



THE ORTET

Volume Seven

Midwest Apple Improvement Association
Autumn 2021 Newsletter



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Ciderwood Press

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Consultant

Bill Pitts

Consultant

Key to MAIA Releases

Trademark Name	Cultivar Name	Test Name	Parents/Cross	Patent Number
EverCrisp®	MAIA1	MDD5-44	Honeycrisp x Fuji	PP24,579
Rosalee®	MAIA11	MDD5-41	Honeycrisp x Fuji	PP29,146
Summerset®	MAIA12	MDD3-75	Honeycrisp x Fuji	PP29,213
Ludacrisp®	MAIA-L	Juicy Fruit	Honeycrisp, open pollinated	PP30472
Sweet Zinger®	MAIA-Z	MJE 1238	Goldrush x Sweet 16	PP30059
Sweet MAIA®	MAIA-SM	MDD 7-50	Honeycrisp x Winecrisp	Patent Pending

A Message from the Chairman



2021 finds the Midwest Apple Improvement Association with over 1000 members, six released varieties, a playbook of potential releases, a series of elite selections, and seedling plantings to be evaluated. MAIA has distributed scionwood to collaborators around the world. If anyone dreamed of this scenario 20 years ago, they kept it to themselves.

For the first ten years the organization operated on a shoestring as volunteers made crosses and grew out seedlings. The last ten years has involved developing a sustaining business model. I now observe MAIA maturing and entering another generation focused on serving our membership while continuing to develop 21st century varieties.

This business maturation will include investment in a new greenhouse to plant seeds from controlled crosses. Plans are in the works to graft 2nd generation trees as soon as viable buds are available from the seedlings. This will hasten the availability of fruit for evaluation, potentially saving time and investment.

The next generation of varieties released by MAIA will come from 2nd generation plantings that will be planted in Spring 2022. These 10 elite selections will be planted on multiple rootstocks (G11, G41, G935, G969, BUD9, BUD10). Several geographic locations will be used. Past elite evaluations were limited to fruit characteristics from limited rootstocks. MAIA's goal is to have more complete information to share with our members when a new selection is released. Priorities continue to be disease resistance, consistent cropping and mid-season harvest window.

Reality Research, Lyons, NY is partnering with MAIA to help make the above happen. Bill Pitts will be consulting/evaluating for MAIA and bringing his 42 years of experience to the MAIA team.

I believe MAIA can reflect with a bit of pride on the accomplishments, but dare not be complacent. The world moves at a breakneck pace and even the tree planting/fruit growing community is changing at a rate unconceivable a generation ago.

Our customers have come to expect delight at first bite which 19th and 20th century varieties generally fail to deliver. When you meet MAIA founders and early volunteers thank them for the foresight and willingness to forge ahead despite the odds. The selflessness of making superior varieties generally available is a much-needed strategy in the current managed variety world.



David Doud

MAIA Chairman of the Board
Countyline Orchard, Wabash, IN
Photo credit: Ann Hunt

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

2021 MAIA Update

MAIA is doing well and I am pleased to report on our current activities and plans for the future. This issue of the Ortelet includes information on the MAIA team that has been assembled to help our 1,000+ members succeed. Your team is working on the following:

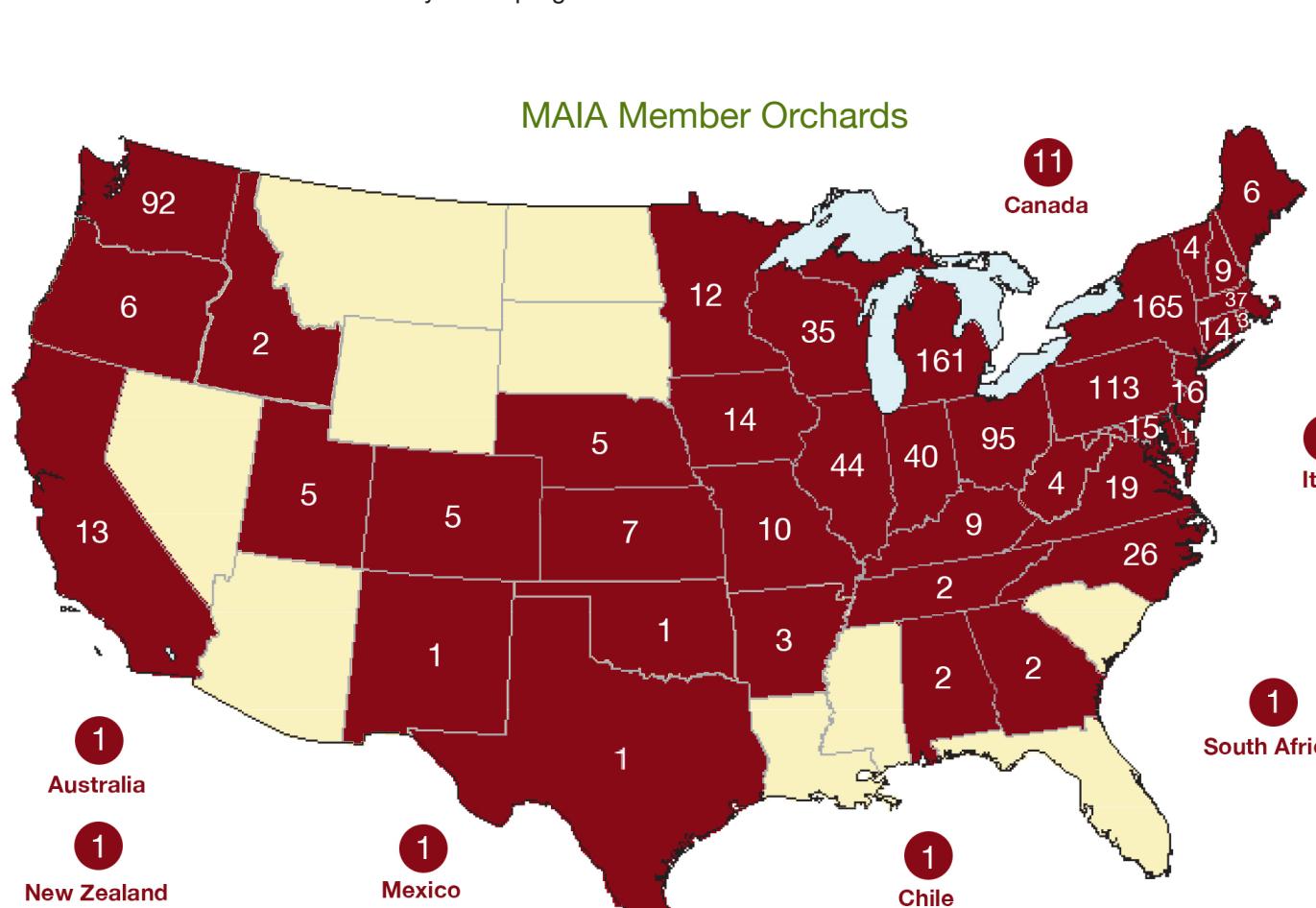
Breeding:

Controlled crosses are made every Spring, seeds are harvested in the Fall and will be planted in the new greenhouse that MAIA has invested in at Reality Research, Lyons, NY. More than 3,000 2nd generation test trees will be planted in 2022 at multiple geographic locations on several different rootstocks. Fourteen selections have been chosen from the seedling blocks as candidates to be patented, named and released. This process is a numbers game and we will be fortunate if 1 or 2 show the superior qualities to justify the investment to move forward. MAIA is also evaluating current selections for use in hard cider. Complex flavored apples that are productive, fire blight resistant, annual bearing and in some cases red fleshed are currently in our program.



Bill Dodd

MAIA President, Hillcrest Orchard, Amherst, OH



Consumer Evaluations:

Selections that have exceptional fruit qualities are compared with other apples (existing varieties or other MAIA selections) to validate whether consumers score them as ridiculously good.

Patent & Trademark:

It takes an entire growing season to collect the information needed to apply for a plant patent. The naming process includes applying for a trademark.

Virus-Free Material:

MAIA has sent material to the Clean Plant Center Northwest in Prosser, WA to be certified virus free. Material is in various stages of evaluation and the hope is to have certified virus free material of all MAIA releases.

