

Apple scab: Robust cultivars for northern Europe

Problem

Apple scab (*Venturia inaequalis*) is a major problem in organic growing, especially in northern regions where production is smaller, and only a few new cultivars are bred or tested.

Solution

A list of robust cultivars tested for northern regions is expected to help choose the suitable cultivars when establishing an apple orchard.

Benefits

The suitable cultivars will give a high yield of coloured, good tasting cultivars harvested in the period from August to November.

Applicability box

Theme

Crop production, temperate fruits

Keywords

Disease and pest control, disease tolerance

Context

Northern Europe

Application time

Orchard establishment

Required time

From two months to two years

Practical recommendations

- Check information about local cultivars tested at research stations and on established orchards¹. Talk to your retailers.
- Here is a list of cultivars for organic pome production that are suited in northern Europe that can ripen and develop a good taste and nice finish^{4,5}:
 - Earliest ripening cultivars: Nanna, Discovery, Sansa, Red Aroma, Alkmene, Santana, Red Ingrid Marie (Picture1), Holsteiner Cox, Red Topaz, Rubinstep (Pirouette®) (Picture 2), Topaz, Wellant, Red Belle de Boskoop and Bramley. Belle de Boskoop and Bramley are mainly for juice^{4,5}.
 - Recommended pear cultivars for organic production: Anna, Carola, Conference, Concorde (Picture 3) and in the warmest areas also, Xenia and Gräfin Gepa.
- It is important to know which pollinators are needed for the different cultivars, the optimal harvest time, and the optimal selling and storage time for the cultivars^{2,3}.
- Remember that even the cultivars described as scab resistant may develop a scab race that can break down the resistance. Always control apple and pear scab from bud break and at big infections peak in the primary ascospore discharge period.
- Even robust cultivars against apple and pears scab do not significantly reduce the need for treatments. There is always the risk of other diseases, such as sooty blotch.



Picture 1: Apple cultivar Red Ingrid Marie. A Danish cultivar, harvest around 1 st of October, a firm robust high yielding cultivar. Photo: Hanne Lindhard Pedersen, HortiAdvice.



Picture 2: Apple cultivar Rubinstep (Pirouette®). Origin Czech republic, harvest September a high yielding, firm, fine tasting robust cultivar, suited for long storage. Photo: Maya Bojesen, HortiAdvice.



Picture 3: The pear cultivar Concorde is relatively robust and one of northern Europe's best cultivars for organic production. Photo: Maya Bojesen, HortiAdvice.

Further information

Further reading

1. Håndbog for Frugt- og Bæravlere (2022). Hortiadvice. Pp. 192.
2. Korsgaard, M. (2020). Økologisk frugt i haven. Koustrup & co. Pp. 247.
3. Korsgaard, M. and Lindhard Pedersen, H. (2007). Frugt og Bær, Landbrugsforlaget. Pp. 304.

Weblinks

4. Reports (in Danish):
HortiAdvice.dk: [Robust varieties of apples and pears for organic cultivation](#)
Havensfrugt.dk: [List of leaflets on fruit and berry selection](#)
5. [Production instruction on apples and pears](#) on hortiAdvice.dk (in Danish)
- Ecofruit proceedings 2022 for more practical recommendations:
[Testing apple and pear cultivars for organic production in Denmark](#)
[On farm testing of organic apple and pear cultivars](#)
- Check the [Organic Farm Knowledge platform](#) for more practical recommendations.

About this practice abstract

Publisher(s): HortiAdvice
Hvidkærvej 29, 5250 Odense SV, Denmark
+45 23826347, www.hortiAdvice.dk
Author: Hanne Lindhard Pedersen, Maya Bojesen
Contact: Hlp@hortiAdvice.dk



Review: Ambra De Simone (IFOAM Organics Europe), Lauren Dietemann (FiBL)

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