

HILLTOP

™ Issue #9 Fall/Winter 2015/16



platform harvesting
no-cost health care
face-to-face with Eva Lauve
marketing produce to kids



— SINCE 1964 —

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FLAVORFUL
BEST LOCALES
FAMILY GROWN**



OUR STORIES

Stemilt apples are grown with flavor, quality, and innovation in mind.

Learn the story of our World Famous Apples at:

www.stemilt.com/ourstories

Dear Readers,



As I write this letter, we are in the midst of apple and pear harvest in Washington State. The crops for both fruits this year will not break any records for volume, but are shaping up to be high-quality with the best color on apple varieties like Honeycrisp that we've ever seen. Our varietal mix continues to evolve on apples

with a focus on growing the varieties that consumers demand, including: Honeycrisp, Gala, Fuji, Piñata®, Pink Lady®, and new trademarked varieties. We've also started the three-year transition of many apple acres to organic production in order to fill growing organic demand.

In this issue of Hilltop, you'll read about a new offering to our employees that I'm very excited about. The Stemilt Family Clinic opened at the beginning of September and offers free primary healthcare for our employees and their immediate family. Providing a service like this to our employees has been a dream of mine for some time and it's great to see it come to fruition.

Our technology story focuses on how harvest platforms are helping us reduce the use of ladders in orchards in order to efficiently harvest apples. We're also sharing the reason behind our new square-shaped PLU stickers for apples.

With the new crop year upon us, I want to thank you all for your continued support of Stemilt and our World Famous Fruits. We look forward to many successful promotions at retail this fall and winter for both apples and pears.

Onward,

West Mathison
President
Stemilt Growers

HILLTOP

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onthecover



Harvest machines in full production in Quincy, WA



Stemilt
RUSHING RIVERSTM
— THE BEST PEAR LOCALES IN THE WORLD —



Stemilt's **Rushing Rivers Pears** proudly call Washington's famous river valleys home. Orchards blanket locales like the Wenatchee River Valley and Entiat River Valley, where **mountain slopes** meet **pristine rivers** and **fertile soils**.



4

contents

Issue #9 Fall/Winter 2015/16

letter from the editor 1

lifestyle

- face-to-face with Eva Lauve 8
- coloring apples 12
- are Stemilt fruits GMO? 22
- stickers gone square 24
- a marketing to kids success story 27

technology

- platform harvesting 18

sustainability

- no-cost health care 4

what's new in produce

- storytelling 34

recipes

- Piñata apple, grains & greens bowl 16
- haricot verts & roasted bosc pears 30

parting shot

- red pears 36



12



8



18

no-cost health care

sustainability



As the Stemilt Family Clinic prepared to open its doors, a proofread of the brochure that informs employees of the company's new healthcare service came back with what seemed like an obvious error. The proofreader pointed out that the brochure said that the Clinic would provide FREE primary healthcare to Stemilt employees and their dependents.

Dr. Christian Kovats, a Northwest native and family physician who will see and treat patients at the new Clinic, simply grinned. "It's hard for many to believe, but the services our Clinic provides are, in fact, 100% free," he said.



Stemilt's Family Clinic opened its doors on September 1st with appointments already on the schedule. The new service has been a long-time dream of Stemilt president, West Mathison, and his wife, Courtney, who oversees the company's community investment committee. They recognized the need for employees and their families to have easier access to quality, comprehensive healthcare, and wanted to provide the service near worksites, for both employees and their dependents, and at no charge.

Five days a week, employees and their dependents can utilize the Clinic at no cost for any of their primary care needs, including: annual wellness exams, well-child check-ups, sports physicals, illness and injuries, lab work, immunizations and vaccinations, minor procedures, and the management of chronic illnesses like diabetes and hypertension. The Clinic's pharmacy also fills prescriptions for free.

Located in a remodeled section of Stemilt's Euclid Street facility in Wenatchee, the Clinic was made possible by a partnership between Stemilt and Confluence Health, Wenatchee Valley's healthcare affiliation that strives to provide safe, high-quality care in a compassionate and cost-effective manner. The Clinic is owned by Stemilt, but operated and staffed by Confluence Health and one of its highly trained medical teams.

Leading the medical team at the Clinic is Dr. Kovats, a doctor with a military background who spent the past 28 years as a family physician in Orlando, Florida. With his kids now grown, Dr. Kovats wanted to return to the Northwest in order to spend his free time recreating on ski hills and in the great outdoors, while continuing to practice what he describes as the career he was "born to do."

"Communication and compassion have always been strong traits of mine," the highly energetic Dr. Kovats proudly said. "As a provider, I strive to take my knowledge and training of health and empower people to make themselves better."



“

Communication and
compassion have always
been strong traits of mine.

”

Joining Dr. Kovats are two bilingual medical assistants and a registered nurse who manages the practice, as well as two Confluence Health clinics in neighboring cities.

Stemilt is the first private company in the Wenatchee Valley to provide a free primary healthcare clinic for its employees and their dependents. The company also runs a health clinic at its Olds Station facility through a partnership with AnovaWorks, which offers basic first-aid care to employees and serves as a first responder to any work-related accidents.

