

THE ORTET

Inaugural Issue

Midwest Apple Improvement Association
Autumn 2015 Newsletter



THE ORTET

Volume Two

Midwest Apple Improvement Association
Autumn 2016 Newsletter



THE ORTET

Volume Three

Midwest Apple Improvement Association
Autumn 2017 Newsletter



THE ORTET

Volume Four

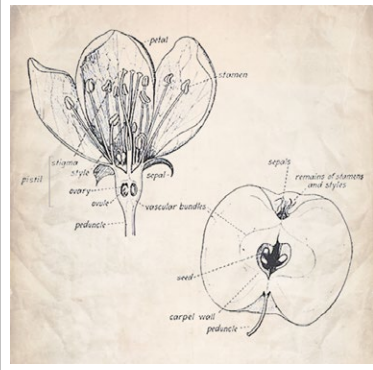
Midwest Apple Improvement Association
Autumn 2018 Newsletter



THE ORTET

Volume Five

Midwest Apple Improvement Association
Autumn 2019 Newsletter



THE ORTET

Volume Six

Midwest Apple Improvement Association
Autumn 2020 Newsletter



THE ORTET

Volume Seven

Midwest Apple Improvement Association
Autumn 2021 Newsletter



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Volume Eight

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Volume 10 | 2025

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MAIA Team

Bill Dodd
President

Karen Burkhart
Senior Vice President,
Atlantic Operations

Hank Markgraf
Canadian Consultant

Bill Pitts
Horticultural Consultant

Reality Research LLC
Breeding and Evaluations



MAIA Bi-Annual Field Day

at Reality Research Farms | Lyons, NY
will be scheduled in August 2026

MAIA Board of Directors

David Doud
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Felix Cooper
Vice Chairman of the Board

Allen Grobe
Secretary/Treasurer

Tom DeMaree
Board Member

Chris Eckert
Board Member

Chris Kropf
Board Member

Andy Lynd
Board Member

Dano Simmons
Board Member

Jacob Wafler
Board Member



MAIA Annual Meeting

Wednesday, March 26, 2025 2:00 pm EST

The 2025 MAIA Annual Meeting will be
held as a Zoom meeting.

Email kburkhart@maiaapples.com
if you wish to receive a Zoom invitation for
the annual meeting.

A Message From The Chairman

On March 12, 2010 (15 years ago!), a meeting was held in Mitch Lynd's living room in Pataskala, OH, to chart a course forward for MAIA. The organization was 12+ years old, had sorted through tens of thousands of seedlings and had selected dozens for further testing. Founders Mitch Lynd and Ed Fackler made it clear they had no interest in leading the organization through its next phase of patenting, licensing, and distributing new varieties.

After more than four hours of discussion, it was resolved to approach Bill Dodd through the auspices of the Fruit Growers Marketing Association (OH) with a list of administrative duties for confirmation that he could handle this for the group and at what price.

It is no understatement that FGMA and Bill saved MAIA from dissolution, or at least disaster.

Over the next two years under Dodd's leadership, MAIA reorganized as a Co-op under the laws of Ohio, proceeded with the patenting of MAIA-1 (EverCrisp®), and developed the "managed, open release" model for tree distribution. With the cooperation and encouragement of Bill Pitts and Wafler Nursery, MAIA-1 tree production was fast-tracked, with test plantings on three rootstocks distributed in the spring of 2013 and 30,000 trees sold and distributed to members in 2014. The story of the decision to move forward aggressively with the variety deserves its own column, and I'll save that for another time.

The last 10 years have seen MAIA emerge from under the wings of FGMA and into a unique resource for apple growers. MAIA very affordably provides access to modern apple varieties for member growers. The season-long lineup of varieties provides the direct marketer with crispy, flavorful apples that delight the customer. Originally imagined as a resource for direct marketers, at least three MAIA varieties are gaining traction in the wholesale market. Several MAIA varieties are being evaluated internationally, and MAIA-1 is being aggressively planted in Chile and New Zealand for export to the Asia market.



