



THE BC APPLE INDUSTRY

The apple industry is a major employer in the Okanagan Valley. Each year, 7% of the labour force is employed by the apple industry. About 4,800 people work in the orchards, 2,500 in packinghouses, and 1,000 are hired as seasonal workers.

Who's involved in producing apples?

Orchard owners and managers

Orchard labourers

Aplarists

Packinghouse employees

Processing plant employees

Truckers, dispatchers

Sales and advertising staff

Fertilizer, pesticide and equipment dealers

Box, bin and pallet manufacturers

Packinghouse construction, management and labour employees

Government and university teachers

Inspectors

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What challenges do apple growers face?

BC is internationally recognized as the North American leader in the adoption of modern technology. Fruit growers have had to modernize their growing methods to remain competitive in the world. Many of the old orchards consisted of big apple trees planted large distances apart. Today, many orchardists have switched to high-density plantings with smaller trees planted much closer together. For example, older orchards might have 80 trees per hectare. High-density orchards can have as many as 1,500 to 12,000 trees per hectare. High-density planting produces trees that produce fruit earlier, yield larger crops and are easier to harvest. BC growers have planted different varieties of apples that are more popular in the international markets.

Another challenge is pests, and how to deal with them. There are three main orchard pests that are difficult to control. They are the codling moth, leaf roller and bud moth.

Education and Research

Kelowna Land & Orchard Co. Ltd. prides itself on being a source for education on the tree fruit industry. KLO also participates in various research projects to improve the tree fruit industry and is currently conducting research studies on the **Sterile Insect Release (SIR) Program**.