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Hudson River Fruit expecting high-quality apple crop out of New York

By

Keith Loria

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Hudson River Fruit currently owns and farms more than 450 acres in New York and Vermont.

“We are one of the largest apple shippers on the East Coast, especially out of New York,” said Alisha Albinder Camac, operations manager for the Milton, NY-based company. “We’ve been around since the 1960s and are a fourth-generation family-owned and operated company.”



Hudson River Fruit focuses primarily on apples from New York and represents 70-plus commercial apple growers in New York state and New England.

“We rely on honesty and integrity with establishing strong relationships with our grower partners,” Camac said. “In the produce business, at least with apples, there’s no contracts. It’s just based on trust and faith in your relationship with your grower base and your retail partners.”

The company has had some of its partnerships since the very beginning, which is a testament to its ability to service and deliver, and adapt to the changing times.

“The environment of the category has shifted due to varietal changes and other factors,” Camac said.

“You have your traditional HoneyCrisps and Gala that continue to take up more and more of the market share of apples,” she continued. “And then you have some of the club variety space, which has really left an imprint in the past five years. We’ve seen some of the peak crowdedness in that space over the past few years and some of the varieties didn’t make it on the shelf space and are not reappearing. But SnapDragon and RubyFrost continue to be something the market really wants.”

Thanks to great weather, including plenty of rain and cooler nights as of late, Hudson River Fruit is expecting an abundant apple crop in the upcoming harvest, and foresees great size and quality.

After a year of challenges caused by the pandemic — adapting to meet the supply chain issues and

adjusting to a newer way of doing things with Zoom meetings and other tech advancements — it showed those in the company that they could be successful no matter what the circumstances.

“That’s been exciting and I think a lot of the takeaways have been really beneficial and almost created a new market with at-home delivery so retailers have a new market, and it’s been interesting to see how things have changed throughout the past two years,” Camac said. “And 2021 is looking really good. The high demand that we saw during COVID-19 has definitely stayed. We’re seeing a lot of growth within our retail space which we’re really happy about and hoping that it continues.”

She sees possibilities for growth opportunities ahead, and the company does have plans for some future expansion and storage capacity. Hudson River Fruit has also finished planting a new 25-acre piece of farmland recently, which is starting to come into fruition now and starting to really bear fruit and come into full swing.

“We’re continuing to go with our sustainability initiatives, as well,” Camac added.

“We’re putting in a huge, new, two-acre pond that’s going to help with water supply and leaving a lot of the land as wildlife reserve,” she said.

“We’re just continuing to be stewards of the land and hoping that what we can do is sustainable and that we have the right resources to keep it going.”

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