



Photo by John Boldrick

Randall Dempsey of Dempsey Farms in Prince Edward County unloads apples from his truck at the Belleville farmers' market on Tuesday morning. Apples took a hit this summer with early warm weather followed by frost.

Apple producers take a hit with poor growing season

By John Boldrick

Susan Manning of Apple Wolf Farm in Stirling is facing tough times after a spring that all but destroyed her apple crops.

Temperatures reached 30 degrees C by mid-March mixed in with a hard frost and there was even hail in one case. Some of the Quinte areas apple farms were hit with some unexpected weather that all but ruined their crops.

"The majority of them would probably be suitable to feed (to) domestic animals or wild animals. There were very little eatable apples in this case," said Manning.

The unpredictable weather also affected Apple Wolf's unofficial workers – the bees.

"It didn't affect bloom so much because a lot of the starting of the budding hadn't actually come out, but by the time the blooms themselves were ready, the bees had actually gone back into their, I guess, hibernation state, so of course they missed the blooming season, so a lot of our blooms did not get pollinated and that was one of the reasons we got very little apples this year," said Manning.

While selling apples for baking and human consumption is out of the question for the Stirling area organic farm, all has not been lost. Manning said hunters often buy up spare apples by the truckload for their hunts.

"We tried to get as much off the ground and off the trees as possible before the end of the season," she said.

Still, the less than stellar turnout this year is made even harder after a banner turnout last year.

"Last year was amazing, we had so many apples that we couldn't eat enough,"

said Manning. "The apples themselves were just incredible."

As it turns out, Stirling isn't the only area affected by the rapidly changing weather.

Randall Dempsey is the owner of Dempsey Orchards in Prince Edward County, an orchard that has been in his family for over 200 years. He said that

'It was hot mid-March – too hot, everything jumped out ahead of normal, and then when apples and pears and plums came into blossom, we got hit with a fairly hard frost and that varied from place to place in the county.'

Dempsey Orchards owner Randall Dempsey

weather had a large impact on his crops this year.

"It was hot mid-March – too hot, everything jumped out ahead of normal, and then when apples and pears and plums came into blossom, we got hit with a fairly hard frost and that varied from place to place in the county," he said.

The difference between this year's growing season and last year's is very sub-

stantial, said Dempsey.

"This year was different because it was hot, close to 30 Celsius, mid-March and then we had the frost when a lot of the stuff was in blossom and we had quite a drought period for a fair amount of time. Then of course this month I have had about 220 millimeters of rain so far, which is more than I require."

However, Dempsey said it could have been a lot worse.

"My season's not over yet, but overall it's going to be down. I got hit, but I think my crop is at around 60-65 per cent of normal," he said, "I know guys that only had 10 per cent."

Dempsey said his harvest isn't finished yet, certain varieties such as Ida Reds, northern spies and sweet apples are still to be picked.

"Most of your varieties kick in September, so September and October is the busy time for apples," he said.

For Dempsey, this year pales in comparison to the best apple-growing year he has never seen, 2009, which he described as the best growing year he has seen in his lifetime.

"We had good rainfall, we had the perfect climate for apples to get colour, so size and colour was very good that year," he said.

Clifford Foster of Fosterholm Farms in Brighton has had to deal with consistency issues as much as the weather. Foster, who picks his apples at Dunnett Orchards in Brighton, said he has been having problems with the amount of apples he has been harvesting this season.

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No fallout results from rugby party

First-year player taken to hospital after hitting his head

By Taylor Renkema

There will not be any consequences for the men's rugby team at Loyalist College after a party on college residence resulted in one player being sent to hospital.

A first year player said he passed out and hit his head after drinking from a bottle of vodka that was being passed around a circle of first-year players at the party almost two weeks ago. An ambulance was called and he was taken to hospital.

Loyalist's Athletic Director Jim Buck said he talked to some veteran players about what happened at the party.

"Obviously we'd like to see none of our varsity athletes drinking and partying, but let's be realistic," he said. "They're college age students and student athletes and that's going to happen. We just try and make sure that they make educated

decisions."

Buck said he still has to talk to the injured first-year player, Kyle Fernhout, about the incident. Most of the controversy arose when Fernhout talked about "the peer pressure of doing that [drinking] with the teammates," and "trying to get accepted into the team."

Buck said he talked to some veteran players about the party and they assured him it was not a matter of hazing.

