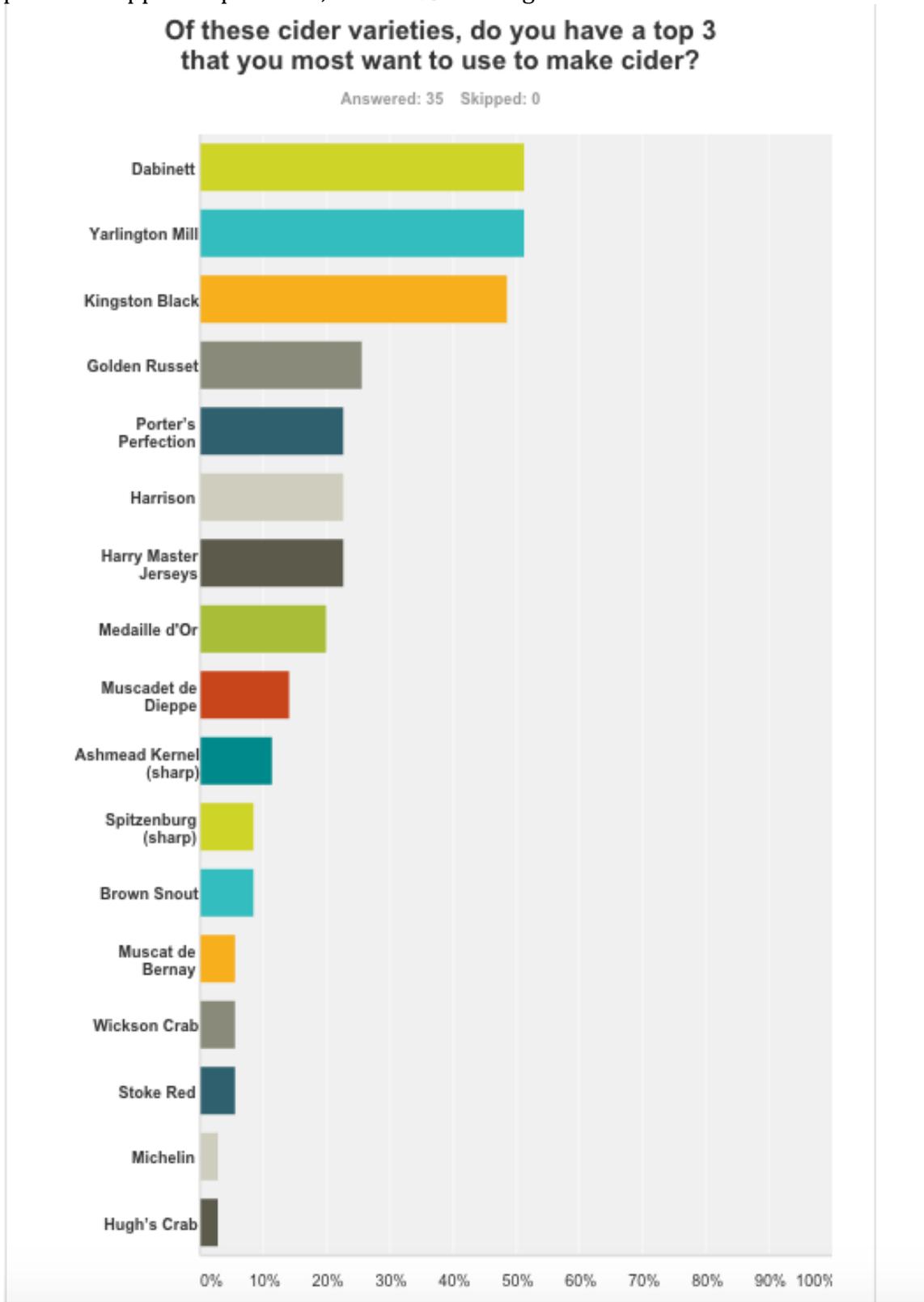
Oregon
Department
of Agriculture

This project has been funded by the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, with advice from Marcus Robert, Cidermaker and Operations Manager for Tieton Cider Works LLC.

APPLE VARIETIES:

What Apples are in the Highest Demand for Cidermakers?

