



NORTHERN SPY

Origin	About 20 miles south east of Rochester, New York, about 1840.
Parentage	Unknown.
Availability	November to March or later.
Source	Most commercial nurseries in the Northeast USA and Canada.
Quality	Sprightly acid, aromatic, moderately sweet, very crisp, firm and juicy. Distinctive.

Fruit:

Size	Above medium to large.
Surface	Fairly smooth to moderately ribbed, moderately glossy. Tender skinned and bruises easily.
Ground Colour	Greenish yellow becoming creamy yellow in storage.
Over Colour	Splashed and striped with orange red to red. Red strains have somewhat more over colour but otherwise are not much different and have not displaced the original Northern Spy.
Flesh Colour	Yellowish cream; retains the yellow after processing.
Harvest Season	Early to mid October.

Storage	Stores well, in cold until spring and in Controlled Atmosphere twelve months or more.
Strains	Several have been selected, principally for more over colour but merits have not been sufficiently documented to identify preference for this primarily processing cultivar. Strains with greenish flesh should be avoided.

Tree:

Vigour	Vigourous. The tree eventually becomes quite large, only moderately hardy.
Habit	Narrow upright becoming spreading with successive crops. Tends to have narrow crotch angles and many lateral shoots. Judicious pruning coupled with limb spreading and/or tying down will both develop a productive tree faster and forestall splitting loss of major limbs under a heavy crop load and a storm.
Precocity	Notoriously slow to bear. With size controlling stocks and best training practices this can be shortened considerably.
Fruit Placement	Primarily on spurs and two and three year old shoots.
Bloom Period	Late.
Pollination	In mixed cultivar plantings Spy will usually set well, but in the occasional season mid-season blossoms will be over before Spy is ready. Remedy? Always co-plant another late blooming diploid.
Nutrition	Moderate Nitrogen levels are adequate; too much vigour and low Calcium will lead to bitter pit disorder.
Crop	Once in production yields are usually good. It can become biennial.
Synchrony	Good.
Adaptation	Best adapted to regions somewhat north and east of its origin. Local folklore attributes the Falmouth area as producing the best Spys.
Disease Reaction	Only mildly susceptible to scab, powdery mildew and juniper rust. Somewhat susceptible to the physiological disorder bitter pit. Storage rots should be guarded against often starting as lenticel (Spy) spot.
Insect Reaction	Somewhat susceptible to mites. Spy has genetic resistance to woolly aphids.
Rootstock	Dwarfing stocks both are useful and are not the whole answer. They will reduce the time to bearing but planting large nursery trees, growing and training them well will do so also. Unless supported, Spys on dwarfing stocks will have some trees that break at the union under heavy early cropping.

Comments:

Spy is an old cultivar that has not yet been equalled for processing, at least under Nova Scotia conditions.