“Our Olds Station health clinic has been a huge asset since opening in 2011, but we wanted to take on-site healthcare a step further and that’s when the idea of the Stemilt Family Clinic started to come to fruition,” said Zach Williams, Director of Human Resources at Stemilt. “Statistics constantly highlight the important role that regular, routine check-ups have on a person’s health and well-being. Early screening, diagnosis, and treatment are critical in maintaining a healthy workforce now and in the future. The Clinic’s ability to provide comprehensive and high-quality healthcare at no cost is a great benefit that we are thrilled to offer our employees and their families.”



face-to-face with Eva Lauve



I recently spoke with Eva Lauve, Stemilt's Scheduling and Food Safety Manager, about her lengthy career at Stemilt, the importance of food safety in produce, and how she's managed to keep up with the ever-changing fruit industry over the years.





Brianna: When did you join the Stemilt team and how have your roles evolved over the years?

Eva: I'm currently in my 37th year with Stemilt. I began like many others here do, as a cherry sorter working on Stemilt Hill during summer break from college. Stemilt had a longer cherry season than others, which meant more hours and more money! I continued working for Stemilt at nights while attending Central Washington University. I graduated with a BS in economics and a BA in international finance and began applications to graduate school. In the meantime, Stemilt offered me a supervisor position to cover an employee's leave for a brief time and I quickly accepted. The temporary position came to an end, but I stayed on and became the supervisor for a new tray fill line for apples that had just been completed at Olds Station.

By 1987, Stemilt was going through a big growth spurt and decided to split our quality control operations into two areas – raw fruit and packed fruit. I took the packed fruit supervisor role and worked with sales to help create line running orders and determine what fruit went where. At the time, we only packed 20-pound loose packs. It was far less complex than today!

In 1992, I was given the opportunity to travel extensively to visit retailers both domestically and in export markets. I would meet ocean vessels to see them unload and report back on fruit quality. Food safety was just a buzzword at the time, but starting to gain traction. Our founder, Tom Mathison, always preached quality-first, and knew we

needed to be on the forefront of food safety. He tasked me with researching different programs and finding the one that would work for Stemilt. Soon, I moved into a new role where I managed production at Stemilt and implemented the food safety plan at our facilities.



In the 2000's, Stemilt began working through a succession plan where Tom's grandson, West, would take over his role as president. The company was growing and changing quickly and restructured as a result. I took over as the scheduling and food safety program manager, and that is the role I continue to be in today.

Brianna: You briefly mentioned that working at Stemilt led to extensive traveling. What are some of your most memorable trips?

Eva: Traveling has been one of the best, and most unexpected, parts of my career with Stemilt. My most memorable trip was when I was given the opportunity to go to Sydney, Australia and speak at the HAACP conference. I also spent 3 fast weeks on an around-the-world cherry trip, visiting Asia and Europe to see the arrival of cherries and collect data to report back on the quality of Stemilt's fruit. I've been fortunate to see and experience parts of the world I would not have otherwise experienced because of Stemilt.

Brianna: Explain a "typical" day for a food safety manager like yourself.

Eva: Typical days are hard to come by which is one reason that I enjoy the job so much. It's constantly changing. One thing that is consistent is communication. Whether it is with our customers or production and sales teams, I'm always working to learn what the various needs are for packing our fruits. I also spend lots of time ensuring that our procedures with the Safe Quality Food (SQF) program are current and being followed.

Brianna: You've been part of Stemilt's food safety program since its inception. How has it evolved and why does food safety get so much attention today?

“
 Traveling has been one
 of the best, and most
 unexpected, parts of my
 career with Stemilt.
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Eva: Food safety was a natural fit with our company culture, where quality-first has always been ingrained. In 1989, our Responsible Choice program began and to me, that was the start of food safety as it made everyone aware of the need to constantly evaluate our processes and ensure safety and quality came first. The introduction of the SQF program at Stemilt in the early 90's elevated that. Today, food safety is a necessity. Our complex industry, and how easily and quickly information flows in this world, elevate food safety issues. Fortunately, technologies have come along quickly, too, and allowed us to continue to focus on safety and quality first in all that we do.

Brianna: What is your favorite part of your job?

Eva: I love going to the production floors and being with people on the line, especially during cherry season. Interacting with our crews takes me back to my early days at Stemilt and all the great times we had working together!

Brianna: What do you spend your “free time” doing?

Eva: I love anything and everything about sports, especially supporting local teams. I also enjoy bowling and golfing.

Brianna: What's kept you in the fruit industry so long?

Eva: It's the fact that every day is different. Things are always changing and our industry is always growing. New varieties, technology, and the coming of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) are all bringing about change and it's exciting to be part of that.

Brianna: You are very involved in industry groups. Explain some of your roles and why you think it's important to get involved in things outside of your company.

Eva: I serve on a variety of food safety committees, both within Washington State and for the broader produce industry. I commit time to these voluntary groups because I've always felt it was important to have an understanding of what might be coming to impact your business. The network you end up creating helps you constantly gain knowledge and continue to improve.

Brianna: What is your favorite Stemilt fruit and why?

Eva: Golden Delicious apples. They are always consistent in their eating qualities!

Brianna: That's spoken like a true food safety person! How about role models that have impacted your career?

Eva: Stemilt's founder, Tom Mathison, was an incredible mentor who gave me the opportunity to grow in the industry as Stemilt grew as a company. I've always felt blessed to work here.





coloring apples

It's roughly two weeks before apple harvest and the time that growers carefully examine color on varietal apples.

“

People buy apples with their eyes so it's important that we produce fruit with vibrant colors.

