

**Nova Scotia Tree Fruit Crop Report For 2013**  
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The winter of 2013 was not as mild as that of 2012 but would be considered as moderate. The extreme low at Kentville was  $-23^{\circ}\text{C}$  which was recorded on February 8<sup>th</sup>. The extreme low in 2012 was only  $-15.8^{\circ}\text{C}$  and the lowest winter temperature recorded over the past 50 years was  $-30.0^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The mean temperatures for January, February and March were slightly lower than those of 2012 but above the 50 year average. Snow coverage began the last week of December with periods of no coverage in January and February and the disappearance of snow cover by the last week of March. The greatest depth of snow on the ground was 25 cm. Snow cover and winter temperatures were not a hindrance to dormant pruning. No winter damage was observed on tree fruits as a result of winter conditions.

Up to the end of August, the 2013 growing season has been good. The mean temperatures for March and April were slightly higher than that of 2012 and greater than the 49 year average. This would explain the early start to the growing season, with green tip occurring around April 22. Green tip this year was about a week behind that of 2012 but 5-7 days ahead of average. Degree day accumulation for 2013 was below that of 2012 and similar to 2010, however, above the 10 year average. The last spring frost at Kentville was recorded on May 19<sup>th</sup> with a low of  $-0.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Light frosts were also recorded on May 18<sup>th</sup> ( $-0.8$ ) and May 4<sup>th</sup> ( $-0.7$ ). No significant flower bud damage was noted to fruit trees as a result of these frosts. Rainfall accumulation recorded at Kentville for April to the end of August (Table 1) was 371 mm compared to 213 mm in 2012. Total accumulation was less than the 10 year average. Full bloom of McIntosh on the floor of the Valley occurred around May 26<sup>th</sup>, about a week to 10 days later than in 2012. Return bloom was very good on the stone fruit and pears and good on apples. Cool wet weather at the start of the apple bloom did have an impact on the set of Gravenstein, however, fine weather during peak and late bloom did result in a good fruit set on most cultivars.

No major pest problems were observed during the growing season. A total of four primary and eight secondary apple scab infection periods were recorded at Kentville from mid-April to the fourth week of July. There were three long secondary infection periods, which some producers failed to control adequately. Only one fireblight infection period was recorded at Kentville, resulting in the reduction of blossom blight infections from the previous year. Shoot blight infections appeared throughout the summer months and most notably in pear orchards. In terms of insect pressure, there did not appear to be any major issues. Rosy apple aphid, codling moth and apple maggot present their usual problems. Fruit sized well during the growing season and benefited from regular rainfall, compared to last summer when the dry weather did have an impact on fruit size. At this point in the growing season it appears that fruit maturity and harvest dates will be similar to those of last year.

Based upon observations and conversations with packers, the apple crop is estimated to be similar to last years. Fruit size appears to be better than the previous year which is likely a result of the additional 104 mm rain during the growing season. Significant orchard removal in Morristown and Aylesford would account for the slight decline in the estimated apple crop. The pear crop would appear to be up as a result of good fruit size and set. Wet weather in 2012 during bloom reduced set in some pear blocks. The cherry and plum crop was also up as a result

of increased fruit set compared to a poor set in 2012. The peach crop was also up over that of 2012.

**Table 1: 2013 Monthly Precipitation Totals for Kentville (mm)**

Category	April	May	June	July	August	Total
<b>2013</b>	45.2	72.6	124	90.2	39	371
<b>2012</b>	54.5	26.0	91.5	22.6	72.7	267
<b>10 Year Average</b>	85.4	84.7	91.3	81.8	85.2	428.4

**2013 Apple Crop Estimate**

Cultivar	2013	2012
	Bushels	Bushels
Gravenstein	40,000	60,000
McIntosh	480,000	540,000
Cortland	350,000	400,000
Red Delicious	85,000	85,000
Spy	330,000	300,000
Spartan	25,000	35,000
Idared	230,000	230,000
Honeycrisp	170,000	145,000
Gala	75,000	65,000
Others	250,000	250,000
Total	2,035,000	2,075,000