

# HILLTOP

Issue #19 Fall/Winter 2020/21



P.12 **Thirsty for Teamwork**

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**Unlock Flavor**

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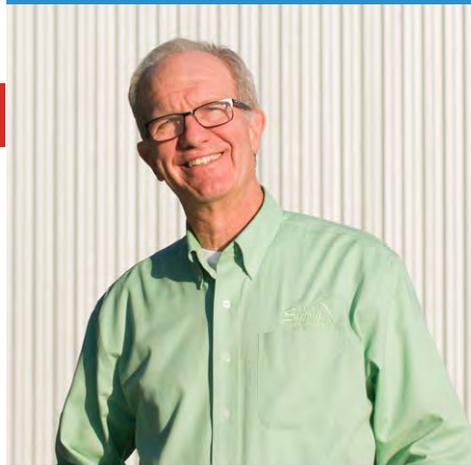
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# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



## CULTURE

By: West Mathison

I know its cliché to say, but what a year 2020 has been. The tree fruit industry is unpredictable by nature and facing the challenges of weather and labor is normal life for us. The start of 2020 brought those same challenges, but had an additional layer, or as I like to call it, a strong headwind: tough economic challenges for apple and pear orchards brought on by oversupply and rising production costs.

At Stemilt, we had done the work to prepare for these tough economic times. It's a cycle that we know repeats itself in our business, and we were armed and ready to provide continuity to the business and weather the storm.

Then, COVID-19 (Coronavirus) arrived. Demand for apples and pears at retail surged overnight, and we had a new challenge in front of us: keeping our team members safe while we continued the essential work of providing fresh fruit to our customers and consumers.

Being in this unpredictable industry, I've come to understand that so much of what we do is out of our control, so I've always tried to counteract that by leading our teams to focus on the things that we can control. When the financial metrics didn't look promising, we instead looked at Famous First, an initiative that would drive us to reduce repack and fruit transfers by 25 percent. It's amazing to share that we surpassed that goal and reduced repack and transfers by 34 percent year-over-year! What a phenomenal achievement that was driven by better collaboration and a commitment to be World Famous, the first time...every time.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been another challenge where so much is out of our control. It's a marathon, not a sprint, and something that we truly just have to get through. We want to do the best that we can to manage the issue while keeping a focus on the future. Empathy has been ever present around Stemilt this year, and we've leaned into our cultural norms to work together through circumstances that we never imagined finding ourselves in.

It's been a trying year, but as an eternal optimist, I know it's also been a year of learning and growth at Stemilt. Our teams have adapted to change quickly and effectively and have shown up in big ways to support one another and encourage each other often through our High 5 peer-to-peer recognition program. Through all the unknowns and things that are out of our control, we've continued to stay the course to see our mission of cultivating people and delighting consumers with our World Famous Fruit.

As we close the chapter on 2020, I say "bring it on, 2021." The Stemilt team has proven its adaptable and ready to conquer any challenges – whether we can control them or not – that come our way.



West Mathison

An aerial photograph of a vast agricultural orchard. The orchard is divided into numerous rectangular blocks by light-colored dirt roads. The trees are planted in very tight, parallel rows, creating a grid-like pattern. In the upper right quadrant, there is a large, rectangular pond with a blue border. The surrounding landscape includes other green fields and some farm buildings in the distance.

# OH HELLO, CAPSTONE

## ORCHARD

By: Katie Harmon

**The What:**

Capstone is a modern oasis for up and coming apples and cherries. Nestled in the Columbia Basin near Mattawa, Washington, this orchard grows over 890 acres of conventional apple and cherry varieties. Stemilt also uses this lush growing region for some of its test blocks.

**The When:**

Cherry harvest starts in June and transitions into apple harvest in August.

**The How:**

Capstone thrives in its location thanks to its nutrient-rich soil, access to water, like the Columbia River, and many sunshine filled days. This region has farmed apples and pears for decades. Varieties like Pink Lady® apples do especially well due to the heat and sandy soil. The apple's bright pink color is brought on by the area's long, hot summer days.

**The Varieties:****Apples**

- Fuji
- Gala
- Honeycrisp
- Rave®
- Pink Lady®
- Cosmic Crisp®

**Cherries**

- Bing
- Chelan
- Rainier
- Lapin

**Fun Facts:**

It's one of Stemilt's youngest orchards. It was planted in 2014.

It has several new plantings, including test varieties.

While it only grows conventional right now, organic is on the horizon and Stemilt's Agriculture Services team has begun the three-year transition to grow certified organic apples.

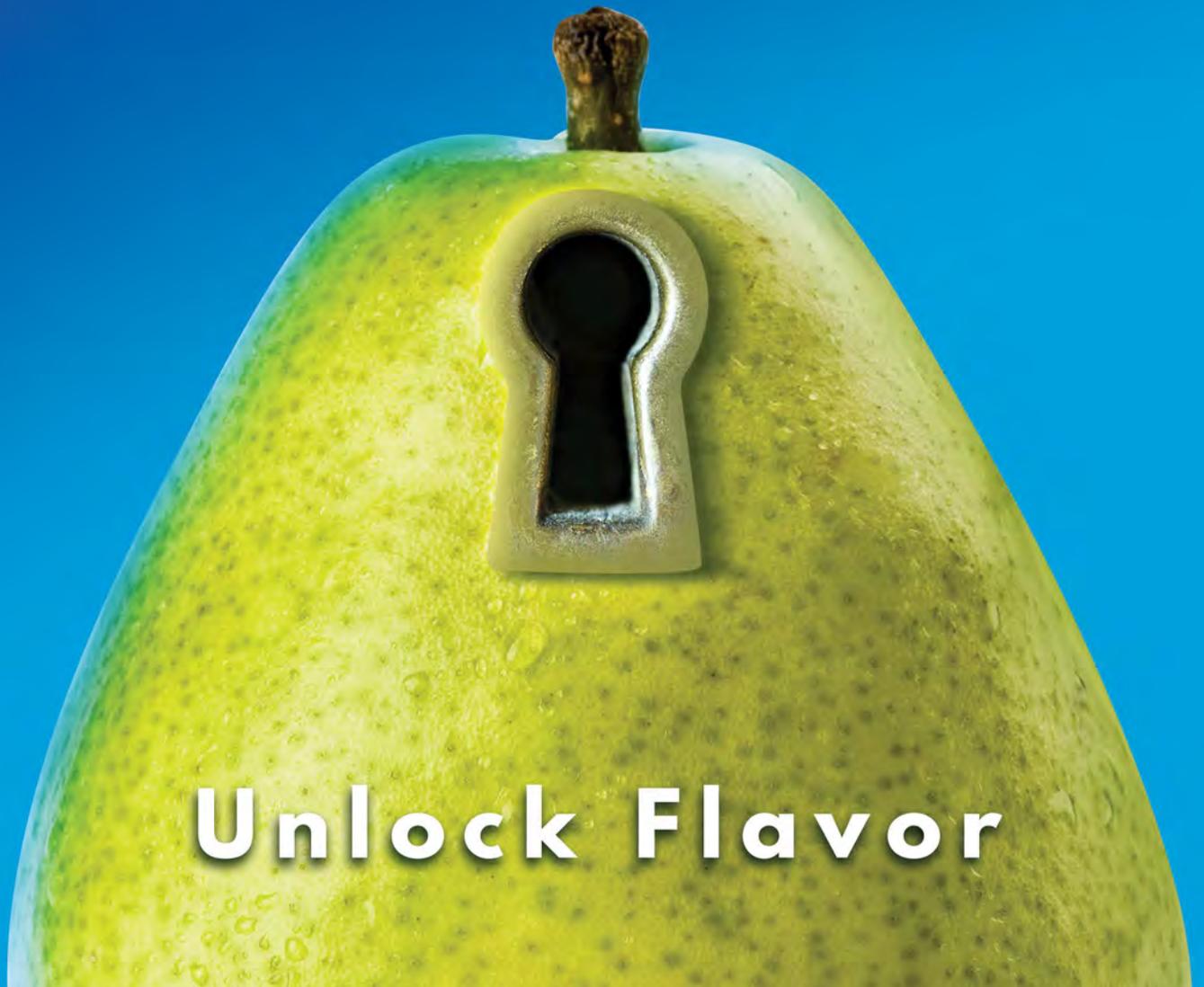
6 reservoirs for fresh water can be found throughout Capstone.

Capstone is as long as The National Mall (to walk from the Capitol Building to the Lincoln Memorial) and one mile deep.

