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Deep roots and innovation abound at Rainier Fruit Co.

September 3, 2020

New crop apple season is finally here, and Rainier Fruit Co. is ready to deliver.

“We started harvesting in early August with conventional and organic Honeycrisp, followed shortly by conventional and organic Galas, and soon to come Fujis, Granny Smiths, Pink Ladys, Lady Alice and more,” said Blake Belknap, vice president of sales for Rainier Fruit.

Weather has been optimal, and Belknap has been very pleased with the crop development and growth this year in high-flavor varieties including Honeycrisp, Jazz, Envy and Cosmic Crisp. “Though each variety has its own unique size profile, the general fruit size is favorable with a nice spread across sizes,” he said. “This will give great flexibility to fill both bulk and bag needs alike.”

As the company gets into the heart of harvest the team is excited to carry over the momentum from its year-round organic program, including the first domestically-grown year-round organic Honeycrisp. “We’re also excited about Envy’s national growth as a top 10 variety and the energy behind Jazz as it captures back to school consumers stocking up on healthy snacking,” said Belknap.

The Rainier family extends from the field to packinghouse and everyone in between.

“To continue providing sustainably-grown and packed fruit, we must always consider the sustainability of our entire operation,” said Belknap, which is why the company has worked hard to achieve Equitable Food Initiative certification for its largest farm of more than 2,300 acres, “We’re the first EFI-certified establishment in Washington State’s Fruit industry to ensure our employees are always treated with integrity and excellence.

“We also cannot produce the best fruit without sustainable growing practices, which is why we are now Bee Better certified,” continued Belknap.

Through Bee Better and the Xerces Society, Rainier is working with specialists to tailor pollinator habitats to each microclimate and orchard to develop and promote healthy pollinator communities, which is critical to the success of fruit crops. “This program is near and dear to our hearts as it represents our commitment to sustainability and being Wholesome to the Core,” he added.

None of this happens without a foundation. Rainier is family-owned and its collective roots stretch deep into the land both literally and figuratively.

“We’re proud to represent such a historical group of families, some of which are fifth and even sixth generation,” said Belknap. “Though the industry has seen much change over the years, Rainier is grateful for the experience that our family provides as we look towards the future.”

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