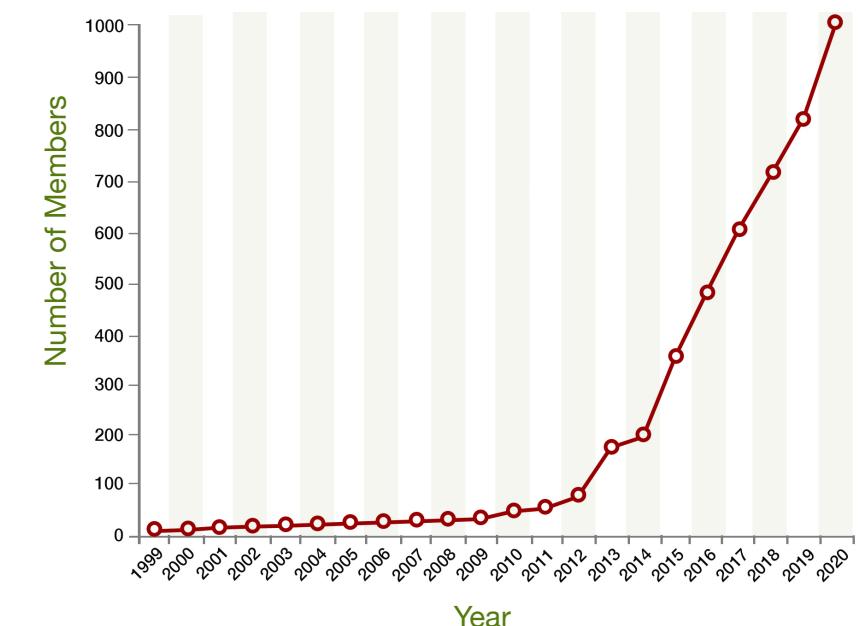
Horticulture:

There are no perfect apples. MAIA is evaluating everything about growing these selections as they are moving through the above process. Growers also contact MAIA about challenges they observe on released varieties and investment is made to work on solving those issues. MAIA has a member Facebook page where growers can compare experiences and discuss successes and failures.

Marketing:

MAIA has the tools to help market MAIA varieties. EverCrisp® PLU labels are available. Variety cards for all the MAIA releases are in stock. "So Crunchy, It's Scary" is a Farm Market promotion for EverCrisp®. Our PR firm can custom design marketing materials for specific accounts. Web pages have been created for all the MAIA varieties and will be updated as production ramps up. EverCrisp® individual apple boxes have been created for customers wishing to provide samples. Plans are in the works to produce 2 oz. packages of EverCrisp® slices for sampling also.

MAIA Membership Growth



MAIA Annual Meeting Reception

Please join us for MAIA's annual reception on February 13, 2022 at the Hershey Golf Club, Picard Grand Pavilion (1000 E Derry Rd, Hershey, PA). All IFTA conference attendees are invited! Continuous bus service starts at 6:45 pm departing from the Hershey Golf Club. Join us for refreshments and light snacks.

International:

MAIA1 testtrees have been planted in several countries. MAIA's Chilean partner has planted 40+ hectares. We expect commercial plantings in other countries soon. Apple Innovations, LLC is a new company that has been formed to manage the EverCrisp® brand internationally.

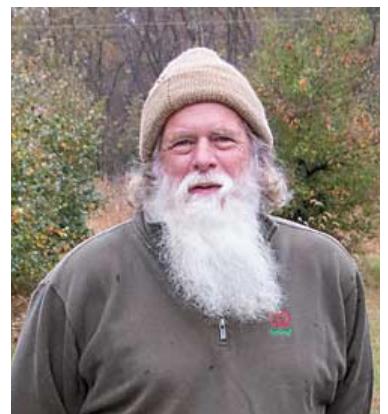
Apple Industry Support:

MAIA is proud to support the International Fruit Tree Association, US Apple Association and many state associations. Check the maiaapples.com calendar to see which meetings MAIA staff will be attending.

MAIA is an inclusive organization. Please contact me at 440.670.2883 or bdodd@maiaapples.com if you would like to get involved with any of the exciting things happening at MAIA!