In the dead of summer, temperatures can get up to 105 degrees Fahrenheit and in the coldest of winters, temperatures can drop to 0 degrees Fahrenheit.



**Stemilt**  
**RUSHING RIVERS**  
— THE BEST PEAR LOCALES IN THE WORLD —



**Unlock Flavor**

## CULTURE

By: Katie Harmon

# MATHISON FAMILY AWARD WINNER

## *Tim Harrington*



**In 2019, Tim Harrington was one of two recipients of the inaugural Mathison Family Award. This award recognizes employees who exemplify Stemilt's values of integrity, trust, innovation, humility, and stewardship over the course of the year. Learn more about Tim, his role at Stemilt and why he was awarded this prestigious honor.**

**W**hen Tim Harrington, merchandising manager for Stemilt, learned he was awarded the Mathison Family Award, he said “Are you fooling me? I’m just an average joe – it should be somebody else.”

Humbled, honored and a bit embarrassed, Harrington finally accepted the award (mentally-speaking that is) from the company he’s been with since 2009. Tim’s contagious personality, hard work ethic and ability to charm people is what makes Harrington such a worthy recipient of this award and what caught the attention of the executive team at Stemilt.

According to Harrington’s nomination submitted by Stemilt’s Vice President of Sales & Marketing, Mike Taylor, Director of Sales, Tate Mathison, and Marketing Director Roger Pepperl: “Tim has an uncanny ability to adapt his communication approach to transfer his passion onto others, and time and again has turned consumers, customers, and even strangers in a hotel lobby into everyday enthusiasts for our World Famous Fruit.”

Harrington is the lone occupant of Stemilt’s East Coast office, nestled in New Hampshire. As a merchandising manager, Harrington is a liaison between Stemilt’s sales and marketing departments and their retail partners, often making store visits and helping retailers with merchandising tactics. With a background in produce and retail, Harrington understands the business and is naturally skilled at providing customers with promotion solutions that fit their strategy to ultimately raise the category bar.

Harrington is also well known for his unforgettable Stemilt University trips. While based in New Hampshire, Tim has taken it upon himself to make Central Washington his second home, often encouraging retailers to make the trip out west to show off Stemilt’s immaculate growing operations. “Tim’s enthusiasm for Stemilt’s product is what make the trip so fun for retailers,” explains Pepperl. “He brings out produce managers, category buyers, directors – you name it – and creates a trip that is full of laughter, education, and fun. He represents Stemilt’s values and norms each day and perfectly demonstrates Stemilt’s mission – to cultivate people and delight consumers. He is extremely worthy of this award and more than deserving.”

### **From Jocelyn Gerard, Stemilt’s merchandising manager and Tim’s coworker:**

“From day one, Tim has made a hugely positive impact on my work-life at Stemilt. I immediately sensed he was a good person when I met him.

Of course, that impression was 100 percent true. His overall knowledge of retail and generosity with that knowledge has been invaluable to me professionally. His passion for Stemilt and sense of fun are completely contagious everywhere he goes.

He has been a great mentor, but he is also a colleague and friend I can call and talk to about the good, bad, and the ugly both personally and professionally. I know many customers call him friend. And I am proud to as well.”



## SUSTAINABILITY: PLANET

By: Katie Harmon

# THIRSTY FOR TEAMWORK

**Becoming EFI certified is no easy feat, yet our Quincy, WA teams conquered the challenge. Now, they are taking their newly-found skills and putting them to the test.**

To be World Famous, you must start with a few simple steps:

- 1) Believe in our mission: to cultivate people and delight consumers.
- 2) Follow Stemilt's 5 values: Integrity, Innovation, Humility, Trust and Stewardship
- 3) Think outside the box.

And that's exactly what our teams in Quincy, Washington did to complete their first Equitable Food Initiative (EFI) project. The Quincy team achieved EFI certification in September, where a third-party audit proved the farm met 300 standards for labor practices, food safety, and pest management.

The EFI Quincy leadership team, which is made up of 12 Stemilt team members, oversees a large orchard that grows apples and cherries in the Columbia Basin. The Quincy team is the first to achieve EFI certification for Stemilt and has been working to become a cross-functional leadership team that will foster continuous improvement throughout its operations.

The Quincy leadership team received a received an anonymous note in its EFI suggestion box to expand the availability of water throughout the orchard earlier this year. Not long ago, team members could bring their own water into orchards, but updated food safety guidance required personal water containers to remain outside of the orchard. The Quincy team eagerly deployed around improving the process of getting water jugs closer to the areas our team members were working and made improving the availability to water their first official continuous improvement project as part of the EFI program.

"EFI's approach to continuous improvement aligns with Stemilt's core values," explains Brianna Shales, Stemilt senior marketing manager. "EFI's soft skill training around leadership, communication, problem solving, and conflict resolution provides our team members with a way to adapt through continuous improvement. They worked through all of these skills when they addressed how to get more water to work areas."





To resolve the issue, the team moved through a robust problem-solving process which doesn't happen overnight. In total, the water jug project took about two months, starting with identifying the problem, to where they are now, which is moving through the evaluation process. The team researched what was needed and how more jugs could be purchased, stored, filled, cleaned, and distributed.

"This is collaboration at work rather than one individual guessing at what is needed to address an issue," explains Shales. "The team worked together to identify a series of concepts and designs before landing on their final design. The Quincy team ended up doubling the amount of water jugs placed strategically around orchard blocks and finalizing a stand design which is currently being installed throughout the orchard."

After implementing this process, the team has created more confidence among employees. The crew members now know they will have easy access to water which results in more efficiencies in the field and the EFI leadership team has gained confidence in their teamwork, response to concerns and problem-solving skills. This only makes Stemilt's journey to growing and sharing our World Famous fruit with consumers that much more achievable.

"Our teams have done well with this first project and look forward to tackling the next one," states Shales. "They are currently reviewing the latest suggestions and will decide on their next project in the coming weeks."

Stemilt continues to seek EFI certifications at other ranches in the future, but is extremely pleased with the effort and dedication the Quincy team has shown throughout the process.

□ □

**After implementing this process, the team has created more confidence among employees.** □ □



"We are extremely proud of our team who dove into this EFI process headfirst," explains Shales. "Not only will the team continue to work together to make improvements throughout their operations, but they're striving to exceed current standards and set new ones so we can continue to cultivate and delight."



## CULTURE

By: Katie Harmon

# IN THE MIND OF *Jay Fulbright*

Stemilt's Executive Vice President Jay Fulbright is a man of dignity. Strong and motivated to succeed, Jay takes a moment to discuss leadership skills, his motivations, and why people are the cornerstone to Stemilt's success.

## Leadership:

When I think of leadership, I think of mentoring and helping others reach their greatest potential. Stemilt incorporates this same mentality within its walls. It is a company that constantly seeks to help employees improve by providing the tools to get there, regardless of what position they are in.

## Obstacles:

An obstacle is a way to overcome something to reach success. Honestly, I thrive when there are challenges to face. Obstacles shouldn't be viewed as a deterrent to move forward, they should be accepted as a way to reach success.

## Mentors:

Mentors can help make good people better. It's a person to look up to and help people along the way to become all they can be. A few people I consider mentors are:

**West Mathison**, president of Stemilt. He has a nice, calm demeanor, even in the face of a problem or issue. Employees sense that and it goes a long way.

**Sandro DeNadai**, former president of Dovex Fruit Company. He always sees the bright side in things and is a very smart businessman. He taught me that you don't have anything without people. If you don't have happy people, you won't have a happy business.

**David Millheisler**, Stemilt's former CFO, was also a great mentor to me. He really understood the inner workings of the financial system and that always impressed me.

## Motivation:

I am most motivated when I am challenged. Whether it is at work, in an athletic endeavor, or in my personal life – I use that motivation to come out the other side as a better individual. I am also motivated by people who perform their jobs well. Roger Pepperl, Stemilt's marketing director, motivates me. His passion is radiant throughout the company. I feel fortunate that we'd had him here for so many years. Another Stemilt employee who has been motivating to watch is Mark Blakney, our Chief Accounting Officer. He stepped up in a time when Stemilt needed him most and picked up the pieces. He has done very well, and it has been very inspiring to watch his growth.



**Obstacles shouldn't be viewed as a deterrent to move forward, they should be accepted as a way to reach success.**



## Do Differently:

When I was younger, I wish I had been more tuned into people and had less of the "my way or the highway" type mindset. I needed to be more kind and less self-absorbed. Before I worked at Stemilt, I was at Dovex Fruit Company, but the two companies merged in 2010 and honestly, I have really grown since then. Stemilt has taught me that we are part of a team. The management system adopted principals that are meant to lead and guide others to success which helped me become more sensitive to people's needs. Stemilt is about the people and takes people into consideration when we make business decisions. We can't have World Famous fruit if we don't have World Famous people to help us get there.

