

**Clark Brothers Orchards.** Aaron Clark didn't plan on being an apple grower. He grew up on the western Massachusetts dairy and apple farm near Ashfield that has been in his family for four generations, but went off to college and then into retail sporting goods. His brother Dana took over managing and running the farm with his father.

Aaron returned home a few years ago to apply his retail experience to the farm's payroll system. He stayed for another project, and then another. Eventually, Dana took a sabbatical and Aaron found himself in charge. With characteristic determination and the help of a few long time employees, he learned more about pruning, mowing, fertilizing and harvesting in a few years than he had his entire childhood.

Today, Clark Brothers Orchards produces some of the best local apples in the region. Dana is back on the farm managing orchard production while Aaron runs the apple business. (Their 65-acre orchard, in an area known as Apple Valley, produces over 50 varieties: popular apples like McIntosh and Cortland, newer varieties like Honey Crisp and Gala, and a few that date back for centuries like Black Gilliflower and Esopus Spitzenberg. Every part of the orchard is infused with the Clark family history of care and stewardship,



carried on by Aaron and Dana.

The Apple Valley area is graced with a combination of soil conditions, cool climate, and high elevation especially well suited for apples. And the location is perfect for another reason. "Because we're local, we can let the fruit stay on the tree longer for better firmness, color and taste," Aaron notes.

*There's no question that consumers are concerned about what goes into their food. I think most small farmers feel that way [too]. You know, we live here.*

**Aaron Clark**

Clark Brothers is certified as part of Red Tomato's Eco Apple program. The Clarks started using Integrated Pest Management systems nearly 20 years ago because they wanted to use the least amount of chemicals possible. Aaron believes most small farmers feel the same way—"you know, we live here," he says. In the tough business of produce, the Eco Apple program is helping Clark Brothers find new markets for their exceptional fruit.

Clark Brothers Orchard supplies Red Tomato with Eco Apples. Visit their website at [www.applevalleyapples.com](http://www.applevalleyapples.com).

Our Eco Apple totes and 3# poly bags. World renowned illustrator Anthony Russo created six illustrations for Red Tomato, pro bono. We paid him in-kind with fruit. They serve as the graphic foundation of our packaging.



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# eco apples™

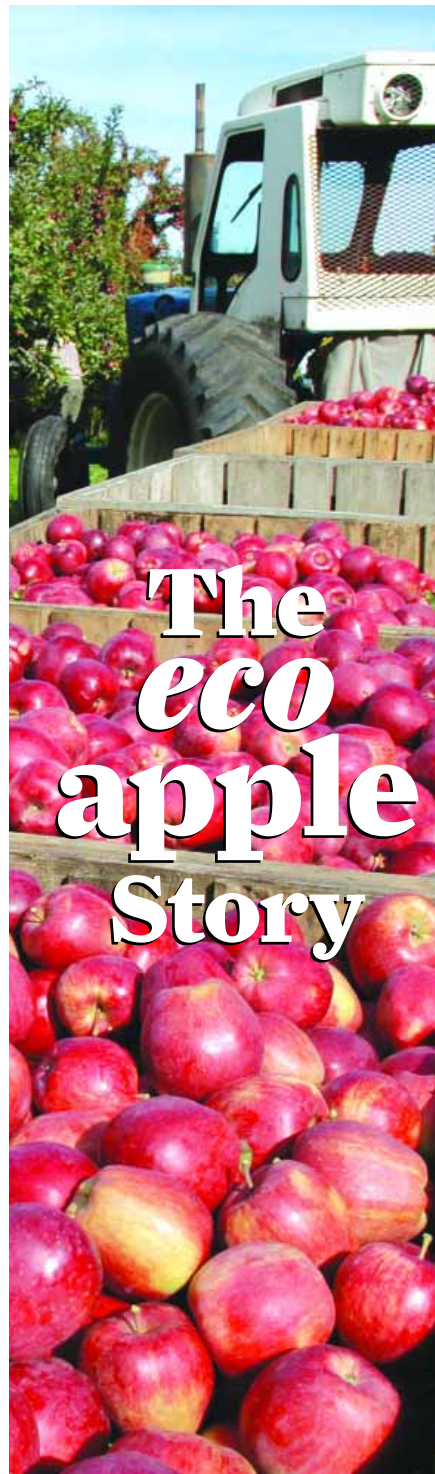
BORN AND RAISED HERE™

**L**ocal, family farm and ecologically grown - one taste and you know it's worth it.

**red tomato**  
Fresh produce. Fresh thinking.

**Red Tomato's mission** is connecting farmers and consumers through marketing, trade and education, and through a passionate belief that a locally-based, family farm, fair trade, ecological food system is the way to a better tomato.