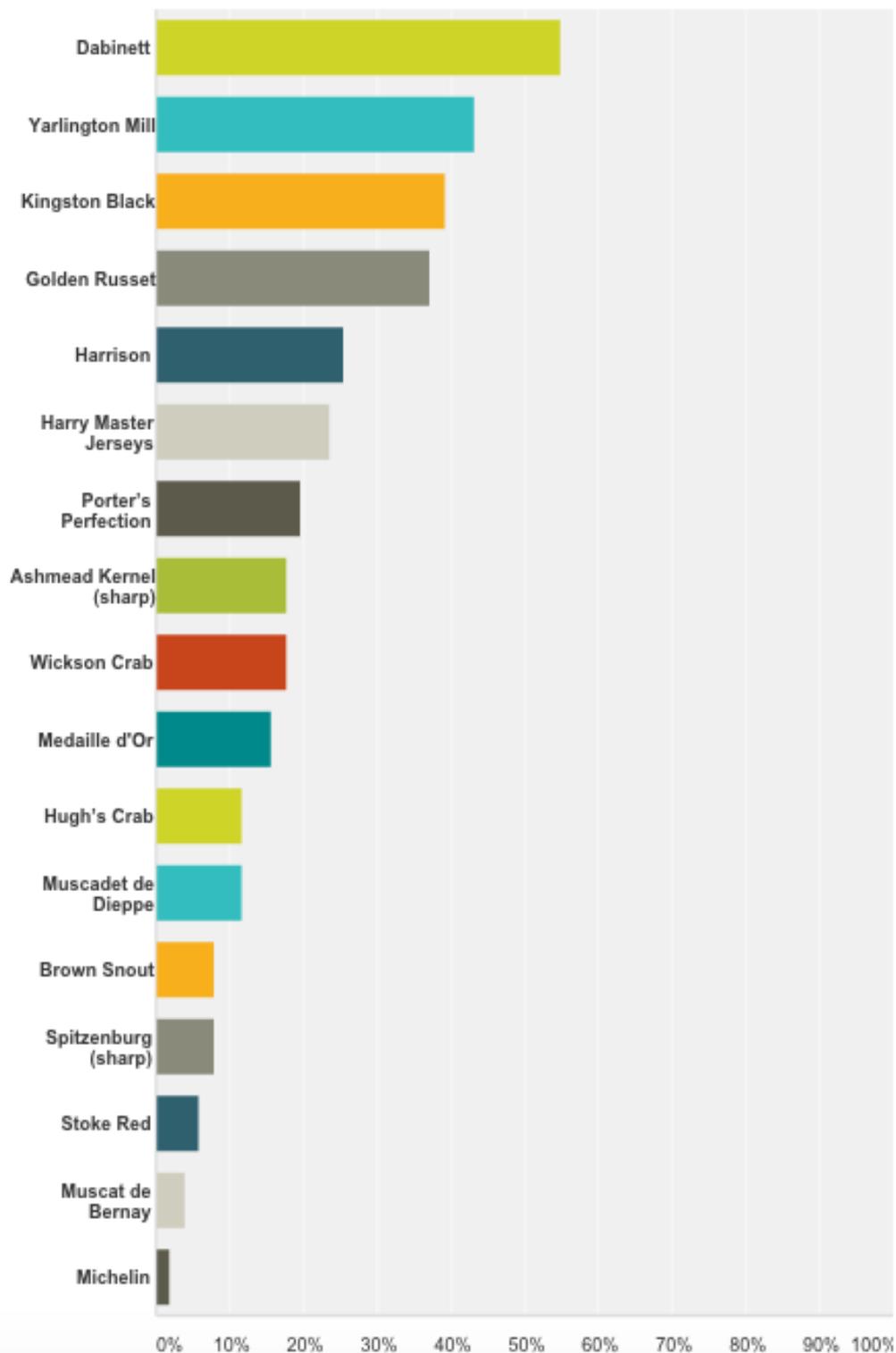
When given a list of 17 commonly grown cider fruit, the 35 respondents from the NWCA, responded Dabinett, Yarlington Mill, Kingston Black, and Golden Russet as their top 4 preferred varieties. Approximately 50% of respondents each listed the top 3 as their preferred apples to purchase, with 27% wanting Golden Russet.