David Doud & wife Valerie (1978)

MAIA Board Chairman

Countyline Orchard, Wabash, IN

"MAIA will, in all practical purposes, end when we quit making crosses." - Jim Eckert, founding member, 2011. (Quoted by Ed Fackler)

Breeding continues aggressively in cooperation with Reality Research of Lyons, NY. Seeds of controlled crosses are germinated on site, grown for the summer, and then budded on dwarfing rootstock. This process about halves the time it takes to look at fruit compared to planting seedlings in the field. The next three years will demand the evaluation of several thousand ascensions, a monumental task in itself. Reality Research is also the main repository of our advanced selections, breeding parents, and test blocks. We are fortunate and appreciative to have such a professional and enthusiastic partner.

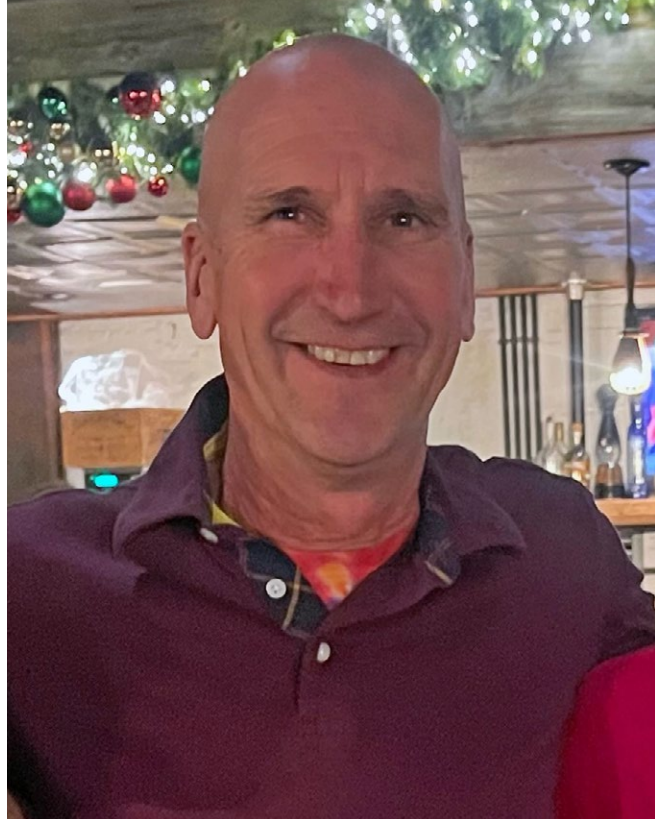
Thank you to the founding members for your long-shot investment in the future of fruit growing. Thank you to all members for supporting this club 'for the rest of us.' Thank you to the MAIA staff who work hard keeping up with the needs of the members. Thank you to the members of our board of directors for the time and energy spent guiding MAIA into the future.

Best wishes for a fruitful and prosperous 2025!
David Doud, Board Chairman

From the President

2024 MAIA Update

MAIA is pleased to present the 10th anniversary issue of the Ortet to our members and the apple community. The Webster dictionary definition of Ortet is “the original plant from which the members of a clone have descended.” A simple explanation that in MAIA’s case includes decades of time spent nurturing and evaluating apple selections. These selections begin as apple seeds from open-pollinated selections or controlled crosses. When using open-pollinated, we know one parent because the apple was harvested and the seeds taken. Controlled crosses involve hand-pollinating two varieties that have been chosen for outstanding characteristics that we hope will carry forward to the offspring in the seeds. The seeds are harvested from the apples, planted in a greenhouse, grown until there are viable buds to be grafted onto a rootstock, grafted and then the trees are cared for until they produce fruit.