GET TO KNOW YOUR MAIA Board of Directors

David Doud Roann, Indiana • Chairman of the Board



David Doud is an Indiana native, raised on a family orchard and nursery operation. After completing his B.S. degree in Horticulture at Purdue University he returned to work at his family's business, Doud Orchards for 13 years. In 1988 he and his wife Valerie began their own business venture, Doud's Countyline Orchard. They operate 20 acres of apple, peaches, pears and strawberries. David has been active with MAIA for 25 years and has the original seedling MAIA1 tree, which bears Evercrisp® apples.

David is joined by his wife Valerie, a retired biology teacher, who now handles sales and social media for the orchard. Their two daughters also assist with sales and promotion, in addition to their off-farm careers. David is also active in his community as a long-serving board member of the Roann/Paw Paw Public Library and was active with the Michigan IPM school in the mid-80's that eventually became the Michigan Fruit school in the 1990's.

In his spare time, David is a percussionist with a band called "Acoustic Voodoo," and he enjoys collecting and working with vintage woodworking tools and vintage agriculture equipment as well as collecting Horticulture publications.

David has been a steadfast enthusiast and promoter of the MAIA varieties and an exceptional leader of the MAIA Board of Directors. He is most gracious, as apparent in a recent quote "It has been and remains a great honor to associate with the MAIA apple breeding program. From the start in the heartland, expanding nationally, and now internationally, I've been allowed to associate and interact with growers and professionals of the highest character. I am proud of this breeding program 'for the rest of us.' Thank you to all members, from the most recent to the early contributors of the last 25 years."

Felix Cooper Cincinnati, Ohio • Vice Chairman of the Board

Felix is the CEO of Gardens Alive! Inc. Gardens Alive! is one of the country's largest horticultural businesses with over a dozen direct-to-consumer brands and four serving the wholesale market. Gardens Alive! prides itself on being on the cutting edge of plant breeding by supporting and collaborating with private breeders and plant development groups such as MAIA, as well as through their own breeding division called Wow Genetics. Felix was Mentored by MAIA's co-founder Ed Fackler for over 25 years and attributes the bulk of his horticultural education to this experience and growing up on an organic vegetable farm in rural America. He is married with 2 young children and has a B.A. in Music & Psychology from the University of Louisville. Felix enjoys soccer and travel and is passionate about plant breeding, gardener success, and in providing a 'wow' experience around flowers and edible horticulture.



Allen Grobe Elyria, Ohio • Secretary/Treasurer



Grobe Fruit Farm has been operating for 116 years, and Allen and his sons Brett and Keith are 5th and 6th generation orchardists, respectively. Allen and his family operate 800 acres of fruit, vegetables and grain crops in North Central Ohio, just west of Cleveland. Their diversified operation operates 3 farm markets, a commercial apple packing line, and a commercial cider operation, which supplies many local farm markets and grocery stores.

Allen earned his degree in Fruit and Vegetable production from Michigan State University in 1990. In addition to MAIA, he is a member and serves on the board of the Ohio Fruit Growers Marketing Association and has been appointed to the FSA (Farm Service Agency) Board in Lorain County Ohio. He enjoys the outdoors, especially hunting and fishing.

Tom DeMarree Williamson, New York • Board Member



Tom is the President of Donald DeMarree Fruit Farm, Inc. that includes 200 acres of apples. He has 45 years of experience growing fruit including cherries, peaches, pears, plums, and raspberries. He is a 2nd generation fruit grower. Tom started in the family business out of High School and is joined by his wife Alison and their daughter Kristen, who has a doctorate in Physical Therapy and plans to be the next generation to manage the family business. Tom and his wife have 2 other daughters that are married and live in Virginia and Tennessee.

Tom enjoys camping and is very active in his community. He has been a Volunteer Fire Fighter and is involved with the Pultneyville Reformed Church, NY Apple Association, Williamson Town Planning, and has been a Board member for IFTA and Wayne Co IPM Cooperative. Tom says "I have learned a lot by participating in IFTA events and conferences over the past 40 years. We have made many friends across North America and around the world through IFTA. It has been an invaluable organization for our business and has helped us to make our farm what it is today."

