



MEET OUR GROWERS

Sunrise Orchards

GAYS MILLS, WISCONSIN

HISTORY

Sunrise Orchards, Inc. was one of the original apple plantings in the 40-acre Kickapoo Development Company when it was founded in 1913. The family tradition began with Ellery and Grace Teach, who moved Sunrise Orchards to Gays Mills in 1934 and eventually acquired sole ownership in 1956, the same year the second generation—Ellery and Grace’s son, Maynard, and his wife, Janet—joined the operation.

Sunrise is currently managed by third generation Allen and Lynne Teach along with sister and brother-in-law Laurie and Kevin Opprecht.

FAST FACTS



- Location: *Gays Mills, Wisconsin*
- Total Acreage: *225 acres*
- Year Founded: *1913*
- Commodities: *apples*
- Varieties: *Cortland, Empire, Gala, Golden Delicious, Haralson, Honeycrisp, Jonagold, Jonamac, McIntosh, Paula Red and Red Delicious*
- Production Time: *August - January*
- Packing Facility: *Sunrise Orchards*
- Distance from Packing Facility: *On location*

GROWTH

Now into the family's third and fourth generation of farmers, Sunrise Orchards spans approximately 225 acres—almost five times the size of the original Kickapoo orchard. “We grow about 135,000 bushels of apples annually,” says Allen Teach, president of Sunrise Orchards. “We have more than 20 different varieties and employ over 120 workers in peak season.”

SUSTAINABILITY

Because the Gays Mills valley area is prone to floods, Sunrise grows its apples on the sides of the steep hills, safe from the flooding and frost. Smart sprayers compensate for the angles of the hills, drastically reducing the amount of spraying required cutting chemical use by 20-25%.

Sunrise also employs integrated pest management techniques. They are using pheromones - a natural alternative to insecticides that allows greater control over insects. Allen adds, “We believe in “age-old techniques” like walking the orchard every week to visually inspect the fruit and ultimately improve its quality.”

“Another simple thing we do is harvest our entire crop in plastic totes and bins,” Allen says. “The bins are more sanitary, stack easier and give our apples a longer life span – and the bins themselves have a longer life too.” With so much fruit to pack, that's a very good thing.



FUTURE

“Instead of quick growth we're looking for sustainable, incremental growth,” says Allen. “We plant new trees every year on 10% of our acres using high-density systems.”

Using the latest and greatest apple-growing technology, these tactics improve apple varieties and strains. Other recent upgrades include an updated grading line, Greefa color sorter and a stainless-steel water dump for food safety.

In the near future, Sunrise is looking at implementing the defect sorting underway at some Riveridge orchards. “We have a good exchange of ideas with Riveridge as a partner,” says Allen.

Allen believes the orchard's steady annual growth, along with the Riveridge relationship, helps the orchard deliver high quality apples to the local area and beyond.



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