”

Examining color is one indicator of starch levels in the apples and a step in ensuring that a grower makes his or her goal of storing the majority of the orchard's apples for the long-term. It also helps them prepare for harvest and ensure that they can get the fruit picked efficiently and at high qualities.

But, what happens when the color isn't quite meeting expectations? For growers, that's when they turn to the use of reflective material, which help enhance the color of bi-colored apples.

Stemilt is a big user of Mylar, a film that enhances color in apples by reflecting any sunlight from the ground back up into the shady parts of the tree. It is used to color many bi-colored varieties at Stemilt, including Honeycrisp, Pinata®, Fuji, Pink Lady®, and certain strains of Gala apples. Stemilt also uses Mylar films on certain blocks of red and Rainier cherries.

“People buy apples with their eyes, so it's important that we, as growers, produce fruit with vibrant colors,” said Scott Driscoll, Stemilt Ag Services' Quincy Area Manager. “Reflective material helps us direct sunlight to the underside of the apples in order to color each piece of fruit evenly. We're speeding up the coloring process in order to pick apples at the optimal internal qualities which combines to deliver a great eating experience.”





A four-wheeler is used to put the reflective material down each orchard row with piles of soil placed frequently in order to hold it securely in place. Then, Mother Nature takes over with the delivery of sunlight. Overhead cooling in orchards helps prevent the Mylar material from causing fruit to sunburn.

Several years of testing Mylar in Stemilt orchards led to the extensive use of the material in company orchards today. For example, Driscoll found that after using the reflective material on Honeycrisp apples at Highway 28 Orchards in Quincy, WA, he picked more bins of fruit per acres on “first pick” than he would have been able to without the reflective material. First-pick apples are more likely to be put into long-term storage than second-pick apples and, therefore, are more desirable to growers.

“The use of reflective material in orchards not only helps us manage our harvest and pick more apples in the optimal maturity range, but also delivers a more marketable piece of fruit for retailers to sell and consumers to enjoy,” said Driscoll. “It’s yet another tool in our toolbox to help produce World Famous Apples.”



What is Extenday®?

Extenday® is a reflective fabric that helps enhance color on varietal apples. With an 8 year lifespan, the tight woven fabric ensures that fruit doesn't sunburn. Because it is reusable, Extenday is used in Stemilt orchards for multiple purposes. It helps deliver heat units to trees in the spring, is effective at coloring yellow-red Rainier cherries in the summer, and also serves as a tool to help color Pink Lady®, Gala, and Fuji apples before harvest.



Piñata apple, grains & greens bowl

A great way to enjoy a mix and match of all your favorite, go-to nutritious salad options is to build a bowl.

Makes: 2 bowls



About the recipe

Stemilt's delicious Piñata apple is paired with bright, lightly dressed, leafy greens dotted with slices of crisp celery; hearty mixed grains of quinoa, millet, and buckwheat popped with bits of toasted walnuts and slivered green onion, a heart-healthy helping of edamame, and sweet wedges of roasted delicata squash. The greens are tossed with a lemon-honey-miso vinaigrette, with extra served alongside to drizzle on top. It's a great salad, but an even better bowl of nutritious goodness, with Piñata apples at the forefront. Enjoy this perfect selection of crunch and Piñata's bright, juicy, sweet-tart, and slightly tropical flavor.

Ingredients

1 large Stemilt Piñata apple, halved, cored and sliced into thin wedges
1 cup cooked grains (a blend of "super grains" cooked according to package directions). Cooled to room temp works well.
¼ cup sliced green onion
⅓ cup toasted walnut pieces*
2 cups mixed leafy greens, lightly packed
1 stalk celery, trimmed and thinly sliced
10 to 12 slices of roasted delicata squash**
2 cups cooked, shelled edamame (cooked according to package directions), cooled to room temp
6 leaves butter lettuce

*Place walnut pieces in a pan over medium high heat and toast for 1 to 2 minutes, until just golden tinged and beginning to deliver an aroma.

**Trim one small delicata squash, halve lengthwise and cut into thin slices, toss with 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil, ¼ teaspoon kosher salt and ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper and roast in 425 degree F. oven for 20 to 25 minutes, until golden.

For vinaigrette

Whisk lemon juice through cider vinegar, until honey and miso are thoroughly combined. Whisk in olive oil, until blended, and season with salt.

¼ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
Scant 1 tablespoon honey
1 teaspoon white miso paste
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Pinch kosher salt

Procedure

In a small mixing bowl, combine grains, green onion and walnuts. Set aside.
In a separate bowl, combine leafy greens, celery and 2 to 3 tablespoons of vinaigrette, tossing lightly to combine. Set aside.
Arrange 3 leaves of butter lettuce in the bottom of each of two salad bowls.
Then individually arrange grains, mixed greens, edamame, and roasted squash equally among two bowls, leaving an area in each bowl to fan out wedges of Piñata apples. Serve immediately, with additional vinaigrette to drizzle on top, if desired.

Nutritional Information:

Per Serving: Calories 841.9 (36% from fat); Fat 33.7g (sat 3.1g, poly 10.6g, mono 11.6g); Protein 26.1g; Carbohydrates 104.6g; Fiber 16.9g; Sugar 21.6g; Cholesterol 0mg; Potassium 690.2mg; Sodium 113.0mg.

platform harvesting



technology

A few years ago, Stemilt's field team would not have dreamt of harvesting apples without ladders. Yet, that's exactly what Highway 28 Orchards in Quincy, WA is expecting to happen this year with the use of its four harvest machines that allow crews to hand-pick apples on the middle and tops of trees from a secure platform.