Red Tomato (RT) is a mission-driven, nonprofit organization that works in the marketplace. RT works closely with farmers and scientists to create supply chains of locally-grown products that satisfy the needs of retail grocers and their customers (the ultimate consumers).



One of Red Tomato strategies for achieving our mission is to *build a strong brand* to support ecological, locally-based farming. One of our most successful endeavors is the Eco Apple.

#### Eco Apple program highlights:

- The most advanced Integrated Pest Management (IPM) protocol for ecological apple production in the Northeastern United States
- Six growers, 650 acres, certified for production in 2006; grower and acreage base expected to grow each year
- Twenty apple varieties plus twenty-five heirloom varieties marketed in supermarkets and retail grocery stores
- Third party certified and inspected—managed by IPM Institute of North America, Madison, Wisconsin
- Protocol reviewed annually by land grant scientists at University of Massachusetts/Amherst and Cornell University
- Insecticide use reduced on Eco Apple farms by more than 40% between 2004 and 2005

#### The Eco Apple program supports innovative local apple farmers.

Eco Apple growers are among those leading the way to rebuilding a diverse, local, agriculture in the Northeast. Organic apples are *extremely* tough to raise in large quantities in the northeastern United States due to pests specific to this climate. Most of the organic apples sold in the United States are grown in Western states or imported from elsewhere. For local apples in the Northeast, it makes sense to support these pioneers of advanced IPM—Integrated Pest Management.

*We see ourselves as tenants and stewards of the land.*

*Agriculture can do harm.*

*But we have the opportunity to do it right, and have the community be glad we are here.*

**Barney Hodges**



#### Eco Apples are not organic apples, but they share a philosophy of earth friendly farming.

Eco Apple farmers follow the strictest IPM standards, an approach that has much in common with organics. Eco Apple farmers use a combination of old agricultural methods and leading edge technologies to minimize spraying and other environmentally disruptive practices. IPM means preventing pest infestations before they happen, monitoring crops closely, and treating pests only as needed. Eco Apple growers encourage and rely on naturally-occurring controls such as ladybugs, spiders, wasps, bacteria, and predatory mites. Eco Apple farmers must have a deep knowledge of apple ecology to succeed. Their methods are more expensive and more labor-intensive than standard practices such as routine spraying. Both organic and advanced IPM practices have a common purpose: better for the environment, the farmer, farmworkers, the consumer, and better for the fruit.



## Farmer Profile

**Scott Farm in Dummerston, Vermont** sits high in the Connecticut River Valley surrounded by hills and just minutes away from busy downtown Brattleboro and Interstate 91. The farm, once home to Rudyard Kipling, houses one of the most beautiful collections of old farm buildings in all of New England.

Scott Farm has been cared for by several generations of the Holbrook family. In 1995 Fred Holbrook, a bachelor in his mid 70's and last in the Holbrook line, donated the farm to the Landmark Trust, an independent U.K. building preservation charity, with the stipulation that it remain in agricultural use.

Zeke Goodband is now the farm manager and the orchard's caretaker. An accomplished horticulturalist, steeped in knowledge about heirloom apples, Zeke describes a walk through an apple orchard as a walk through history. "You can learn about the trees right from the time they were planted," he notes, "I can tell that Fred Holbrook cared deeply for his orchard."

Zeke first came to love apple orchards as a student visiting old Maine farmsteads. He has spent the past 30-some years in close company with several heirloom orchards, learning the craft of tending trees from old-timers and adding his own experience. Since taking over in February of 2000, he's grafted thousands of trees onto the rootstock planted by Fred Holbrook. There are over 70 varieties of heirloom apples, including some rarely seen on this side of the Atlantic. Each tree has its own personality, and Zeke knows the look, taste and character of each type of apple.

Scott Farm supplies Red Tomato with Eco Apples, including heirlooms.



**Some Eco Apples are heirlooms.** Heirlooms are old varieties that have been grown, savored, and passed down for generations, sometimes for centuries. They come in every color, size, and shape.

Heirloom apples are all about flavor—usually exquisite; always unique.

Eco Apple Heirloom varieties include:

- Ananas Reinette
- Ashmead's Kernel
- Baldwin
- Belle du Boskoop
- Black Gilliflower
- Black Oxford
- Blue Pearmain
- Calville Blanc d'Hiver
- Cox's Orange Pippin
- Esopus Spitzenberg
- Fameuse
- Gravenstein
- Hudson's Golden Gem
- Lady
- Maiden's Blush
- Northern Spy
- Reine de Reinette
- Rhode Island Greening
- Roxbury Russet