## Advice:

Accept the things you can change and things you cannot, don't worry about.

## Dream Job in Alternate Universe:

Professional Baseball Player. I am a huge New York Yankees and Atlanta Braves fan. My hero is Mickey Mantle and has been since I was a boy.

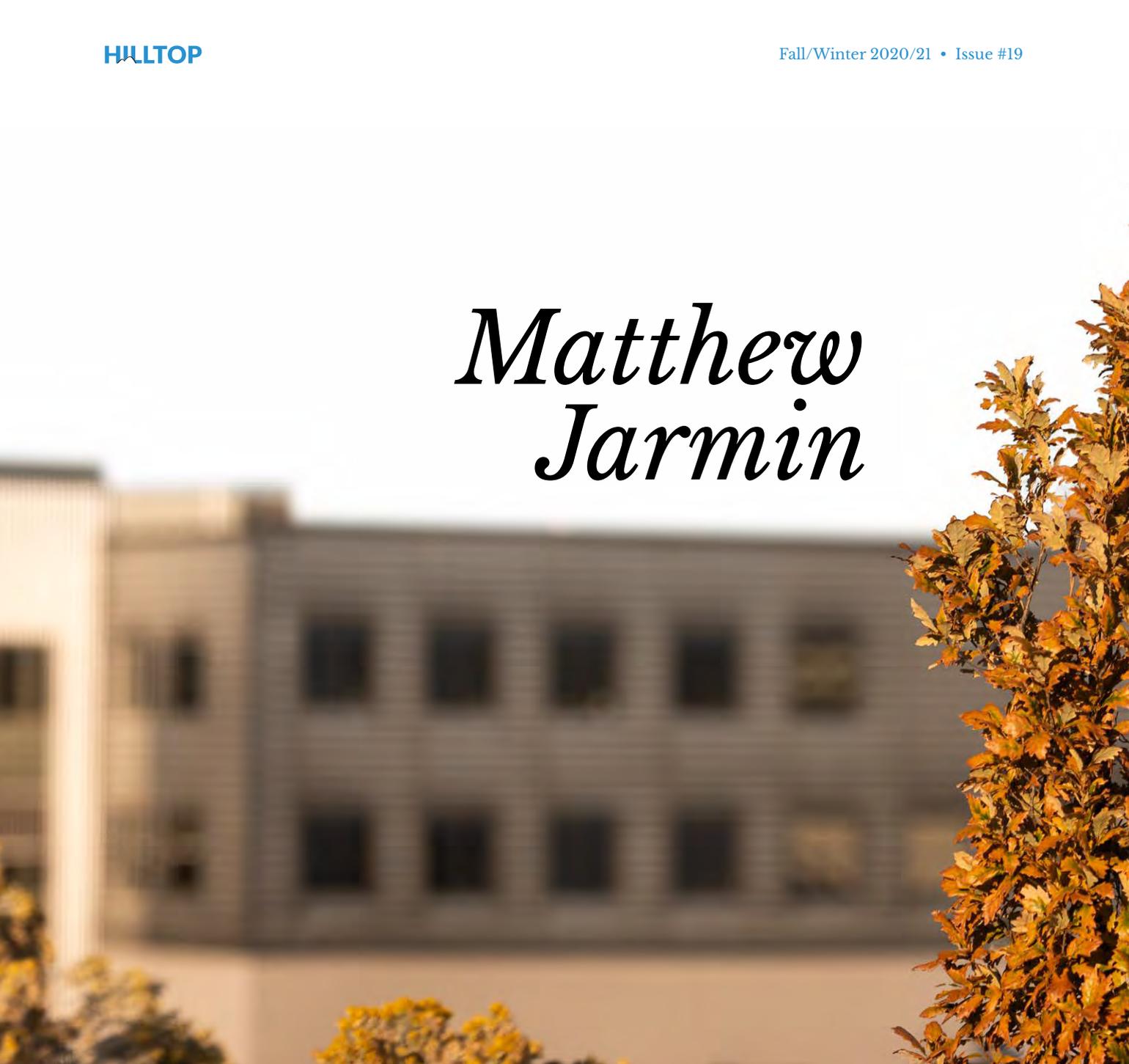
# FAMILIAR FACE



## CULTURE

By: Katie Harmon

**I** had been working in the organic industry for about 5 years when I met Mike Taylor (Stemilt Vice President of Sales and Marketing). Organic at that time was a smaller niche in the produce industry. Stemilt saw an opportunity and was rapidly transitioning more acreage to organic. Mike Taylor approached me about joining the Sales team as an organic sales specialist. My wife Anne and I were newly married and living in the Skagit Valley, north of Seattle. We decided to visit Wenatchee before I committed to the job. It was a gorgeous fall day; the crews were harvesting apples and leaves were changing colors – we were sold and never looked back. I started in January of 2001 and will be completing my 20th year at the end of December.



# *Matthew Jarmin*

**What is your current position today?**

Today, I am a Sales Account Manager where I manage retail and wholesale accounts in the United States and Canada, selling all that Stemilt grows and markets, including organics.

**What does your day-to-day look like?**

My day-to-day consists of calling on retailers and wholesalers accounts around North America and helping them grow their businesses as well as create World Famous promotions with our products. Each day gets filled up quickly with selling, filling orders and looking forward to the next promotion and season ahead. I'm a people person, so I enjoy conversing with people for a living. I have been working with many customers for several years and really enjoy talking to them each day and grateful for the friendships made.

**What do you like about your job?**

I love fruit and selling it as well. It's an exciting and dynamic category for the produce industry. It's always changing, and each day presents new challenges never like the one before. I like the people—everyone from farm to retail are passionate about the produce business.



**I have been working with many customers for several years and really enjoy talking to them each day**



*Matthew Jarmin*  
Sales Account Manager



**What do you do outside of work? What are your hobbies?**

I love the outdoors. When I'm not working, you can usually find me outside somewhere. In the winter and early spring, my family and I are usually skiing. My daughters participate on the competitive ski team here in Wenatchee at our local ski area, Mission Ridge. I have 3 that race downhill, one that competes Nordic skiing. In the summer and fall, we are usually biking, hiking, water skiing and mountain biking. We are super busy and active and I feel blessed we can do these activities as a family.

**What are some of the challenges?**

Managing expectations. The business changes rapidly. We can't predict the weather and sometimes the crop or pack isn't what is expected. When packing ceases and orders are pro-rated due to a rain event, it's never easy. But it's part of the job, so you learn to adapt and work through what comes your way. Also, our business certainly has seasonality to it, but there is plenty of overlap from season to season which keeps things busy all year round — it's good, but a challenge!

**What is some of the best advice you've been given?**

I heard Tom Mathison say this often... "In this business, success isn't going to just fall out of the sky into your shirt pocket."

**Who do you look up to?**

That's an easy one—my dad. He was responsible for getting me into the agriculture business. He was a Horticulturist for Washington State University for many years and part-time farmer as well. He's retired now, but still gardens and enjoys driving his Kubota around. He loved and still really does love a good hard day's work and enjoys the challenge of physical labor. He was a big advocate about working hard and sticking to it until the job is done to completion. He is a man of principal, a good role model who loves Jesus. He is delighted I'm in the fruit business.

**What is your favorite Stemilt fruit?**

That's easy. Sweetango® apples.




# LIGHTNING ROUND

**Favorite Breakfast Food**

Yogurt and granola

**One song that always gets stuck in your head**

Don't Stop Believin' by Journey

**3 Things You Can't Live Without**

Outdoors, coffee, my family

**Sweet or Salty?**

Salty

**3 Words To Describe Stemilt**

Fun. Forward Thinking

**If you could have dinner with anyone (dead or alive) who would it be?**

Jerry Seinfeld

**Dream Job (if you weren't working at Stemilt)?**

Heli Ski Guide

**Weirdest Food You've Eaten**

Rattlesnake

## FRUIT

By: Katie Harmon

# THE BAG THAT DOES IT ALL

Meet Stemilt's newest packaging option that satisfies the needs of selling bulk fruit but in a shopper-demanded bag: the 100% recyclable Farm + Famous paper tote bag program.



## What is it?

Meet Stemilt's newest packaging option that satisfies the needs of selling bulk fruit but in shopper-demanded bags: the 100% recyclable Farm + Famous paper tote bag program.