Results from this question, when opened up to nationwide cidemakers, were consistent for the top 3 varieties in highest demand. Variances are slight on the next most highly sought out varieties, the 5th-7th preferred, which are Harrison, Harry Master Jerseys, and Porter's Perfection. Please note "Hugh's Crab" is incorrectly spelled and should be "Hewes."

Of these cider varieties, do you have a top 3 that you most want to use to make cider?

Answered: 51 Skipped: 0



If you're more of a list person, rather than a chart, here is a table with the same information from 51 respondents:

Answer Choices	Responses
▼ Dabinett	54.90% 28
▼ Yarlington Mill	43.14% 22
▼ Kingston Black	39.22% 20
▼ Golden Russet	37.25% 19
▼ Harrison	25.49% 13
▼ Harry Master Jerseys	23.53% 12
▼ Porter's Perfection	19.61% 10
▼ Ashmead Kernel (sharp)	17.65% 9
▼ Wickson Crab	17.65% 9
▼ Medaille d'Or	15.69% 8
▼ Hugh's Crab	11.76% 6
▼ Muscadet de Dieppe	11.76% 6
▼ Brown Snout	7.84% 4
▼ Spitzenburg (sharp)	7.84% 4
▼ Stoke Red	5.88% 3
▼ Muscat de Bernay	3.92% 2
▼ Michelin	1.96% 1

Total Respondents: 51

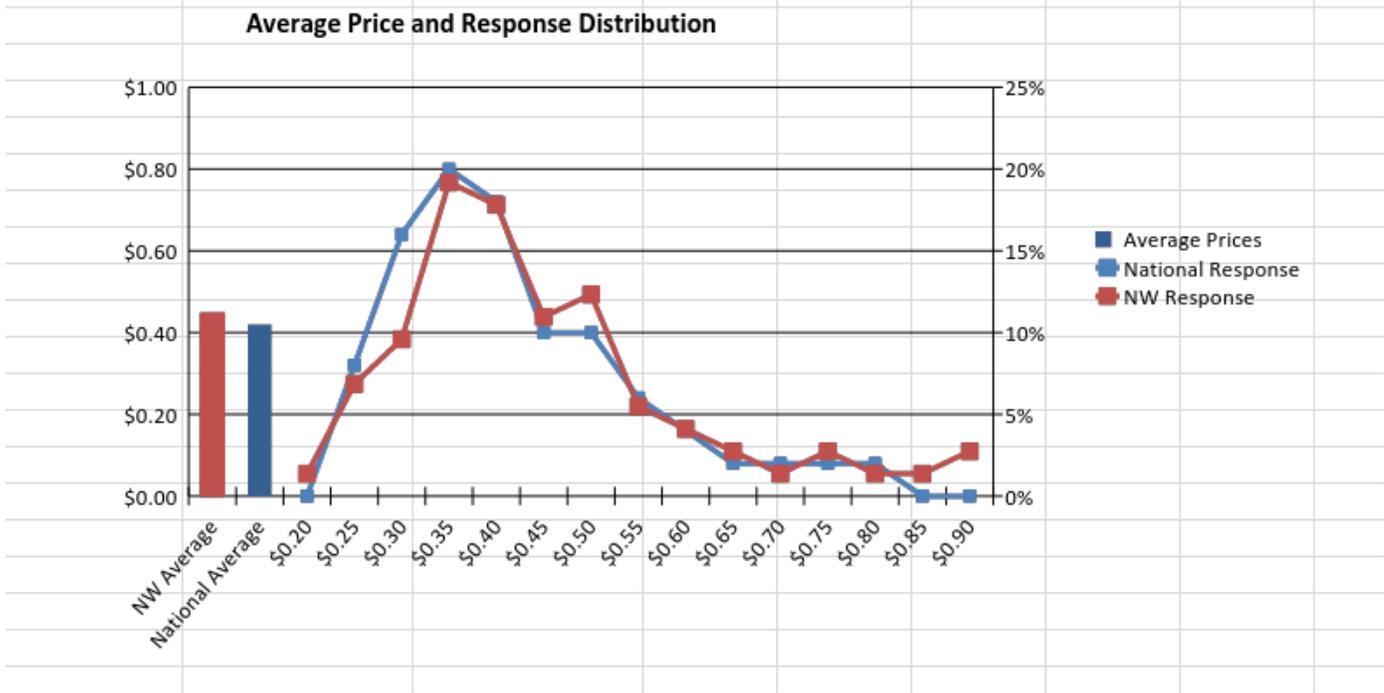
Specialty Varieties:

Secondly, we asked what other varieties are cidermakers looking for which are not on the list? The specific question was: "what other bittersweet or heirloom varieties do you really want growers to consider for you? This was an open-ended question where respondents could fill in the blank. 40 people responded. Each name listed was listed at least once. The "1s" next to the name indicates more than 1 person noting this variety. The list is alphabetical.

→ Newton Pippin (10) is in highest demand, followed by Belle de Boskoop (5), and Macintosh (4).

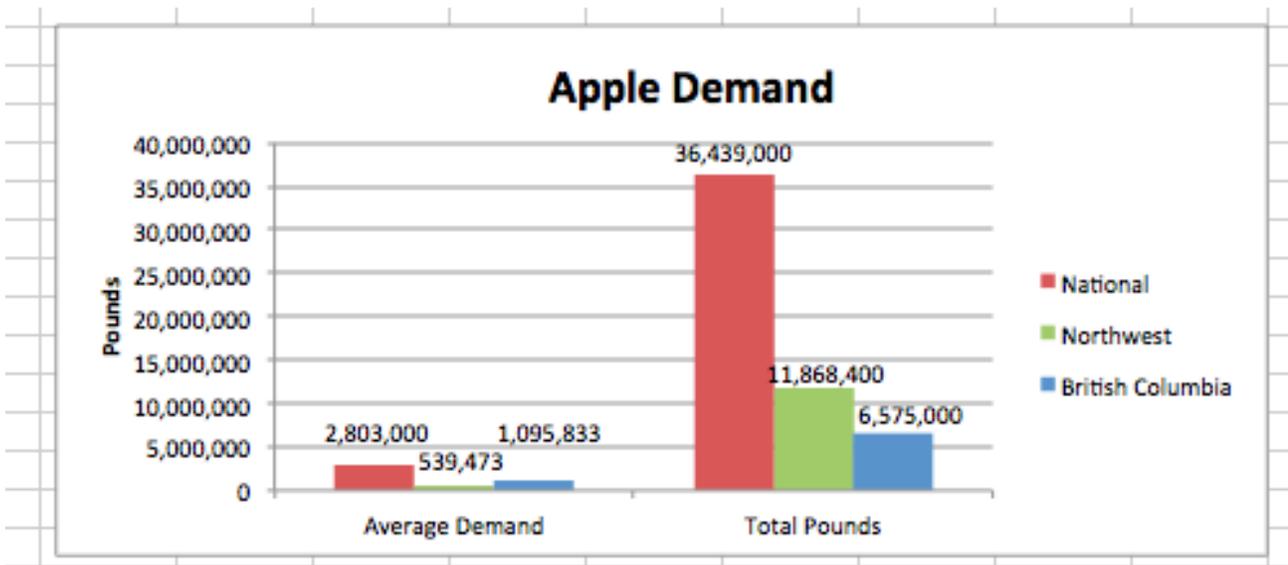
Baldwin1	Douce Moen1	King David1
Bedan Black Twig 111	Doux Normandie11	Liberty 1
Belle de	Foxwhelp111	Macintosh 1111
Boskoop11111	Frequin LaCaille1	Manchurian 1
Bramlens Seedling1	Frequin Rouge1	Nelson County Crab1
Breakwell's Seedling1	Frequin Tardive1	Newton Pippin
Browns Apple1	Geneva1	1111111111
Brown Russet 1	The Girls1	Northern Spy 1
Brown Snout 11	Gravenstein11	Oreleans Reinette1
Campfield1	Grimes Golden1	Peau de Vache1
Cox Orange Pippin 111	Hereford Redstreak1	Porter's Perfection 1
Crab apples11	Hewe's Crab1	Puget Spice 1
Crimson Gold	Hidden Rose 1	Redfield11
Domaine Perry pears1	Jonathan1	Refreshed apples111