Bill Dodd

MAIA President

Hillcrest Orchard, Amherst, OH



MAIA-RZ

This process is a numbers game; the more crosses you have, the better chance of finding something extraordinary. MAIA is currently working with over 9,000 seedlings. Apples from the seedlings are observed for color, shape, harvest timing and taste. 98% of them are decent or terrible and eliminated ASAP. We are looking for phenomenal. Bud wood is taken from the exceptional ones, and more trees are made and planted for 2nd generation testing. There are usually about (twenty) 2nd generation apples in evaluation at any given time. There are currently three elites that have been chosen from the (twenty) 2nd generation choices. Larger plantings of the three elites are then planted in geographically diverse areas to see how they handle heat, cold and everything in between. Storage testing begins and horticultural observations continue.

MAIA-RZ has successfully made it through this process and a plant patent application number (18/921,762) has been approved. A trademark name has been secured, and this phenomenon will be marketed as Red Zeppelin®. Anyone who has a catchy tagline for this selection can send it to me at [bdodd@maiaapples.com!](mailto:bdodd@maiaapples.com)

MAIA Collection Policy

The MAIA Board of Directors adopted the following Collection Policy at their November 13, 2024, Board Meeting. This Policy is based on the terms of the License Agreement between MAIA and Tree Purchasers.

- Send monthly statements to members.
- MAIA members that are 5 months or more past due shall be added to a “Do Not Sell List” and sent a default letter per Section 8 of the License Agreement.
- Section 8 of the License Agreement allows for a 30-day “Cure Period” to allow the member to bring the account current.
- If a member’s account is not made current by the end of the Cure Period, MAIA has the right to send the account to a collection agency.
- In the event of continued material default and as otherwise set forth in the License Agreement, MAIA membership may be revoked and MAIA trees removed.
- Member reinstatement is at the discretion of MAIA management and the Board of Directors.



MAIA-RZ Biglerville, PA

Grafting, Topworking, On-Farm Nurseries

Growers are reminded that all MAIA varieties are protected by plant patents, and all MAIA apple brand names are protected by registered trademarks. MAIA has spent significant resources to develop and protect its intellectual property and vigorously enforces its intellectual property against unauthorized and unlawful uses. Any use of MAIA’s intellectual property without MAIA’s prior approval is strictly prohibited. This includes topworking, grafting, or otherwise producing MAIA varieties without permission. Documents are available at maiaapples.com to receive proper approval to graft, topwork, or produce trees on farm nurseries. Contact MAIA for more information.

Exporting EVERCRISP® Apples

The License Agreement prohibits exporting EverCrisp® apples to other countries without first entering into a separate export agreement with MAIA. This applies to sales agencies that do not grow EverCrisp® apples but would like to export them for eventual sale in other countries in connection with the EverCrisp® brand. The EverCrisp® mark and logos have been registered in many foreign countries and jurisdictions, giving MAIA and its affiliates legal recourse to pursue unauthorized uses of EverCrisp® in such countries. MAIA has not, and will not, hesitate to pursue legal action against any entity that makes use of the EverCrisp® mark or logos without proper license or other authorization to do so.

MAIA’s policing of its intellectual property rights not only ensures that MAIA retains its rights, but that MAIA’s proprietary varieties, as properly grown and sold by MAIA members, remain of the highest quality to be enjoyed by generations to come.

REALITY RESEARCH

Current Trials at Reality Research LLC.

Lyons, N.Y.

2nd Generation MAIA Trees

Since 2016, over 3,500 2nd generation trees of 98 different varieties have been planted. We are evaluating nine of the 2nd generation selections on six different rootstocks. Rootstocks include Bud 9, Bud 10, G11, G41, G935, G969. Images 1 & 2 are examples of an App built by Jon Clements, Extension Tree Fruit Specialist at UMass and Win Cowgill, Tree Fruit Production Specialist with Win Enterprises International, LLC. This program is used by individuals with MAIA test trees, including Reality Research, to easily collect variety data in the field.

Focus for 2nd Generation Evaluations

Green Tip: Future added evaluation. To better understand if certain varieties might be more sensitive to cold damage.

Bloom: Timing, density, habits.