## What else should I know?

The Euro holds 8/4lb. random-weight tote bags.



## How does it help the retailer?

The Farm + Famous tote bag is a grab-and-go pack that rings off the PLU so that you can sell by the pound. It displays instantly and meets consumer demands for sustainable packaging.

## It's How2Recycle Approved

The Farm + Famous paper tote bag is 100% recyclable and features the How2Recycle label on the bottom of the tote bag. With the How2Recycle symbol placed on the Farm + Famous packaging, it indicates to the consumer exactly how to recycle the package at home. This provides consumers with transparency and encourages recycling.

## The Outcome:

Simple: delighted consumers.



# NEW FACE



## CULTURE

By: Katie Harmon

**I** Tell readers how you found yourself at Stemilt.

was raised in the fruit industry. My grandpa was the CEO of Trout Blue Chelan, a fruit growers' co-op and my parents own a fruit stand in Entiat, Washington (about 20 miles north of Wenatchee) called Trader John's so fruit has always been in my blood. When I was in college, I worked seasonal jobs within the fruit world. I knew I always wanted to end up somewhere that involved fruit, so I just kept my eyes out. Then, about three years ago, I saw a position open for Sales Assistant position at Stemilt. I interviewed and got it. My start day was sort of monumental as it was the 20th anniversary of Grandpa's passing, so I just felt that I was in the place I needed to be.

# *Auna Lundberg*



**Tell us about your position and what you do at Stemilt.**

After a little less than a year as a Sales Assistant to Matthew Jarmin and Brian Wyatt, a new role opened and I was soon named the Sales & Operations Coordinator. I now work with Mandy Land, Stemilt's Allocation Specialist and Cindy Hartman, Procurement & Import Fruit Manager. My main role is to monitor and coordinate warehouse transfers and help load off partner warehouses.



**I love puzzles  
and my whole  
job is basically  
one giant  
puzzle.**



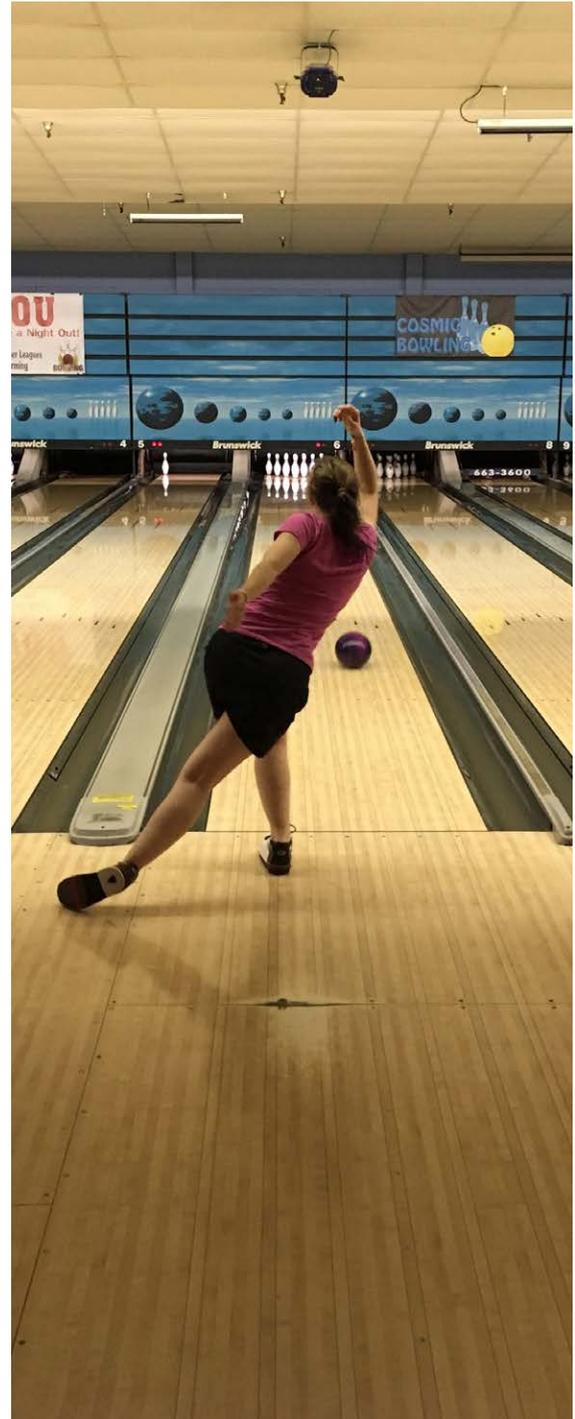
*Auna Lundberg*  
Sales and Operations Coordinator

### **What do you like about your job?**

I love puzzles and my whole job is basically one giant puzzle. Every day, I consolidate orders. I take time to sift through them, coordinate and ensure that everything is correct. It is methodical and my brain thrives off it. I also enjoy being part of the team, buffering between sales and shipping. The shipping department works hard, so I am always trying to ensure that the order is clean, so they don't have issues. I find great fulfillment at the end of the day when orders are filled, and the process was smooth.

### **What challenges do you face?**

Mostly the push back from people. Orders are modified, fruit availability shifts, and pack schedules change at the last second so it can be a task to make things work and still please everybody. But I do enjoy the dynamics as they are challenging and fun. Allocation can be hard at times as it's tough to work with a limited supply of fruit and figure out how to divvy it among customers. Another challenge is learning how to adapt to the many personalities we work with and understanding their process. I have found it is crucial to address conflicts and issues early on.



**What do you do outside of work?**

I bowl. A lot. I have been bowling for about 7 years now. Eventually, I would like to bowl in the Professional Women's Tour. When I'm not bowling, I build jigsaw puzzles or write. I'm currently working on a novel series. I work with a group of my college friends where we share our works and review over email since we all live in different states. It's a great way to learn. Occasionally, I will go work up at the fruit stand. I also enjoy going to the movies. Even when no one else wants to go, I am content going by myself.

**How do you stay motivated?**

With the current times, I take things day by day. I like working out and staying active. It is hard to see past the week you're in as things change so fast. My family also motivates me. They taught me that it's important to keep getting up and going to work every day. Both my parents worked hard over the years and still do. I try to set out each day and complete the tasks that must be done. Some days are tougher than others, but I just keep moving forward.

**Favorite Stemilt fruit?**

Honestly, I don't eat many apples, but when I do it's a SweeTango® apple. It's so crunchy and great for apple nachos. When Rave® is in season, I like treating myself to one of those every now and then. I also enjoy a d'Anjou pear around February after they have sat for a few months. They are super tasty when they are sliced and drizzled with honey.




## LIGHTNING ROUND

**Favorite Breakfast Food**

Waffles or French Toast

**One song that always gets stuck in your head**

Hakuna Matata from the Lion King

**3 Things You Can't Live Without**

Books, bowling balls, and fluffy blankets

**Sweet or Salty?**

Tangy

**If you could have dinner with anyone (dead or alive) who would it be?**

My grandfather (Dad's dad)

**3 Words To Describe Stemilt**

Trust the Ladybug

**Dream Job (if you weren't working at Stemilt)?**

Professional Bowler or a Mega Million Novelist like J.K. Rowling

**Weirdest Food You've Eaten**

Rice with Tartar Sauce

# THE BRAND FATHER



## CULTURE

By: Katie Harmon

**A man many know as Roger Pepperl, is saying so long to the produce industry and heading out onto the best thing: being a grandfather and retirement.**

**I**t's difficult to sum up Roger Pepperl in just one sentence.

Is he a branding wizard? Yes. He is the king of one-liners and analogies that make you stop and think, "how did he come with that?" You bet. Is he a Michigan State obsessed, dog-lover who fights for his people and is constantly churning up new and exciting ideas that keeps his marketing department on their toes? You better believe it.

But after 40 years of early mornings, PMA tradeshows, customer dinners, and thinking up of new campaign ideas while mowing his lawn, Roger Pepperl is hanging up his Stemilt hat and embarking on his next adventure: retirement and being a grandfather.

"What Roger did at Stemilt and for our marketing department is going to define Stemilt for decades to come," states Brianna Shales, Stemilt senior marketing manager and Roger's confidant. "Roger's passion and dedication to the industry has been felt by many and he changed the course of the produce industry through his branding efforts and vision."

Roger was brought onto the Stemilt team by founder, Tom Mathison, to create a marketing department over 20 years ago. Since then, he turned a non-existent marketing department into a full force, well-oiled machine. From Stemilt's newest brand, Rave® apples to the popular Lil Snappers® kid-size fruit brand, Roger has taken several commodity items and turned them into something notable for consumers to enjoy.