Chris Eckert Belleville, Illinois • Board Member



Chris is the President of Eckert's Inc., a 600-acre fruit and vegetable operation that includes a Farm Market, Pick-your-Own, Wholesale sales and a restaurant. Chris grew up as the 7th generation on his family farm and always wanted to work in the business. After graduating from University of Illinois with a degree in Agriculture Economics in 1994 he spent a year in Boston as an apple buyer for Shaw's Supermarkets and then worked as a Production Manager for a salad processing plant in Columbus OH before returning to the Eckert farm.

Eckert's is truly a family operation. Chris works with his wife Angie (retail operations) and two sisters (HR and restaurant). His cousin Jim is retired but works seasonally. His son, daughter, and retired parents (Larry and Judy) also help as needed. Chris loves food and wine, serves on his local Hospital Board, is a former board member and Treasurer of the North American Raspberry Blackberry Association, and is former President of the National Peach Council and Illinois Horticulture Society.

David Hull Canfield, Ohio • Board Member



David is a 3rd generation fruit grower. David and his sister Debbie Pifer operate White House Fruit Farm, just southwest of Youngstown Ohio. The family has been farming 200 acres since 1815. Apples are their signature crop, but they also grow strawberries, blueberries, peaches, nectarines, sweet corn, asparagus, tomatoes, peppers, squash, onions, cucumbers, eggplant, and pumpkins! They also operate a year-round farm market that offers their produce as well as donuts, sliced-to-order deli, homemade fudge, specialty foods, and freshly pressed apple cider.

David graduated from the Ohio State University in 1983 with a B.S. in Agricultural Science.

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David's wife Christine and 2 adult children, Lauren and Scott, are also involved in the family operation. David is also serving his third term on the Board of GreenStar Cooperative, which wholesales specialty and unique food products for retail and farm markets.

Andy Lynd



Pataskala, Ohio • Board Member

Andy Lynd is a 4th generation orchardist and co-owner of Lynd Fruit Farm in Pataskala, Ohio, just east of Columbus. They operate 400 acres—primarily apples with some peaches, berries and Asian pears.

Andy grew up doing all manner of work around the orchard and earned a B.S. in Agricultural Economics from the Ohio State University in 1986. Since then, he has been full-time at the farm, joined by his wife Debbie. They have 8 children, and his son Noah and son-in-law Cody also work full-time at Lynds. Retail is the primary marketing strategy for the farm through a market and U-pick operation. Andy is an early-American history buff and enjoys woodworking. He also lends his talents as a scoreboard operator for the Granville Christian Lions basketball team and serves as a deacon at his church in Alexandria.

Daniel (Dano) Simmons, Jr. Cincinnati, Ohio • Board Member

Dano Simmons is a 3rd generation apple grower and President of Peace Valley Orchards, a 288-acre farm in the rolling hills of Eastern Ohio. Peace Valley is no stranger to new apple varieties as it is the origin of several patented varieties- Lawspur Rome®, Starkspur Rome®, Buckeye Gala®, Dandee Red® and Golden Glory®. These are all superior strains found as mutations in their orchard. Dano operates the orchard and farm market, including a bakery, with his wife Peggy, brother Paul, and two sisters Carol and Ginny. He has 3 grown children and several grandchildren.

Dano received his B.S. in Horticulture from the Ohio State University in 1979 and enjoys hunting, fishing, golf, firearms, and traveling.



GET TO KNOW YOUR MAIA Staff Members

Bill Dodd



Henrietta, Ohio • President

Bill is a Charter member of MAIA and has been the President of the organization since 2009. Bill managed the Ohio Fruit Growers Marketing Association (FGMA) from 2004-2018. FGMA is a grower owned cooperative that markets apples and cider.

Bill was raised on a family fruit orchard (Hillcrest Orchards) in Northern Ohio and earned a business degree from Findlay College. He briefly worked for Ford Motor Credit after college and then returned to his family farm in 1983. He has grown the business from a small farm market and wholesale packing line to a huge Agritainment operation that sees thousands of fall visitors a week and includes a wedding venue managed by his wife Diane.

Bill was Chair of the USAApple Association in 2013, American Fruit Grower magazine's Fruit Grower of the Year in 2015, and served on the IFTA board of Directors for many years.

Bill and his wife love to travel and visit other farm operations. They have 3 married children (5 grandchildren) that all live adjacent to the farm and are involved in the business.