“
Platform harvesting will increase at Stemilt in the future. It's safe, efficient and allows us to pick longer.
”



The latest technology to arrive in Stemilt’s orchards did not come overnight. According to Scott Driscoll, Stemilt Ag Services’ Quincy Area Manager, the company has been testing different harvest machines for five years. The idea behind all the testing was that a machine could lead to a more efficient harvest, reduce ladder accidents, and, assist in years with labor shortages.

“At some points, it seemed that we would never get past the testing stage and find one that worked,” Driscoll said. “We tested highly engineered machines with lots of different features, but finally came back to a very simple and basic machine that would help us in our goal of harvesting high-quality apples efficiently.”

The simple, gas-powered machine comes from Automated Ag in nearby Moses Lake, WA. A platform sits on the second level of a three-wheel machine. The bottom level automatically picks up empty bins and sets down full bins, while an arm on the machine helps it automate down an orchard row in order to keep it moving forward and straight. A crew of four to six people stand harnessed atop the platform where they work as a team to harvest apples straight into bins. The bottom of the trees have been previously picked by another crew, so harvest platforms are used to pick fruit from the middle and top of trees on both sides of the row. The speed of the machine is set at the beginning of the row and a crew member uses a joystick to turn corners or redirect the machine if needed.





“Harvesting from a platform works so well because of the efficiencies we gain in having people work together on an even plane instead of the old standard of working individually and going up-and-down on a ladder. Ladders don’t have to be moved from tree to tree. Harvesting the tops of the tree will always be the most inefficient job in the field, but the use of platforms allows us to do this job more efficiently, increase worker safety, and get a large percentage of fruit off in great condition,” said Driscoll.

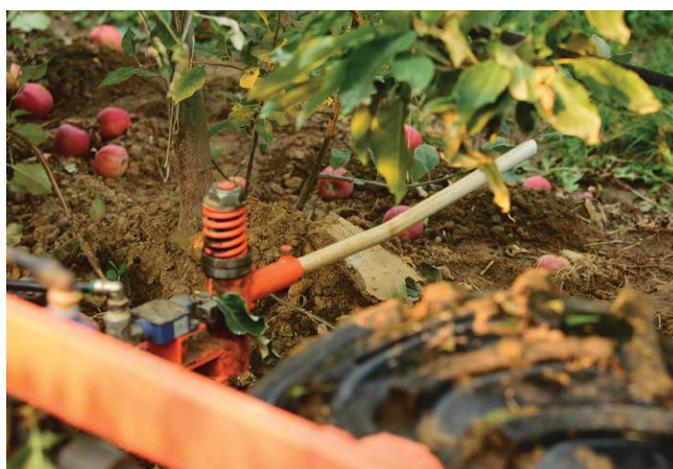
Each crew member is required to be harnessed and strapped on the platform. This makes for a safer work environment and is much preferred by orchard managers like Driscoll, who recognize ladder use as the biggest cause of accidents in the industry.

Another benefit of platform harvesting is the ability of the machines to operate at night. The machines are equipped with lights for harvesting at night, and because of that, Highway 28 has worked into a routine of running two shifts. The first runs from 4 am to around 12 pm and the second goes from 8 pm to 4 am. In 2014, the machines helped the large company ranch harvest its share of a record Washington State apple crop by operating 20 hours a day on average for three weeks.

The benefits of platform machines go beyond fall harvest, Driscoll noted. The machine is used for any work to the top level of the tree throughout the year, including tree training and winter pruning.

With testing of the new technology complete, Stemilt is now rolling out the use of platform machines at other company ranches. The company has 10 machines in use this season. According to Driscoll, once his crews got past the initial learning curve of the machine, they started realizing its many benefits.

“It’s much different than the norm because they must work together as a team in order to get fruit picked efficiently and correctly. Because it is so new, we pay a bonus for crews that pick from a platform,” said Driscoll. “Platform harvesting is something we expect to increase our use of in the future. It’s a safer way for crews to pick fruit on the top of the tree, allows us to harvest apples more hours each day, and do so in an efficient way where quality remains top-of-mind.”



are Stemilt fruits GMO?

W

ith laws around labeling being approved, or disapproved, by voters in many states, genetically modified crops, or GMO's, are one of the most talked about topics in the food industry today. At Stemilt, the top question we get from consumers is whether or not our apples, pears, cherries, and summer fruits are genetically modified.

Genetically modified organisms are defined in plant agriculture as “the process of intentionally making a copy of a gene for a desired trait from one plant or organism and moving it to another plant.” All Stemilt fruits are non-GMO because they are developed from a different method of plant breeding, known as cross-pollination.

Fruit breeders identify the traits they want in a new variety, and then find parent varieties with those characteristics that might give them the new cultivar they are after. Fruit trees are flowering plants and reproduce through pollination. To create a new variety, breeders harvest pollen from the flowers of the male parent and then brush the male parent pollen onto the female parent's flowers. The pollen moves down the stigma of the flower and, hopefully, fertilization occurs.

Because the process is far from foolproof, fruit breeders make thousands of crosses each year, every year. Once the tree produces its first fruits, the new fruit is reviewed for taste and other qualities, and a decision is made on whether it is kept for further testing or discarded.

The arduous process means that new varieties of fruit do not come about too often. For instance, the popular Honeycrisp apple was first crossed back in 1960, but wasn't released to growers until 1991. Crossing the same two parents again also won't result in the same new variety. Just like in humans who have two children who don't look identical, the fertilization process when breeding new fruits always produces a unique result.