“Lil Snappers® kid-size fruit was a 45-minute think tank idea that developed into one of our most successful and well-known brands to date,” explains Shales. “Roger saw something others didn’t and ran with it. He has always been good at that (but it was always a bit scary for his team!). Moon Cherries® was another idea like that. Cherries can easily be commoditized due to their short season, but Roger refused to let something great go unknown. He created something spectacular.”

Before coming to Stemilt, Roger spent 21 years at Meijer, a midwestern grocery chain, learning the ins and outs of the retail world. Roger worked various roles, however, his most memorable being a buyer and merchandiser, which allowed him to experience the dynamic between grower-shippers and the retailer. This is also where he first met Tom Mathison, Stemilt founder and the man who ultimately convinced Roger to join the other side.

“Tom and Roger had an extremely special relationship,” explains West Mathison, Stemilt president and Tom’s grandson. “Their passion and love for the industry fed off each other and they shared the same goal which was to provide consumers around the globe with high quality fresh produce. This passion helped shape Stemilt into who we are today: a high-quality service provider whose mission is to cultivate people and delight consumers. Roger has been instrumental in making this mission a reality.”

“Roger sets out every day to fight commoditization in produce and tell the brand stories that make our industry so unique,” explains Shales. “He spends every day dreaming of ways to share our company story, seeing brands as the building block towards achieving higher produce consumption to benefit the entire industry.”

Roger has been responsible for many brands and initiatives that carry the Stemilt name, including Stemilt’s Artisan Organics™ program, Kyle’s Pick® cherries, Piñata® apples, Apple Lover 5lb. packs, 5 River Islands® cherries, Rushing Rivers® pears, Stemilt’s sustainability program Responsible Choice®, and Stemilt’s latest internal branding campaign, Famous First, a program dedicated to improving the supply chain, where the focus starts in the orchard and doesn’t end until Stemilt’s product is in the consumer’s hand.

However, two of Roger’s most notable brands have been Lil Snappers® kid-size fruit and A Half Mile Closer to the Moon® cherries.



**Roger saw  
something  
others didn’t  
and ran  
with it.**



While Roger's branding efforts create quite a picture of success within the industry, Roger's passion for the industry really lied within his passion for his people. Not only does Roger see his people as his biggest asset, he believes in them as well. He is constantly pushing his employees and others throughout Stemilt to build up their strengths, work on their weaknesses, and push themselves to seek out new challenges.

"Roger has worked to develop each and every one of his employee's skills, so they can bring their best foot forward," explains Shales. "He believes in the power of continued education and always encourages us to keep reading, exploring, and learning. He wants us to look beyond our industry and into others so that we can continue to raise the bar within the world of fresh produce."

## Roger made a mark on many. His fellow team members throughout Stemilt reflect on some of their favorite memories.

### *West Mathison*

*President*

"Roger always strived to be creative and edgy. Right when social media and viral videos were starting to grow in popularity, Roger created this Stemilt parody that he thought I would love. He really worked on building it up, telling me how excited he was for me to watch it. So when I did finally watch it, well, let's just say it fell flat. When I showed it to my family, it fell even flatter. Roger always strived to be hip, relevant and informed and he has always done a great job at that, but this time, well, he crossed the line. So, a little time passed and he approached me about a bag that the grape guys were doing. It was upselling the category and we could easily implement and pack in this same pouch bag. I could see Roger's creative genius working and how he thought this would be valuable, when he sold me on the idea, I just didn't get it. I think he picked up on my body language and lack of enthusiasm, but he didn't give up. About three months later, one of our major retail partners basically converted their whole bag program to our bag, the bag that I wasn't so sure about, and today Lil Snappers® is our most successful branded packages. Roger revolutionized the bag category, upselling packaged apples and the world was never the same. Roger has a brilliance about him. He is practical, functional, and fun. He is going to be greatly missed here."

Roger's passion for the produce world will be difficult to replicate. While he found much success and created many wonderful memories throughout his 40-year venture, his next endeavor will allow him to pursue some new and exciting challenges: like learning to bake bread and molding his new granddaughter Madison, into the next generation of produce fanatics and marketing geniuses.

"Roger's motto for our team is 'If you're not first, you're last,'" said Shales. "It's a testament to his competitive nature, and what he has instilled within us and throughout Stemilt's walls. His energy will be missed, but he's lit a fire in us to keep working to be first."



From left to right: Roger Pepperl, Tom Mathison (Stemilt founder), and West Mathison (Stemilt president)

### *Brianna Shales*

*Senior Marketing Manager*

"Roger is a master traveler and anyone who has traveled with him before now has a few travel tricks. First, always pack in a carry on. I've had people that didn't follow this and watching Roger wait not-so-patiently for them at baggage claim was hysterical. Second, always request that your hotel room is on a top floor and away from the elevator or ice machine. Finally, always say 'yes' to dessert. And if you must ask why, he probably won't invite you to dinner again!"



From left to right: Brianna Shales, Landon Michaelson, Roger Pepperl, and Nick Shamley admired their “think tank brand” Lil Snappers®. It is now one of the company’s most successful brands.

**Tate Mathison**  
Director of Sales

“Roger was instrumental in marketing and brand awareness. I traveled with him often over to Europe for an international board we sat on where all the major apple marketers from around the world would come together. Many were blown away by Roger’s insight behind branding structure and strategy, and how that reinforces a brand. He justified the importance of consumer education and ultimately, the satisfaction of the consumer experience. His knowledge was a turning point for the board that they will see great benefit from in the future.

Really, at the end of the day, Roger knows how to sell stuff at retail which was a radical shift for the produce industry. He changed how the industry worked and we all have him to thank.”

**Wendy Everhart**  
Domestic Sales Manager

“My best memories with Roger are when we go to visit Meijer. We always had to drive through the Spartan campus, go to the Sparty statue, and give a salute. He gets so excited every time. I don’t think I ever went for a meeting that we didn’t stop there. Roger is such a wealth of information and I learn something new from him every time we travel. He has been an awesome mentor to me.”

**Nick Shamley**  
Promotions Manager

“Whenever PMA would come around, we always had display signs to put up around the booth. To be prepared when we got down there, Roger would come to the office with metal frames that look oddly similar to political sign holders. He always told us he got them for a steal.”

**Mike Taylor**  
Vice President of Sales & Marketing

“I used to call on Roger when he was a buyer at Meijer, and he had an advantage over me because I was a green salesperson at the time. I remember Roger grabbing ahold of this wild idea Tom Mathison had to sell cherries in a bag. I’m pretty sure Roger didn’t have permission to do this with his boss and it was unheard of to do back then. But he did it anyway and the catch-weight bag took off. Stemilt couldn’t keep up with the business and it changed the whole industry’s way of selling cherries.

Roger is also a great negotiator. I recall giving him an aggressive price on cherries during a fantastic price. They were 1/3 of the way through shipping the ad and Roger called to ask for another week. I told he would have to get permission from Tom, but Roger said, ‘...too bad. I already booked the ad. You’re doing it!’

Working with Roger was a pleasure and he leaves a strong legacy at Stemilt...his deep understanding of retailer and consumer has made us a better vendor to retailers...and truly World Famous!”



Roger converses at one of many tradeshow he has participated in.

Roger is a die hard of Michigan State fan, often chanting "Go Green" throughout the halls of Stemilt. He was surrounded by many Washington State Cougs.

## *Katie Harmon*

*Communications Manager*

"Roger and I see eye to eye on a lot of things. We are both competitive in nature, start every meeting out as "this will be quick" (which they usually never are), and feel dogs are more deserving than most humans. Roger has taught me how to travel right, that 'permission is for losers' (when appropriate) and to always act confident, even when I feel like I don't feel I have any clue what I'm talking about. I am forever grateful that I was fortunate enough to be taken under his wing and be taught by someone who has changed the produce industry for the better."



From left to right: Katie Harmon, Katie Robinson, Dave Martin, Roger Pepperl, Brianna Shales.



Roger has been an incredible voice and representative for Stemilt.

## *Landon Michaelson*

*Lead Designer*

"For two decades I've had the best boss ever. I started a few months before he did and we sure hit the ground running when he landed at his desk. Thousands of projects later I have many unique memories. One brand building moment was the day we needed to quickly modify the Lil Snappers® packaging the way you see it today. I affectionally call it the '45 minute brand' because that is how much time I had to make the changes to go to press. I am proud to have been a keystone in touching all these brands over the years.