Tree Growth Habits: Vigor, branching, bearing habit, blind wood, blossom blight, shoot blight.

Fruit: Harvest timing, crop load, size, color, overall appearance, texture, flavor, pre-harvest drop, brix, starch, DA index, taste testing, storage.

Future Outlook: We recently conducted a taste test and concluded that many varieties will be eliminated from the program. This will allow us to focus our attention on varieties of greater interest and better possibilities. 10 varieties have really stood out. The goal is to find varieties that will benefit farm markets, you-pick operations, commercial fresh marketing, and the slicer and processing markets. MAIA continues to visit with apple variety managers in the US and around the world. These discussions allow us to refine our parameters for a variety's potential in the commercial fresh market. First, is finding a unique-tasting and great textured apple. Second, we know that solid-colored fruit is another major factor. If we can find an apple that meets those two categories, the next step is to conduct long term storage evaluations.



MAIA apple tester | Fruit | Seeding | Maturity Report | Tree | MAIA Tester

MAIA Selection: **Bill 2** | Status?: Keep testing

KAREN

Date: 10/2/2024

Name: Palmer

Location: Lyons NY

Observation type: Harvest

Rootstock: G.41

Vigor: Weak-medium

Branching: Average

Growth habit: Upright-spreading

Bearing habit: Spur and tip

Blind wood: Some

Bloom time: Late

Bloom density: Average

Crop load: Light-medium

Size: Medium

Red color: 90+

Overall appearance: Attractive

Texture: Hard-crisp

Flavor: Sweet-tart

Overall flavor: Good

Comments:

DateTimestamp: 10/2/2024 4:50:19 PM

Pre-harvest drop: None

Fruit diameter inches: 2.75

Color % red: 95


Firmness lbs: 22

Brix: 14

Starch index: 3-4

DA index:

Status?: Keep testing

Tree pict: 

Season: Middle-late (Empire)




Image 1

MAIA apple tester | Fruit | Seeding | Maturity Report | Tree | MAIA Tester

MAIA Selection: **MDD 7-50**

Date: 5/9/2023

Name: Clements

Location: Belchertown MA

Observation type: Bloom

Rootstock: G.41

Vigor: Weak-medium

Branching: Average

Growth habit: Spreading-drooping

Bearing habit: Spur and tip

Blind wood: No

Bloom time: Middle

Bloom density: Many-average




Image 2



Image 3



Image 4



Image 5



Image 6



Image 7

Current Research Projects

Production: MAIA1 (EverCrisp®). Dr. Christopher Watkins at Cornell University and Reality Research are looking at the effects of applying Retain® two weeks prior to harvest in efforts to reduce water core that could potentially turn into internal browning.

Seedlings: Production has grown rapidly since the start of 2021. Currently there are approximately 9,000 seedlings that were bench-grafted or chip-budded onto Bud 9 rootstock from 37 different managed crosses and open-pollinated selections.

Managed Crosses: Image 3 - Fruit clusters are collected prior to blossoms opening. Pollen is collected and used to pollinate mother blossoms.

Seed Collection: Image 4 - Seeds from the fruit are collected and refrigerated in damp paper towels in zip lock bags. Once they've sprouted, they are ready to be planted.

Growing The Seedlings: Images 5 & 6 - Seedlings start out in 200-cell vegetable trays and are then transferred to larger bins within the greenhouse. This takes approximately 6 months, then one bud is selected from each tree and chip-budded onto a Bud 9 rootstock in the field. Image 7 - Those budded seedlings grow in a protected field, and as fruit is produced, they are evaluated for future use as a new MAIA selection. Image 8 displays promising selections from 2024 season (crossed in 2021).

MAIA-Mitchell: We have established a 3,000-tree block of MAIA-Mitchell on different rootstocks for fruit evaluations. Members are always welcome to visit!