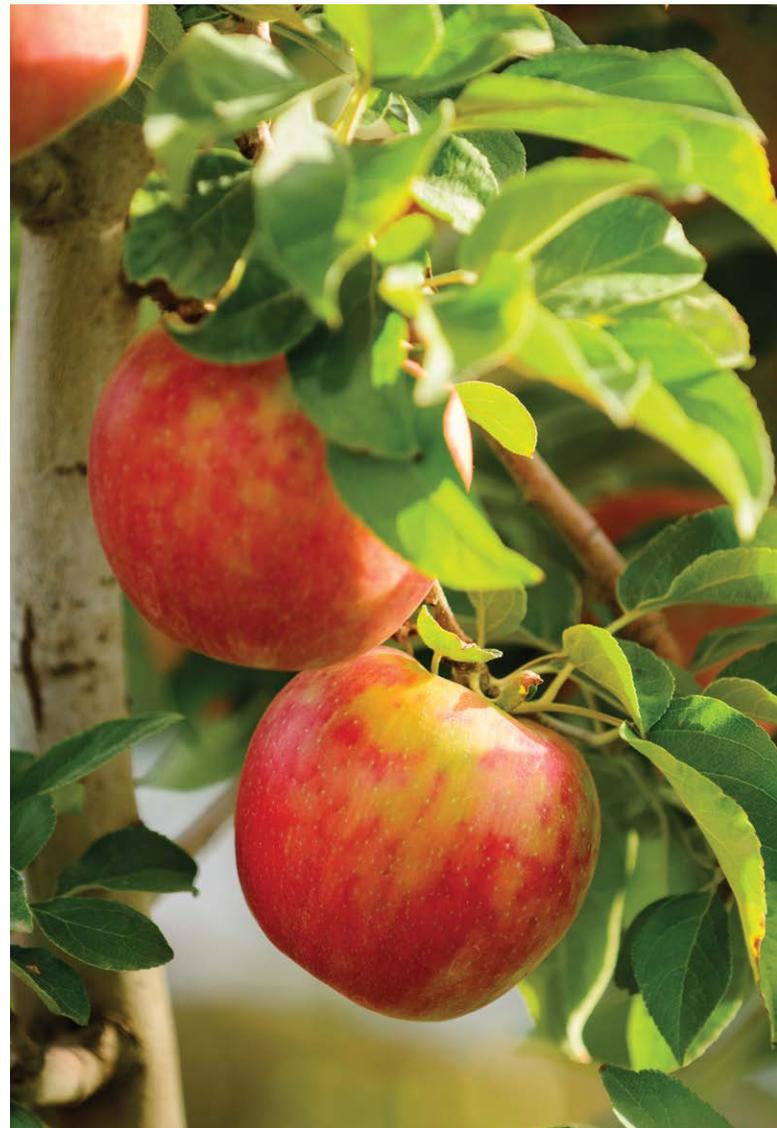
Stemilt works with fruit breeders that follow the traditional breeding method of crossing pollen, which introduces a number of characteristics into the plant, including desired and undesired characteristics. On the other hand, genetic engineering introduces one or a few specific, desired characteristics without introducing the unwanted characteristics. New varieties that Stemilt will help introduce in the near future will utilize traditional cross-breeding and be classified as non-GMO.



Non-GMO Labeling at Stemilt

All of our fruits at Stemilt are non-GMO and certain new packaging highlights that fact. Our newly designed poly bags have our non-GMO logo on them.

NON-GMO™






PIÑATA!

A surprise for your taste buds

THE LEADING NEW VARIETY

28% increase in retail dollars and 16% increase in volume
in last season's November through April apple composite data!



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*Tropical
Twist*

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stickers gone square

It's hip to be square. The popular 1980's song title from Huey Lewis and the News has new meaning for Stemilt and the price look-up (PLU) stickers it applies to apples in order to identify its fruits on bulk displays at retail. That's because Stemilt has changed the shape of its PLU stickers – to a square. The shape change was born as a way to differentiate the Stemilt brand, and help consumers easily locate the company's logo and ladybug mark at the stores they frequent.





Other than the shape and design, Stemilt's square stickers function the same as they did before. The company still uses easy lift tabs in order to make it simple for shoppers to peel the sticker off the fruit at home. The tabs use a powder coated glue in order to prevent adhesive from staying on the fruit. Scanbar technology also remains prominent on the square sticker, along with the PLU code number, in order to make variety identification easy for cashiers when ringing up apples.

Stemilt also kept color coded variety identification on its new square stickers, with each variety having a designated color. Aside from that color strip, the rest of the Stemilt square label is white with a dashed blue outline. For Artisan Organics fruits, the background of the sticker is yellow and the outline is green, as both colors are commonly used to identify organic produce in stores.

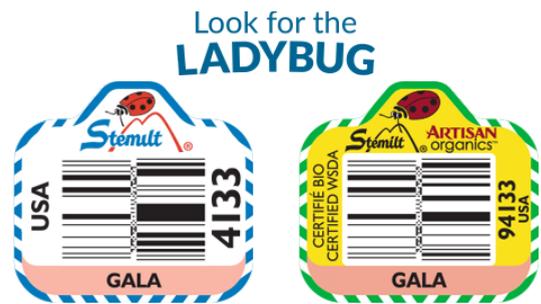
Stemilt uses its popular consumer website – Stemilt.com – in order to tell consumers to look for the ladybug and its logo on fresh fruits. Now, the company will strengthen that message by telling people to also look for its square-shaped stickers.