Roger built a legacy that will last for decades more. Can you find somebody more respected in the industry? I doubt it. It has been a distinct pleasure to be a part of it."

## *Dave Martin*

*Export Sales Manager*

"I think that one of my favorite times with Roger was a trip to "kick in the door" at Hannaford Brothers back in about 2003. I was basically tasked with a big push to get Hannaford on-board, but I had only been recently moved back into the Domestic sales, and I really wasn't "comfortable" in my knowledge of Category Management and retail strategies. Roger taught me how to be "comfortable in my lack of knowledge", and to learn the ability to "ask questions, and let the customer tell you how it works." After we got done, I remember him saying to me "Wow...you REALLY don't know what you don't know!" laughing the entire time. It requires **HUMILITY** to admit, during a sales pitch, that you don't know everything. But if you are able to admit that, and get the customer to bring you into his/her mind....you will win....and they will win....and you get some really good laughs from it sometimes! We walked out of Hannaford and started a relationship that lasted for years. Humility and the ability to laugh at yourself, are great human traits, and Roger is truly a person who lives this, and understands this. I've been a more successful salesman, and person, by trying to put this into practice. He has 100% supported me and my team in export since I made the transition back. He's helped us build Stemilt into a globally recognized brand, with a powerhouse following in the key markets of the world. I'll miss him greatly."

**Tim Harrington**  
Merchandising Manager

There are so many ways to describe Roger. Here are a few that come to my mind:

**Loving & Loyal** – Family. He is so proud and loving of Joni, Alex and Danielle (and baby Madison)

**Dedicated & Caring** – Always looking out for his teammates and Stemilt.

**Driven** – Works 18 hours a day, the remaining 6 hours are spent dreaming of exciting new ideas that will keep Stemilt in first place.

**Innovative** – Always thinking outside of the box. Roger is looking ahead, not necessarily what is trending today, but what will be trending next year and the years to follow.

**Leader** – Always a leader, never a follower.

**Mayor** – Each time I attend a Trade Show with Roger, everyone knows him. Roger is so loved by his friends and acquaintances in the industry. If he has a Facebook page, I bet he has 100,000 friends!

**Coach** – Always inspiring us to turn that A into an A+. Encouraging and coaching teammates to bring out their personal best.

**Terrific sense of humor** – I love his constant use of analogies. I'll miss them.

**Kind** – Yes, all of these years, he let me refer to the multi-apple ads as “Apple Rammers.” Seriously, just like it sounds.

**Friend** – I’m honored to call you my friend. Although your official work chapter may be coming to a close, an exciting new chapter will begin. I look forward to staying in touch with Roger, and hearing the wonderful things that he’s found that brings him relaxation, happiness and joy.

**Jocelyn Gerard**  
Merchandising Manager

“When the team is speaking about a new apple variety, Roger always tries to convince us the next one will be named “the Roger.” Roger’s sense of humor will be missed along with his great mentorship and leadership of our team.”



Dessert is always an option, especially for the marketing team.



Roger and his wife, Joni went to the Rose Bowl when the Michigan State Spartans played.



## FRUIT

By: Katie Harmon

# APPLE BLUEPRINT

Fruit prints are the blueprints to the many cultivars of fruit we grow at Stemilt. Use this guide to learn about the apple varieties that make retailer's apple categories World Famous.



### Rave®

**Season:** August - October

**Characteristics:** Outrageously juicy with a refreshing, snappy zing

**Uses:** Fresh Snacking, Pairing with Cheese



### Sweetango®

**Season:** August - November

**Characteristics:** Juicy crunch with hints of fall spices and vibrant acidity

**Uses:** Fresh Snacking, Pairing with Cheese



### Piñata®

**Season:** Year-Round

**Characteristics:** Classic apple flavors with a tropical twist

**Uses:** Cooking, Baking, Snacking, Pairing



### Honeycrisp

**Season:** September - June

**Characteristics:** JSweet, big and incredibly juicy with a crisp bite

**Uses:** Fresh Snacking, Pairing with Cheese



### Fuji

**Season:** October - June

**Characteristics:** The sweetest apple on the block

**Uses:** Fresh Snacking, Juicing or Freezing



### Pink Lady®

**Season:** October - July

**Characteristics:** Firm with the perfect sweet-tart flavor and effervescent finish

**Uses:** Fresh Snacking, Baking, Cooking, Freezing



**Gala**

**Season:** Year-Round

**Characteristics:** The mellow apple with simple sweetness and hints of vanilla

**Uses:** Fresh Snacking, Freezing or Juicing



**Golden Delicious**

**Season:** Year-Round

**Characteristics:** Sweet with a smooth, fine flesh

**Uses:** Snacking, Baking, Cooking, Freezing



**Granny Smith**

**Season:** Year-Round

**Characteristics:** Super firm, juicy and lemon-like tartness

**Uses:** Baking, Cooking, Freezing, Snacking,



**Red Delicious**

**Season:** Year-Round

**Characteristics:** The classic apple with a mildly sweet flavor

**Uses:** Fresh Snacking, Juicing



**Jonagold**

**Season:** September - January

**Characteristics:** Big, juicy with dessert-like flavors

**Uses:** Fresh Snacking, Baking



**Braeburn**

**Season:** September - June

**Characteristics:** Tart with fall spices and perfectly crisp bite

**Uses:** Baking, Cooking



**Ambrosia**

**Season:** September - January

**Characteristics:** Refreshingly sweet with a fine-grained flesh

**Uses:** Fresh Snacking, Cooking



**Cosmic Crisp®**

**Season:** December - January

**Characteristics:** Dream apple with perfect flavor and texture balance

**Uses:** Snacking, Baking, Entertaining

By: Katie Harmon

# LET THE FLAVOR FLOW!

Revive your store's pear category! From farm to truck to your stores, our RipeRite™ ready-to-eat pear program delivers the best pear eating experience for your customers

1

### We Love our Locales!

Rushing Rivers® pears come from the Wenatchee & Entiat River Valleys—the best pear-growing locations in the world.



2

### We're Picky about Picking

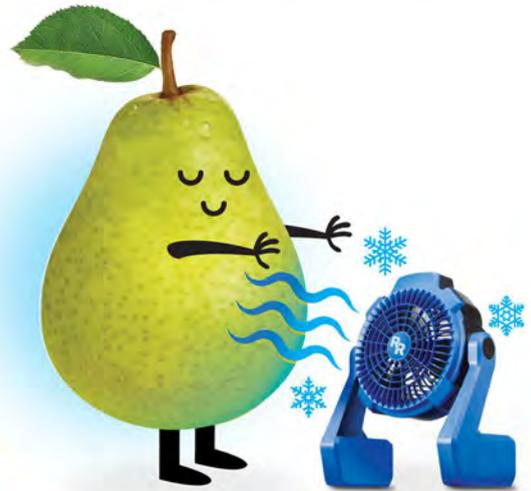
We harvest at the right time for the correct pressures to deliver on our flavor promise.



3

### Royal Treatment

Our pears get the royal treatment from our jet coolers and hydrocoolers to bring pears down to ideal temperatures for ripening.



4

### We Wield Secret Weapons #2

Vented Euro Cartons for uniform ripening of d'Anjou and Red d'Anjou varieties.



5

### We Store Smart

11 controlled atmosphere storage rooms specifically designed with pears in mind.



6

**We Don't Use Ripening Agents**  
And haven't since 2018.



7

**We Anticipate Your Needs!**  
Our robust supply & demand forecasting models ensure we pack pears to order.



8

**We Create the Perfect Combination of Elements**  
Pears ripen in the perfect mix of humidity, temperature and airflow thanks to our Thermal Tech TarpLess® Rooms.



9

**We Have the Best Teams!**  
Our RipeRite teams have created the perfect recipe for ripening Rushing Rivers® pears.



10

**We Ripen Rite to Unlock Flavor!**  
Pears are ready-to-eat soon after purchase for increased purchase frequency.



**AN EXPERIENCE FILLED WITH FLAVOR FOR YOUR CUSTOMERS...A GAME-CHANGER FOR YOUR PEAR CATEGORY!**

## FRUIT

By: Katie Harmon

# THE TREND: BRAIN HEALTH

What's top of mind for consumers when it comes to current health and wellness trends? Brains! While 2020 was not what we expected, it did force consumers to start focusing on improving their health and wellness regimens by incorporating more brain-boosting super foods, like apples, into their diets.

### The What:

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many to reexamine both their mental and physical habits as they were required to quarantine at home. According to The International Food Information Council's 2020 Food & Health survey, 54% of consumers surveyed care more about the healthfulness of their food and beverage choices in 2020 than they did in 2010.