Chip Wigton

Oberlin, Ohio • Senior Vice President



Chip has been with MAIA for 3 years and handles the MAIA Membership records, tree and grafting purchases, license agreements, the MAIA Website, MAIA membership billing and collection as well as supporting marketing efforts. Chip has a degree in Photojournalism and Marketing from Kent State University. He has spent the majority of his career in photography, advertising, marketing and printing. Prior to MAIA, Chip was employed by the Ohio Fruit Growers Marketing Association and the National Association of College Stores. In his free time Chip enjoys outdoor activities including golf, motorcycling and SCCA autocross racing.

Karen Burkhardt

Martinsburg, West Virginia • Senior Vice President, Atlantic Operations



Karen joined MAIA in July and is working with growers in the Mid-Atlantic and East coast region. She is supporting the Evercrisp® marketing at Farm Markets and is assisting Chip with records, billing and contracts.

Karen was raised on a fruit farm in Northern Ohio and earned a B.S. in Horticulture, majoring in Pomology from the Ohio State University. She was a in tree sales with Hilltop Nurseries in Hartford, MI for 2 years and then worked at Knouse Foods Cooperative, Inc. in both Biglerville, PA and Inwood, WV for 24 years. At Knouse Foods she audited grower pesticide records and was involved with fruit quality testing, maturity studies and establishing an organic processing program. Karen also worked 10 years in banking and finance.

Karen is very active in her local community. Over the years she has served on boards for the WV State Horticulture Society, the Boys and Girls Club, the Sunrise Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, and currently the County Farmland Protection Board and Blue Ridge CTC Agriculture Advisory Board. Karen, husband Mark and their children enjoy traveling, outdoor activities and operate a farm with beef cows, horses and goats.

Hank Markgraf

Kelowna, British Columbia • MAIA Consultant



Hank is MAIA's Canadian Horticultural representative. Additionally, he works for Syngenta Canada and operates a 20-acre farm. Hank was born and raised on his family farm in British Columbia. He received his B.S. in Horticulture from Washington State University and has been consulting as a tree fruit specialist since that time. Hank and his wife Darcel operate their family farm with help from their twin boys as needed.

Hank is currently in his tenth year serving as a Board Member for the Internaional Fruit Tree Association (IFTA). He enjoys downhill skiing, fly fishing, camping, and began playing acoustic guitar a few years ago.

Bill Pitts

Sterling, New York • MAIA Consultant



Bill joined Wafler Nurseries in 1979, while still in High School. For the past 42 years he worked in all aspects of the orchard and nursery, including production, tree sales, quality control and evaluating new varieties and rootstocks. He retired this past spring to become a consultant for the fruit industry.

Bill loves to be outside, walking orchard rows with pruners in hand, and especially enjoys fishing and hunting.

MAIA IS HERE TO Meet Your Marketing Needs

MAIA has several programs and materials that are beneficial to you, as a grower. We welcome you to utilize them to help market the exceptional MAIA varieties!



“So Crunchy It’s Scary”

The So Crunchy It's Scary program is a social media photo contest for October designed to get customers excited about Evercrisp® and experiencing your farm location. Customers can post a photo of themselves biting into a Evercrisp® apple for a chance to win \$500! We will provide you with a large display banner, smaller point of sale materials advertising the promotion and a collection of photos with pre-written posts that you can use on all your farm social media accounts. The focus of having customers post about Evercrisp® and your retail farm location is a win-win!



Direct Marketing

For direct marketing (Farm Markets) we have Point-of-Sale Variety Cards that can be displayed to promote apple sales. These are 5 ½ x8 ½ inch full color card stock signs for all the varieties - Evercrisp®, Ludacrisp®, Sweet Maia®, Rosalee®, Sweet Zinger® and Summerset®.



PLU Stickers

MAIA has PLU Stickers available for Evercrisp®. These can be used for wholesale packing and distribution or, if you prefer to use PLU's in your own market. PLU's for the other MAIA varieties are in process.

We are happy to help you with all these promotional items and can ship them or deliver them to your business. If you have other needs that will assist you in selling any of the fabulous MAIA varieties, please reach out and let us know - we are here to help!