According to Stemilt Marketing Director Roger Pepperl, the new square PLU stickers replace the former circle-shaped stickers with a tab in order to make the Stemilt brand more prominent. The square shape makes for a slightly larger sticker than the circle-shaped allowed. Stemilt was able to increase the size of its logo in order to help consumers identify the brand, and also increase the size of the PLU number and variety name which cashiers commonly use when ringing up produce.

“We tested the new sticker shape in a small way last spring to make sure the function and integrity of the sticker didn't change with the new shape. We've since rolled the square-shaped sticker out to all apple varieties, and their organic counterparts. It's a subtle yet exciting change that we think will help us continue to build brand recognition and loyalty for years to come,” said Pepperl.

This is not the first time Stemilt has been on the forefront of an innovation when it comes to branding and produce stickers. In 1982, Stemilt founder Tom Mathison led the fruit industry by becoming the first to place branded stickers on apples. He believed that consumers should be able to easily recognize who grew their fruit and that the sticker would help tell a piece of his story.

“The square stickers are a continuation of Tom's foresight into branding our products. Whether someone had a good or bad experience with our fruits, he wanted them to be able to call on us and let us know. Transparency and differentiation continue to be part of our culture at Stemilt. The new square sticker keeps telling consumers who grew their fruit, while the shape helps make our World Famous Apples stand out and be remembered,” said Pepperl.

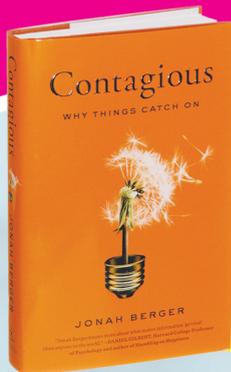


“We've already had consumers recognize a change in the shape of our apple stickers. It's been fun to share that the reason behind the swap was to help them easily identify our brand in order to enjoy our fruits,” said Pepperl.



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**NY TIMES BEST-SELLING
AUTHOR JONAH BERGER
ON FRESH BLENDERS**

“As a smoothie maker myself, I think Fresh Blenders is a great idea. It taps into the growing trend of blending and juicing with a healthy, fresh, and easy to use ingredient like apples.”

-Jonah Berger



Contact your Stemilt representative!

a marketing to kids success story

Lil Snappers®

kid size fruit

Kids are one of the most powerful consumer groups in the food industry today, a fact that speaks volumes considering they aren't the ones who actually make purchases. Marketing food to kids is something that the "junk food" industry has long practiced and in big ways. According to the Center for Science in the Public Interest's Food Marketing Workgroup, companies spend \$1.79 billion annually to market food to children. Approximately \$280 million of that is on healthy food products.

Though there is still a gap for the produce industry to make up in promoting its healthy products to kids, progress has been made thanks to an increase in packaged products for fruits and vegetables over the past few years. According to Stemilt Marketing Director Roger Pepperl, packaging allows companies the space needed to brand and message to any audience, and has helped Stemilt promote fruit directly to kids.

"Packaging has become an important vehicle for us in targeting specific demographic groups. Kids are an important audience for us at Stemilt because apples and pears are two of their preferred fruits. They are also the future shoppers for our entire industry. We believe that our ability to appeal to kids at a young age with great flavors and experiences with our fresh fruit will help in our goals of building lifelong fruit enthusiasts and brand loyalists," said Pepperl.

“
Lil Snappers® brings everything that parents need in a packaged produce item into one bag.”





In 2011, Stenilt introduced its Lil Snappers® brand to the marketplace. The brand packages premium quality, kid-sized apples or pears into convenient, grab-and-go 3 lb. pouch bags and uses playful characters to market the flavorful fruit inside to a wide age range of kids. Just four years later, the Lil Snappers® brand has evolved into the leading pouch bag brand for apples and pears by providing retailers with a focused program to appeal to today's busy parents and their children, while also boosting both volume and dollar sales to the produce department.

“Lil Snappers® brings everything that parents need in a packaged produce item into one bag. The package size of 3 pounds matches shoppers’ weekly purchasing habits by providing an apple or pear each day of the week to put in a child’s lunch or serve up as an afterschool snack. The fruit is sized just right for kids, and the variety line-up we offer includes different flavors in order to keep their interest and encourage the trial of new flavors,” said Pepperl.

The success of Lil Snappers® has been a result of thoughtful packaging, messaging, and marketing the product directly to consumers.

Introducing a new product in produce takes effort, Pepperl noted, but one of the advantages of the Lil Snappers® brand is in its ability to effectively message to its intended audience.

“We always talk about aligning the 4 P’s of marketing – price, promotion, product, and placement – in order to have a successful promotion. Lil Snappers® deliver great products which result in great eating experiences and repeat purchases. Meanwhile, you have a package that self-promotes to the end user through vibrant graphics and fun characters that appeal to a wide age group of children,” said Pepperl.



Stemilt also works on building Lil Snappers® brand awareness beyond the produce department through its heavy consumer marketing efforts.

“We partner with parent bloggers to create recipes and kid snacking ideas that are shared on their platforms, and ours as well. Using influencers in the food and parenting media sectors helps us create consumer awareness around Lil Snappers®. Ultimately, these efforts drive consumers to seek out Lil Snappers® at their stores and creates better results at the retail level,” said Pepperl.