With that, more and more shoppers are choosing to purchase and consume foods that will not only better their waistline, but also improve brain power and reduce anxiety.

### The Why:

Apples can contribute to brain health thanks to the antioxidant, quercetin. Quercetin is found in the skin of the apple (along with potassium, vitamin A and fiber). Cornell University researchers discovered that quercetin may protect brain cells caused by oxidative stress. Scientists believe that quercetins block free radicals, which, when found in excess, can cause damage to the brain cells as well as other cell types.

Including apples in your diet also helps reduce anxiety and stress thanks to the high quercetin levels. Anxiety is thought to be correlated with lowered total antioxidant state, therefore encouraging more consumption of high antioxidant foods.

### The How:

Use these current trends to teach consumers about the importance of incorporating wholesome produce choices into their everyday diet to boost brain power. Create an in-store signage strategy and promote health and wellness trends through your store's digital channels to keep apples top of mind (pun intended) for consumers. .

### The Fruit to Focus On:

Stemilt's World Famous apples. Apples are in peak season with a wide range of flavors to choose from.



### Sources:

Food Insights. [Stemilt Short Code: stemillt.com/hilltop-19-cc-1](https://stemillt.com/hilltop-19-cc-1)

Harvard Health Publishing. [Stemilt Short Code: stemillt.com/hilltop-19-cc-2](https://stemillt.com/hilltop-19-cc-2)

**PRODUCE FOR®  
BETTER HEALTH**  
FOUNDATION

have a  
**plant**®  
fruitsandveggies.org

**FOOD ROOTED  
IN A BETTER MOOD™**

Join the Movement at [fruitsandveggies.org](https://fruitsandveggies.org)



## FRUIT

By: Katie Harmon



# FOUR FALL FINDS

Stemilt's Vice President of Sales & Marketing, Mike Taylor, is back to share his four fall finds that will lead to increased fall and winter sales.

1

## Piñata® Apples

**Why They're Famous:** Piñata® apples are a culinary standout and versatile option for consumers looking for an apple that can do it all. It stands heat well, making it a great option for cooking or baking, but also tastes great for snacking thanks to its classic apple flavors with a tropical twist. Its near year-round availability makes this apple a staple for many.

### Availability:

November – September

2

## Rushing Rivers® d'Anjou Pears

**Why They're Famous:** Say hello to this versatile pear. D'Anjou pears are one of the best keeping pears and have a wide variety of uses, including fresh snacking, cooking, baking and poaching. They are sweet, juicy and they're citrus-like flavor profile leaves you feeling refreshed and ready to take on the day.

### Availability:

October – June

3

## Honeycrisp Apples

**Why They're Famous:** Meet the category dominator. This juicy, big, premium apple variety is a must-have thanks to its unforgettable flavor and superior crunch. At Stemilt, this premium variety is grown for flavor and harvested with quality in mind. One unique attribute of the Honeycrisp variety is its shattering effect when you take a bite. The cells of a Honeycrisp apple fracture cleanly when bitten, so it explodes with flavor. Every. Single. Time.

### Availability:

September – July

4

## Fuji Apples

**Why They're Famous:** Fuji apples are the apple that remind you of being a kid in the candy shop. With the highest Brix (sugar) levels, Fuji apples have a great shelf life and appeal to a wide variety of consumers. This variety finds great success when packed in Stemilt's 3lb. Lil Snappers® kid size fruit pouch bags.

### Availability:

Year-Round

## GET FAMOUS

### Get Famous Finds In Your Inbox

Do you want monthly Famous Finds updates from Mike T. and the Stemilt team? Yes? Good. Just let your Stemilt rep know and our team will get you on the list so you are always in the know!

Topics include:

- Must-have packaging options
- Bulk varieties
- Merchandising tips
- Promotion ideas
- And more!



## What's In Season



Bartlett Pears 4lb



Bartlett Pears



Organic SweetTango Apples 2lb

1

2

Lil Snappers®



Lil Snappers Honeycrisp Apples 3lb

## FRUIT

By: Katie Harmon

## HOW TO:

# UTILIZE E-COMMERCE PRODUCT FEATURES FOR SUCCESSFUL SALES

Stemilt's senior marketing manager Brianna Shales, shares with us what should be included on a digital feature to create category success.

1

### Call Out Seasonal Items

Focus on specific seasonal varieties that have a short season, like SweetTango® apples or Stemilt's Rushing Rivers® Bartlett pears. This is a great way to ensure consumers who are shopping online know what is in season and what is available to them even when they aren't shopping in store. "Online shopping has both pros and cons," explains Shales. "It allows consumers to shop in ways that best fit their needs, however, it also takes away from the in-store shopping experience which often affects seasonal items. It is crucial that retailers take the time to give high priority to seasonal items. Feature the best variety of fruit when it's at peak season and be sure to call that out to encourage the impulse buy." For placement, retailers should utilize featured spots on their online platforms as well as banner ads to highlight these products.

2

### Use Enticing but Accurate Photos

The photos used to feature an item online should be exactly what the consumer is expecting to purchase, however they should also be enticing. "The downfall of online sales is that impulse purchases are less frequent because people can't see or smell what's in store," explains Shales. "As simple as seeing a product in store may be, it also is what encourages consumers to make that impulse purchase. Ensure your photo is an accurate portrayal of what the product is, but make sure it's enticing enough to make them want to purchase it." Shales explains that using branded products like Stemilt's Lil Snappers® kid size fruit is a great way to entice consumers, while also showing the consumer exactly what they will get. "Lil Snappers® kid size fruit is exactly what it sounds like, fruit sized just for kids. The photo makes the purchase easy for the intended audience – parents and kids."



```
<keywords>
kid, kid size,
kid size fruit,
apples, pears,
stemilt,
lil snappers
</keywords>
```

**3****4**

Stemilt 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.

**5****3**

### Include Key Words

When a consumer is looking for a specific item, they often use the search function to look for that particular item. To ensure maximum exposure, give the produce listing multiple keywords to drive traffic to the listing. Include generic keywords, brand and company specific terms, as well as any others that could be associated. For example, Lil Snappers® kid size fruit could have the key word “kid” “kid size” and “kid size fruit” linked to the listing along with “apples” “pears” “Stemilt” “Lil Snappers” and more. The possibilities are great. Retailers can also utilize keywords by associating them with other like-products. For example, if a consumer purchases a 3lb. Lil Snappers® Fuji bag, they may also want to check out the Gala bag option as well. This is a great opportunity to make recommendations to encourage those impulse purchases.

**4**

### Brand Story

Share the story of the product with consumers. According to the The Food Marketing Institute, 81 percent of consumers say transparency is ‘important’ or ‘extremely important’ to them when shopping online and in-store! “Without the ability of in-store signage, the product detail section becomes a crucial section of the listing,” shares Shales. “This is a perfect area for retailers to list the brand and company story. This is also a great place for an organic listing to include “USDA certified” and other recognizable certifications that instill trust with the consumer.

**5**

### Creates Brand Awareness

Utilizing online product listings to their full potential offers a lot of perks to all parties involved. “By setting up the listing with an appealing image, transparent product details and the brand story and utilizing key words properly, consumers will grow to recognize the name and product and ultimately establishing trust within that brand,” explains Shales. “Because of this, not only will the retailer continue to meet the needs of the consumer, it will lead the consumer to a delightful shopping and eating experience.”

Source:

<sup>1</sup> Food Navigator. Stemilt Short Code: [stemillt.com/hilltop-19-how](http://stemillt.com/hilltop-19-how)

## FRUIT

By: Brianna Shales

### PICTURE PEAR-FECT: d'Anjou Pears

Pear-fect might be a little cliché, but it's the only way to describe Rushing Rivers® d'Anjou pears. Grown in the famous Wenatchee and Entiat river valleys in Washington State, these pears eat up volcanic soils, drink in clean river water, and bask in the cool summertime temperatures leading up to harvest. Hand-picked and then given the royal ripening treatment, d'Anjou pears are juicy and sweet with hints of citrus. The pears where flavor trumps all.

## KNOW IT ALL

### The Taylor Family

Not only do Rushing Rivers® d'Anjou pears call the best locales in the world home, but they are grown by multi-generational family farms like Taylor Orchards. Great pears from great people.

### Red or Green?

We love them both! Red d'Anjou pears were discovered as a natural sport growing on a green d'Anjou tree. The color is the only differentiator here.

### Operation Flavor

Flavor is our mission when it comes to growing and packing d'Anjou pears. A trip through our R&D-backed RipeRite™ ripening process plus a whole lot of TLC equals a pear eating experience like no other.