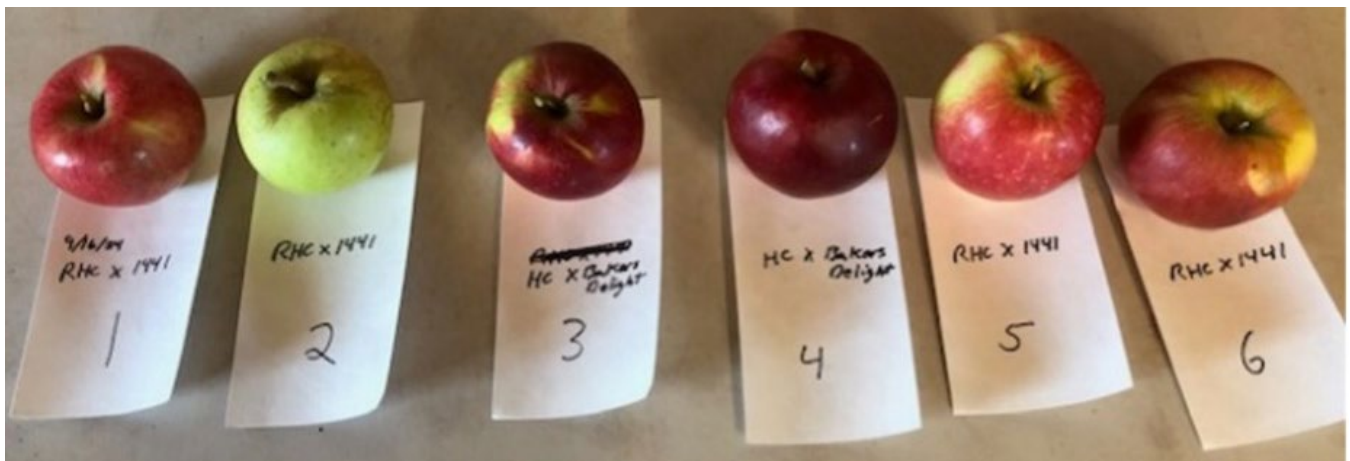


Image 8, first fruit tested in 2024 from seedlings started in 2021

MAIA Apples

MAIA TREES MAY BE PURCHASED FROM THE FOLLOWING MAIA-LICENSED NURSERIES.

Adams County Nursery
 Brandt's Fruit Trees, LLC
 Cameron Nursery, LLC
 Countryside Farm & Nurseries LLC
 Gold Crown Nursery
 Gold Star Nursery
 Helios Nursery
 Hilltop Fruit Trees LLC
 Mike & Brian's Nursery, Inc.
 Saunders Bros Inc
 Sierra Gold Nurseries
 Upper Canada Growers LDT
 Van Well Nursery Inc
 Wafler Nursery
 Willow Drive Nursery, Inc.

MAIA BY THE NUMBERS

25+

years of grass roots apple breeding

2014

First Plant Patent for MAIA received

1,100

Members and counting

2024

10th Plant Patent for MAIA filed

3,800,000

MAIA trees planted



SWEET MAIA® (MAIA-SM)

Kick off harvest with this early-season sweet delight that will win over the masses.

Parents/Cross: Honeycrisp x Winecrisp

Plant Patent #: USPP 34,437

Harvest Dates: 1 week before Gala



SCRUFFY® (MAIA-T)

A uniquely flavored fall apple, noted for its complex, tart taste with a sweet finish and great texture.

Parents/Cross: Honeycrisp, open-pollinated

Plant Patent #: USPP 30,088

Harvest Dates: 2 weeks after Gala



LUDACRISP® (MAIA-L)

This tantalizing apple is all the best parts of sweet, juicy, and tropical, with an amazing texture and crunch.

Parents/Cross: Sweet 16, open-pollinated

Plant Patent #: USPP 30,472

Harvest Dates: 4 weeks after Gala

PLU #: 3537



(MAIA-AM)

Crispy and juicy with a smooth, russet-free yellow peel, this apple is adored for its snappy texture and refreshing burst of flavor.