The 2015/16 apple and pear crops will have good supplies of small-sized fruit, making Lil Snappers® an ideal merchandising vehicle for retailers to utilize all season long. “It’s a great year for building the Lil Snappers® brand in produce departments and Stemilt is ready to assist retailers in successfully marketing this great brand to kids and parents,” said Pepperl.



Bigger is Better for Pouch Bag Pears

Lil Snappers® 3 lb. pouch bags of pears consistently outperform 2 lb. Other brand pouches.

Consider these findings from 2014/15 Nielsen scan data:

Pear shoppers purchase an average of 1.7 pounds per trip. In 2014/15, Lil Snappers® 3lb. pouch bag pears averaged \$1.59/lb. while 2lb. Other brand pouch bag pears averaged \$1.78/lb.

$\$1.59 \times 3 \text{ lb. (Lil Snappers®)} = \mathbf{\$4.77 \text{ average retail price}}$

$\$1.78 \times 2 \text{ lb. (Other brand)} = \mathbf{\$3.56 \text{ average retail price}}$

Lil Snappers® pouch bag pears return the highest retail dollar transaction size while other brands show 25% fewer dollars. In 2014/15, Lil Snappers® 3lb. pouch bag pears moved 7x more volume than 2 lb. Other brand pouch bag pears.



haricot verts & roasted bosc pears with herbed marcona almonds

Bosc pears add natural sweetness and spin to a classic Thanksgiving or winter holiday side dish – green beans!

Serves 4

Ingredients

2 to 3 Stemilt Bosc Pears, peeled, cored and halved
1 pound Haricot Verts, stems trimmed
½ medium onion, diced
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
¾ cup herbed “Valencian” marcona almonds

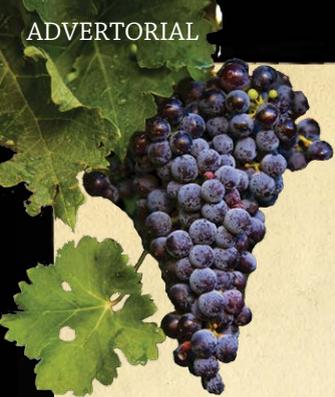
Procedure

Heat oven to 375 degrees F. Place beans and onions in center of a large baking sheet. Place halved pears in outer corners of baking sheet. Drizzle beans, onions and pears with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Gently toss beans and onions to mix oil and seasoning through and spread out in one layer (it’s okay if they overlap a bit... use a second pan if it’s more than just a bit); leave halved pears to nest in the corners of the pan. Place in oven to roast for 20 to 25 minutes. Remove from oven and slice pears. Plate beans and pears to your liking and top with marcona almonds.

Nutritional Information:

Per Serving: Calories 278.8 (63.9% from fat); Fat 19.8g (sat 1.8g, poly 1.0g, mono 5.0g); Protein 6.5g; Carbohydrates 25.8g; Fiber 9.6g; Sugar 13.8g; Cholesterol 0mg; Potassium 234.8mg; Sodium 665.4mg.





Stemilt Creek Winery

We love our Wine Club Members!



Jan and Kyle Mathison reserve the very best of their wines and hospitality for the members of Stemilt Creek Winery Wine Club. Join us as a wine club member and celebrate the joy of fine wine, good friends, and passion for life! As a member for our wine club you receive the following:

- A generous 30% Savings on each Wine Club Release
- 6 bottles of wine shipped 2 times per year (Spring and Fall Wine Club Release)
- 20% off case purchases throughout the year
- 10% off wine purchases throughout the year
- Only wine club members can order from our Library Selection Wines
- Wine Club Members get first rights on available new releases
- Monthly Newsletter
- Invitation to Wine Club Party for Fall Release
- To sign up for the Stemilt Creek Winery Wine club contact:

winery@stemiltcreekwinery.com*

*Due to Shipping Laws, not all states are open for shipping wine.

Please contact us at winery@stemiltcreekwinery.com for availability in your state.





It is with great pride that we honor the pioneers who came before us through our wines at Stemilt Creek Winery. Our site-specific wines are harvested near the land planted in the late 1800's by homestead pioneer, Thomas Cyle Mathison. Jan Mathison, our winemaker, lovingly crafts the wines using grapes that Kyle Mathison grows on the same land that his

family has cultivated for over a century. The winemaking style tends to build the wine with brawny tannins to shoulder earthy flavors evident in the unique terrain of Stemilt Hill, including the use of Kyle's World Famous Compost. Collectively, Stemilt Creek wines exude brawny characteristics consistently in a coherent full-bodied and lasting flavor much like the intriguing story of the Mathison family legacy.



A Day's Work - Honors Scottish Pioneer, Thomas Cyle Mathison - A Day's Work's flavor, structure, and finish can be summed up in the powerful story behind homestead pioneer, Thomas Cyle Mathison. Seizing opportunity to own land, he declared in a strong Scottish accent, "That I cometh to this land with nothing but a days work in me hans." These mighty hands dug ditches, mined for gold, and ultimately planted the seeds for the one of the largest fruit companies in the world. His robust spirit harmonizes with the boldness of this Bordeaux style blend with sturdy structure and a black cherry finish!