### In Season:

October-June

## PRODUCT

By: Brianna Shales

## FRUIT Qs

Did you know that organic produce is nearly 12 percent of all produce sales? At Stemilt, we've been sharing organic fruits with produce shoppers for more than 30 years! Let's look at the answers to the common questions consumers have about organic fruits.

**Q. What is the organic certification process for apples or pears?**

**A.** Organic refers to the way foods like apples or pears are grown and packed. To certify our products as organic, we maintain and replenish soil by using non-synthetic pesticides or fertilizers. An orchard is farmed organically for three consecutive years before organic certification can be granted.

**Q. How do I know if my fruits are organic?**

**A.** At Stemilt, there are two ways! First, we label them under our Artisan Organics™ brand. Another way to tell is to look for a leading "9" before the four-digit number (called a price look-up number) on the fruit's sticker.

**Q. I spotted a white residue on the stem bowl of my organic apples or organic pears. What is it?**

**A.** This is Kaolin clay, a natural material that we apply to protect organic apples and pears from getting sunburned. Yup, even fruit can get sunburned! The clay reflects the sun preventing the burn. It's usually washed off the fruit during packing but sometimes a bit is left behind in the fruit's hard to reach spots.



**Q. How does Stemilt prevent co-mingling of conventional and organic fruit at its packing facility?**

**A.** Organic packing facilities are certified and inspected annually by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. We go one step further at Stemilt by packing organics on a dedicated line.

**Q. Does Stemilt use Apeel™ on organic apples?**

**A.** Yes, we do. Apeel™ is made from plants and adds a little extra "peel" to the surface of fresh produce to slow water loss and maintain freshness. Our Artisan Organics™ brand is all about freshness and flavor, and Apeel™ helps us achieve just that!

## HEY STEMILT!

Here's what organic shoppers had to say about our fruits:

**Dianne C. from Stamford, CT said:**  
"Skylar Rae® cherries are the best I've ever had!"

**Sharon L. in Los Angeles, CA said:**  
"Wow, organic Sweetango® apples are amazing. Must. Find. More!"

**Kris G. from Auburn, MA said:**  
"Thank you for growing organics! My wife loves your organic Honeycrisp apples!"



FRUIT

🍴 9 | ⌚ 15 minutes | 🕒 1:20 minutes | 🕒 1:35 minutes | 📶 Easy

## PEAR ALMOND CAKE

This pear almond cake is loaded with Stemilt Anjou pears and topped with a buttery brown sugar crumb topping.

### INGREDIENTS

#### For the Crumb

1 cup (140 gm) all-purpose flour  
1/4 cup (50 gm) brown sugar  
2 tbsp sugar  
1/2 tsp baking powder  
Pinch of salt  
6 tbsp unsalted butter, melted

#### For the Crumb

1 cup powdered sugar  
1/4 tsp almond extract  
1/2 tsp vanilla extract  
1-2 tbsp milk

#### For the Cake

1/2 cup (113 gm) unsalted butter, at room temperature  
1 cup (200 gm) sugar  
3 large eggs, at room temperature  
2 tsp vanilla extract  
3/4 tsp almond extract  
2 cups (280 gm) all-purpose flour  
2 tsp baking powder  
1/2 tsp baking soda  
1/2 tsp salt  
2 tsp cinnamon  
3/4 cup sour cream, at room temperature  
3 cups finely chopped pears (1 used Anjou), divided  
Pomegranate seeds, if desired

## INSTRUCTIONS

### To prepare the crumb:

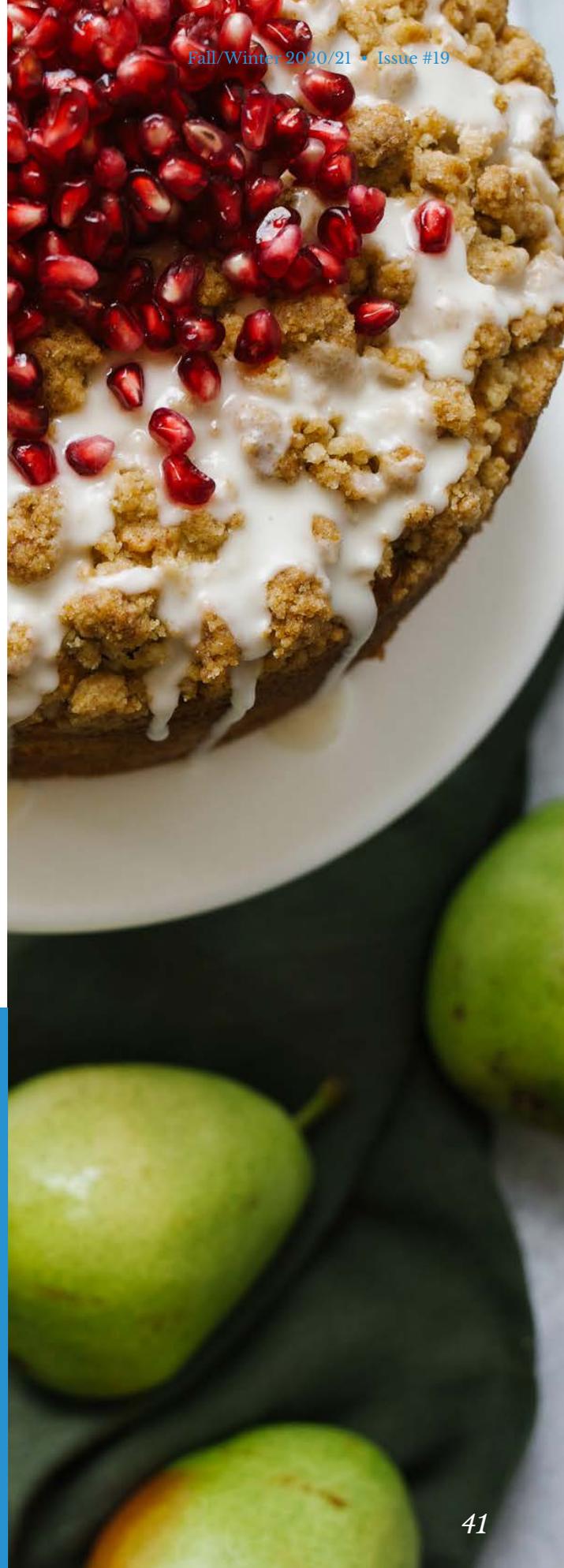
- 1) Stir together the dry ingredients. Fold in the butter until large clumps exist throughout. Set aside while you prepare your cake.

### To prepare the cake:

- 1) Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease an 8" cake pan with sides at least 3" tall. As an alternative, you can use a 9" springform pan. Cut a piece of parchment paper to fit inside the bottom of the pan and place inside.
- 2) In a large bowl or the bowl of a stand mixer, cream together the butter and the sugar until combined and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Add the eggs and extracts and stir on medium until combined. Scrape the sides of the bowl as needed. Add half of the flour along with the baking powder, soda, salt, and cinnamon. Stir on low until combined. Add the sour cream and stir to incorporate. Scrape the sides of the bowl and add the remaining cup of flour.
- 3) Once almost combined, fold in 2 cups of the pears. Spread the batter into the bottom of the prepared pan and sprinkle the remaining pears on top. Sprinkle the crumb topping on top of the pears and bake in the preheated oven until a cake tester inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean, about 70-75 minutes.
- 4) Allow to cool completely prior to removing the cake from the pan. Once cooled, drizzle with the glaze and serve with pomegranate seeds on top if desired.

### To prepare the glaze:

- 1) Combine the powdered sugar, almond extract, vanilla, and 1 tablespoon of milk in a large bowl. Add additional milk until the desired consistency is reached. Drizzle over the cake.



## WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL WITH PEARS AND CHRISTMAS?

You may be wondering why pears are even associated with the global holiday. Pears have a long history and have been around for thousands and thousands of years. In fact, the Greek poet Homer referred to pears as "gifts of the gods." As for Christmas, many associate pears with the holiday due to their reference in the classic (and very well-known) Christmas carol, The Twelve Days of Christmas.

*"On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me,  
a partridge in a pear tree"*

Now that you know why pears are part of the Christmas season, it only makes sense that you try this Almond Pear Cake out because it just screams Christmas cheer.

# ORCHARD

## FROM OUR WORLD

Cosmic Crisp® apple harvest 2020 near Quincy WA.



**Stemilt** **ARTISAN**  
**organics**



**Organic Artists**



Recycle Me