Parents/Cross: Honeycrisp x Fuji

Plant Patent #: USPP 36,071

Harvest Dates: 1 week after Gala, long harvest window



SUMMERSET® (MAIA12)

Your tastebuds will dance the tango with a tangier flavor reminiscent of its parent, Honeycrisp.

Parents/Cross: Honeycrisp x Fuji

Plant Patent #: USPP 29,213

Harvest Dates: 1 week after Gala



RED ZEPPELIN® (MAIA-RZ)

A sensational full red fruit with crisp, firm flesh and exceptional storage ability, this apple stands out for its quality and longevity.

Parents/Cross: Honeycrisp, open-pollinated

Plant Patent #: USPP pending

Harvest Dates: 2 weeks after Gala



ROSALEE® (MAIA11)

With a floral taste, clean aroma, and exquisite texture, this melt-in-your-mouth apple aims to surprise.

Parents/Cross: Honeycrisp x Fuji

Plant Patent #: USPP 29,146

Harvest Dates: 3 weeks after Gala



SWEET ZINGER® (MAIA-Z)

A splash of honey equally balanced with a dash of tartness will have your senses lighting up with bewilderment.

Parents/Cross: Goldrush x Sweet 16

Plant Patent #: USPP 30,059

Harvest Dates: 4 weeks after Gala



EVERCRISP® (MAIA1 & MAIA-MITCHELL)

As a late harvest varietal, this apple excites with its crispier texture, sweet flavor, and long shelf life. EverCrisp® wraps up harvest season with a standing ovation.

Parents/Cross: Honeycrisp x Fuji

Plant Patent #: USPP 24,579 (MAIA-Mitchell)
USPP pending

Harvest Dates: 5 weeks after Gala

PLU #: 3490

MAIA is HERE to Meet Your Marketing Needs

We are here to assist you with your marketing needs for all the MAIA apples that you grow and pack.

Wholesale Packers:

Our partner marketing firm can work with your packaging company and apply our designs for your specific bag, box and packaging needs.

Email marketing@maiaapples.com



GET SOCIAL WITH MAIA

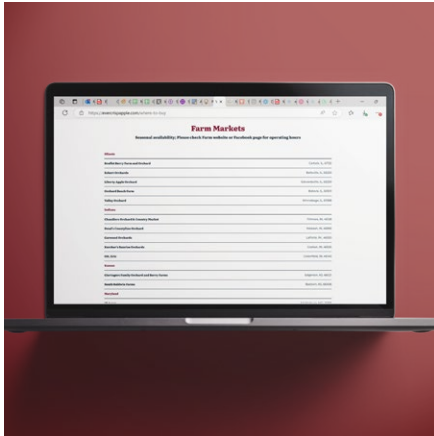
- Visit our website - maiaapples.com - for a bounty of useful grower tips.
- Join our private MAIA Member group Facebook page.
- Follow us on the EverCrisp® Instagram and EverCrisp® Facebook page!

Nurseries:

We have an updated MAIA brochure for nurseries and offer a photo gallery of all MAIA apples for use in your catalogs or advertising.



Retail Markets:



The EverCrisp® website features a “where to buy” list of grower farm markets with EverCrisp®. Please email us to add your farm (listed by state). Check it out at evercrispapple.com!



Point of-Sale cards feature unique QR codes for each MAIA apple website..



MAIA apple Tree-Row signs for pick-your-own sites - see order form below.

MAIA Metal Tree-Row Sign Order Form

Complimentary Signs are 7” wide x 10” high with a QR code.

SWEET MAIA® _____

ROSALEE® _____

SUMMERSET® _____

LUDACRISP® _____

SCRUFFY® _____

SWEET ZINGER® _____

RED ZEPPELIN® _____

EVERCRISP® _____

Enter the number of each sign requested and provide your member name and shipping address:

Farm Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Mail to: MAIA PO Box 88 Oberlin, OH 44074

Or email marketing@maiaapples.com with your order information; also available on the MAIA website.



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