Boss Lady - AJ Mathison - Spectacular spice balances with a mouthful of black-strap molasses which is held up by a mineral note resembling flint - this wine is dazzling. Full of electricity and pizzazz, it dances across the tongue for a long, satisfying finish sure to leave a lasting impression. Don't let all the fun fool you. AJ Mathison, known as Boss Lady, had a fiery fortitude and passion for family and the land. There is a serious side to this 2nd vintage of "Boss Lady" with sturdy tannins, toasted oak, and full flavor finish. Enjoy a sip and let your taste buds tango.

Caring Passion - TK Mathison - Passionate. Caring. Focused. Anyone who ever met TK instantly recognized his genuine personality. He introduced himself with confident honesty and finesse - never hiding a thing - he never had to. He knew who he was. His crew and their families knew he cared about them as much as the work and the land. This 2nd vintage of "Caring Passion" resembles that trait, introducing itself with pure Merlot characteristics: soft tannins, ripe red cherry, coffee bean, and cassis with a hint of vanilla oak backing up the fruit. Just what a Merlot should be - comfortable - just like TK. Sit with it a while and enjoy.

what's new in produce: storytelling



WHAT is your Story?

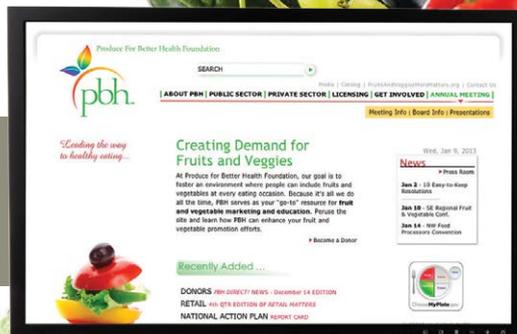
The advent of social media opened the door for brands to share their unique story directly with their core customers. Telling the stories that make your brand different from the next is nothing new, but the vast opportunities the digital world has opened up to get your stories out there is. From social and blog posts to video and one-on-one interactions with your customers, here are **five tips to keep in mind when telling the special stories of your brand and your produce department.**

- 1. Be authentic.** Every brand story you share should be based upon authenticity. Combine facts or events with personality and passion to tell consumers the stories that make your brand special. Every company has a unique story to share and telling it accurately is a great way to begin building fans of your brand.
- 2. Include personality.** Whether your brand is fun and quirky, very traditional, or somewhere in-between, it's important to make sure the stories you build and share have that personality infused into them. It provides the listener (your shoppers) with the voice of your brand which is important in building rapport.
- 3. Keep it simple and concise.** It's important to have a beginning, middle, and end to every story you share, but simplicity and being concise are key in this day and age. An infographic from OneSpot™ revealed that the average U.S. citizen consumes 100,500 digital words every day. It's vital to create stories that grab a person's attention and also remain short and to the point.
- 4. Show, don't tell.** The same OneSpot™ infographic tells us that humans process images 60 times faster than words! Use powerful graphics and even video to effectively tell your story. Chances are that your audience won't just listen to it, but remember it thanks to the visuals.
- 5. Be consistent.** A great opportunity exists in every produce department to engage directly with your shoppers. Make sure every produce team member is well trained to share the same story of your suppliers, or overall produce department mission with your shoppers. The version of the story each person delivers will differ from the next, but consistency in storytelling is vital in building trust and loyalty of your brand.

Bountiful Resources



PBHFoundation.org



Free access to PBH's up-to-date
fruit & veggie marketing research

Free downloadable marketing toolkits

Sign-up for PBH's free fruit and vegetable
communications (*Recipe of the Week* and
Fruits & Veggies in the News)

Free social media tweets & posts

Find out how you can use the
Fruits & Veggies—More Matters logo

Sign-up for PBH's free health related fruit
& veggie news and research magazine,
Fruit & Veggie Connection



@FruitsAndVeggiesMoreMatters



fvmorematters



FruitsAndVeggiesMoreMatters



@Fruits_Veggies

parting shot

A splash of red pears against green and blue makes for a beautiful harvest scene.





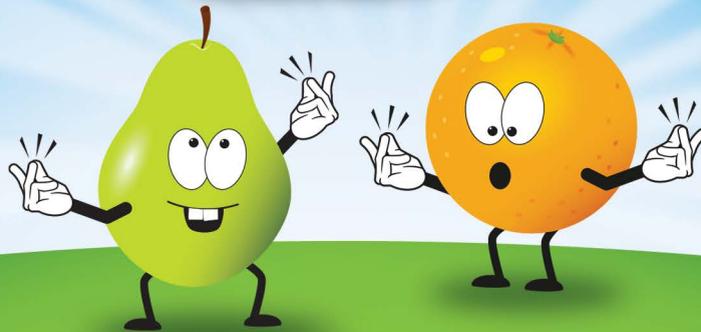
a cooperative of family farms since 1893™

Lil Snappers™

kid size fruit



Tasty, snappy, and perfectly sized for the lil ones in your life



Two great companies, one great brand!

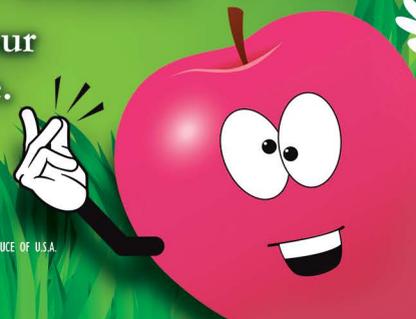
For additional information, please contact your local Stemilt or Sunkist sales representative.

— APPLES, PEARS & CITRUS —



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