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## **Another outstanding crop of New Zealand KORU apples now arriving**

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Officials at Coast to Coast Growers Cooperative, which is comprised of New York Apple Sales in Glenmont, NY, and Starr Ranch Growers in Wenatchee, WA, said that the seventh season of KORU apples from New Zealand is once again an outstanding crop in quality, size and volume. The import program began arriving on both east and west coasts of the United States in April.



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Dan Davis, director of imports and organics for Starr Ranch Growers, said the growing season in New Zealand this year produced a balanced manifest of larger and smaller fruit. “This provides us with a great opportunity for both bulk and bag promotions,” said Davis. “The apples also have a beautiful hue this season, and eating quality is absolutely amazingly.” The KORU’s unique coloring is a natural orange-red over a yellow background.

“During our harvest visits to New Zealand this year we saw the best fruit quality we’ve seen to date,” continued Davis. “Now that the trees have reached maturity they are producing the most outstanding crop we’ve ever taken to market. We’re excited to get this fruit out to consumers so they can enjoy the best apple variety New Zealand has to offer.”

Formed in 2013, Coast to Coast Growers Cooperative shares U.S. growing and marketing rights of both imported and domestically grown KORU apples. The popularity of the apple has grown continually since its introduction to North American consumers, whose feedback includes statements attesting to their love of the variety.

“We are thrilled at the quality of this season’s crop,” said Davis. “The KORUs are living up to the initial reports from New Zealand on all aspects.”

Export volumes from New Zealand increase yearly, along with production volumes. Davis said this season’s crop is estimated at 280,000 40-pound package equivalents.

With New Zealand and U.S. plantings of the KORU apple both reaching maturity, there is now a year-round supply from the two hemispheres.

The KORU was discovered as a chance seedling in a rose garden in Nelson on the South Island of New Zealand.

“It is a natural cross between Braeburn and Fuji varieties, and is incredibly crisp, sweet and naturally delicious,” noted Davis. “The KORU has fruit sugar levels of between 13 and 15 brix, making for a naturally sweet apple treat.”

Kaari Stannard, president and owner of New York Apples Sales, said, “The fresh flavor right off the tree in New Zealand is still at the peak of perfection when the KORU apples are delivered here in the U.S. The apples are picked in March and sold in U.S. markets through September. Domestically-grown KORUs begin in October and are sold in U.S. markets through April.”

KORU apples are grown and picked to specific grade standards. Some growers have done a little extra to clip the stems, which results in less marks and bruises as the apples are packed and shipped. This is all done to give consumers the best eating experience every time.

The KORU’s unique name is from the Māori, meaning loop or coil. Its spiral shape is based on the appearance of a new unfurling silver fern frond. It is an integral symbol in art, carving and tattooing.

“Koru symbolizes life, new growth and peace in the Maori culture,” explained Davis. “For this apple to have been a chance seedling — a true product of Mother Nature — we are really excited to have people learning about all that this piece of New Zealand has to offer.”

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