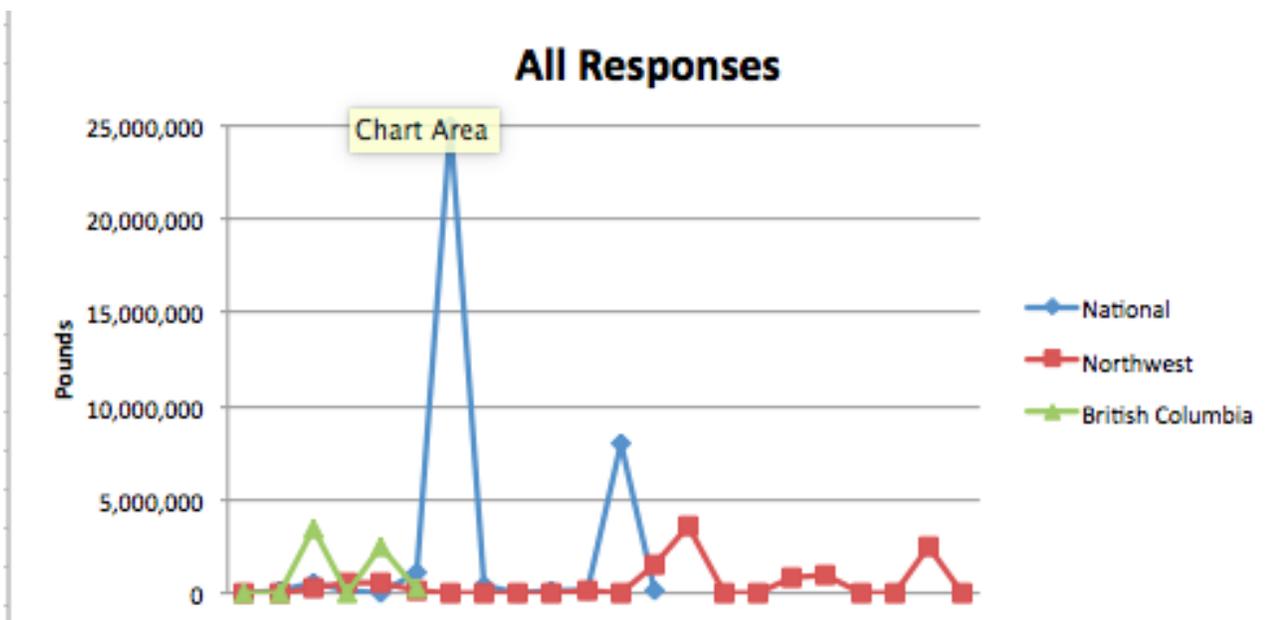
Graph of the results, including 30 responses from NWCA and 15 national responders!



VOLUME

Thirdly, the survey asked respondents about volume: “What volume do you think you will buy in the next 5 years?” Results were averaged and totaled. Results were also separated out by Northwest US respondents, British Columbia respondents (as it is difficult for cidermakers to purchase from the US), and national respondents.





FINAL COMMENTS

Finally, at the end, there were several open-ended comments, noted here.

A couple comments expressed demand for organically grown fruit.

Another, urged farmers to consider mechanical harvesting: “I know I stress this a lot but the only way to create affordable cider fruit is to implement mechanical harvesting. Labor availability and costs are a huge concern across the ag sector, getting orchards and equipment for mechanical harvesting will make cider fruit more affordable in the long run.”

Cidermakers noted they do not generally expect to make cider only from bittersweet fruit right now as it is cost prohibitive and the supply is not available yet, “I typically blend 4-8 varieties into a cider. So an orchard blend of cider apples from bitter sweet to sharp. Then I can label it Orchard run x or what ever. Craft the bottle in the trees.”

Cidermakers are being creative in their purchasing: “We are beginning to work with orchardists in profit-share models, so paying less than market rate up front, but then sharing profits so they end up getting more than market with after-profit dollars. Still in the nascent stages.”

The last comment was regarding the awareness of the difficulty for fruit to cross the US-Canada border: “As a BC cidery with a "land-based license" we are only allowed to buy BC fruit for our cider. It would be extremely helpful if you could share information with BC growers. Thank you!”