

# Apple varieties suitable for organic cultivation in Latvia

## Problem

Organic apple production faces many disease and pest control challenges. While the use of direct control measures is limited, indirect control, such as the choice of robust cultivars, is pivotal. However, only a few winter-hardy varieties, mainly local breeds, are available in Northern Europe.

## Solution

This practice abstract lists the robust cultivars tolerant to apple scab, powdery mildew, and fire blight that are suitable for the Baltic region.

## Benefits

The use of the recommended robust apple cultivars can help to control the main diseases and contribute to the reduction of plant protection products.

## Practical recommendations

- Check information about local cultivars tested at research stations and established orchards. Talk to your retailers. Ask yourself the following questions to choose a suitable variety for your context of production:
  - Do I want to produce table apples or cider apples?
  - Which palette of varieties regarding the taste do I want to offer?
  - Which harvesting times do I want to cover?
  - Do I want to sell the apples to a retailer or direct marketing? If you want to sell to a retailer, check which varieties they accept before planting. If you want to do direct marketing, consider having a broad palette of varieties covering all taste groups and an extended selling period.
  - Do I have storage capacities?
- Even cultivars described as scab resistant may develop a scab race that can break down the resistance. Always control apple scab<sup>1</sup> from bud break and at big infections peak in the primary ascospore discharge period.
- Even robust cultivars against apple scab do not significantly reduce the need for treatments. There is always the risk of other diseases, such as sooty blotch.
- List of cultivars for organic apple production suited in Latvia:
  - Summer cultivars: Agra, Konfetnoje, Kovaļenkovskoje, Roberts, Pervinka
  - Autumn cultivars: Afrodita, Dace (Picture 1), Gita (Picture 2), Beloruskoje sladkoje, Paulis
  - Winter cultivars: Alesja, Rubin, Edite, Zarja Alatau (Picture 3), Monta (Picture 4)

## Applicability box

### Theme

Crop production, Horticulture, Temperate fruits

### Keywords

Temperate fruits, Disease prevention

### Context

Baltic states

### Application time

Planting of trees best in autumn



**Picture 1: Apple autumn cultivar Dace of Latvian origin.**  
Photo: Fruittechcentre



**Picture 2: Apple autumn cultivar Gita of Latvian origin.**  
Photo: Fruittechcentre



**Picture 3: Apple winter cultivar Zarja Alatau.** Photo: Fruittechcentre



**Picture 4: Apple winter cultivar Monta of Latvian origin.**  
Photo: Fruittechcentre

### Further information

#### Further reading

- E.Rubauskis “No fast solutions in organic gardening” (in Latvian), Journal “Biologiski” 03/2020, Association of Latvian organic agriculture

#### Weblinks

- Latvian Institute of Horticulture, L.Ikase – [Apples for organic gardens](#) (in Latvian)
- Technology Transfer Centre - [list of apple varieties](#) (in Latvian, English)
- 1. [Apple scab \(Venturia inaequalis\): Control strategy for organic pome production.](#) Practice Abstract, BIO-FRUITNET
- Check the [Organic Farm Knowledge](#) platform for more practical recommendations.

### About this practice abstract

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