

This week from Autumn Hills... more peaches, a few plums and...

McIntosh



The **McIntosh** Red cultivar has red and green skin, a tart flavor, and tender white flesh and is traditionally the most popular cultivar in New England.

Every McIntosh apple is descended from a single tree discovered in 1811 by John McIntosh on his farm in Dundela, Ontario. An emigré from New York's Mohawk Valley, McIntosh happened upon several wild apple seedlings growing in the woods on his newly acquired land in Canada. He transplanted some trees to his garden, and by the following year only one had survived with the tree producing the crisp, delicious fruit that everyone is familiar with. For years, he had no luck propagating the variety because apples don't grow true from seed until his son, Allen, learned from a visitor the art of grafting cuttings or scions from the original tree. With this cloning technique at their disposal, production of the McIntosh Red could finally branch out (sorry about the pun!).

The original tree that spawned this legacy was damaged by fire in 1894. The McIntosh family nursed the old tree along until 1908 -- the last year it produced a crop -- and in 1910, it fell over. A headstone now marks the spot where the tree stood for so many years.

Bartlett Pear



Pears ripen OFF the tree. Let them ripen until the area near the stem yields to slight pressure and the color turns a golden yellow.

The **Bartlett Pear** we know today in the U.S. is the same variety that is called the "Williams" in other parts of the world. Discovered in England, by a schoolmaster named Stair, it was later acquired by Mr. Williams who propagated the variety and introduced it throughout England.

In 1799, Williams pear trees were planted in Roxbury. Later, Enoch Bartlett of Dorchester acquired the land and not knowing the identity of the trees, he propagated the variety and distributed it under his own name. It was not until 1828, when new trees arrived from Europe, it was discovered that Bartlett and Williams pears were one and the same. By then it was too late and the variety had become widely popular in the U.S. under its adopted name.