"They're pretty honest guys that have been with our program for a couple of years and they've assured me that there was no issue of hazing at all," he said. "They know as rookies before that that's been our policy for a long time and they respect that. It didn't happen when they were rookies and they're not going to let it happen there."

Fernhout's teammate Albert Cormier said the team has no animosity towards him.

"We brought him in closer than what he was before because it's not his fault, or anybody else's fault; it's just the way it happened," he said. "It's not wrong, it's not right, it's the way it was."

Dishwashers a washout for some students living in residence

Small issues have occurred with new machines

By Sarah Armour

New dishwashers installed in the apartment-style residence at Loyalist College are causing students some problems.

Since being installed in the summer, small issues have occurred with the new machines. A number of students in residence have experienced leaks and overflows due to misuse.

"We've had to bring in some contractors to do some under warranty, but (we) quickly fixed and are working on those," said Dominique Dawes, residence programmer.

Students weren't informed of the proper way to run the dishwasher or which products to use with the machine. Dawes said the machines did come with manuals, but she is unsure where they ended up after installation.

After taking a Facebook survey, giv-

ing students the option to vote on what they wanted renovated or added to residence, the decision was made to add dishwashers to all kitchens. Although there have been minor problems with the dishwashers, most students are happy the residence's money was spent on the washers.

"You can always bring your own TV to res. You can't bring a dishwasher, and it benefits the students to not doing dishes anymore and they can focus more time on their studies," said Davis Scheel, a second-year student.

"They could have used the money for a different thing such as a washer or dryer," said Lauren Haines, another second-year student.

Dawes said she has seen an overall improvement in the cleanliness of apartments. "Even during the room inspections, I found that the apartments are in a cleaner state. I've even opened the dishwashers to see dishes in them."

She said roommate issues about dishes have been eliminated because of the new dishwashers.

With better instructions and information on the machines, students could have avoided some problems, but for now, residence staff have the issues under control, said Dawes.

'We've had to bring in some contractors to do some under warranty, but (we) quickly fixed and are working on those.'

Residence programmer Dominique Dawes

Sound of music echoes through city's East Hill neighbourhood

Fourth annual Porchfest rocks Belleville with music of all genres

By Brandon White

The rain was pouring down Saturday morning in Belleville's east end but that didn't stop the community from showing up for the fourth annual Porchfest.

Crowds of people wandered the streets to see the various bands and performers. Musical acts were stretched out from John Street all the way up to MacDonald Avenue.

The festival is a unique experience for Belleville. Families can see what the community has to offer, said Ken Hudson, one of the founders and organizers of the event.

"We heard about a similar event in upstate New York a few years ago. And we thought this is our adopted neighbourhood, and we looked around and said we have a lot of great porches and houses, why don't we organize an event where people play on their porch?"

Hudson said an outdoor festival is appealing and it's something fun for the neighbourhood.

"Right from the beginning, I think the idea caught people's imaginations. It was free, there weren't a lot of family events in the neighbourhood, and it's also a great place to walk around. There isn't a lot of musical venues, and it gives musicians a place to play."

Hudson said that the event has grown wildly popular in the last year, with more than 100 individual performers booked for this year. Porchfest has grown and flourished since it was created, but Hudson thinks that it's still growing.

"It has pretty much been the same for three years, but this year it has doubled in size. That's okay with us, we're happy as long as everyone else is happy. You know, if it happens to grow to twice the size it is now, it'd be awesome for us and everyone else in the community," he said.

Hudson's wife, Lucinda Pritchard, also helped found and organize the event alongside her husband. She said that the festival offers a unique outlet for local talent.

"We have such a wide variety of music. We have some metal and heavy rockers. We have a jazz trio, and some Celtic music. We don't set what people want to play. We put it out to the community, and let people come out and play what they want. It really shows the variety of the commu-

nity.

"Now that we have a son, it's really important we do this for him so he can see what it means to be a part of a community."

"I think it's important for us to be a part of the community and make the place we live, the place we want to be."

One of the acts scheduled to make an appearance was hard-rock band, Non-Existent. They couldn't make the show, but one of the group's members, Dan Foote, still appeared with some friends as backup. Foote said he wouldn't want to miss the event.

"This is my first year playing here at Porchfest, but I've been coming for a few years now, and it always blows me away how awesome the local music scene is," Foote said. "It's awesome that we can have a thing where I can be playing my music here, and then wander two houses down to go listen to a country group, or someone playing blues. It's just great."

Porchfest's creators said they believe the biggest success of the event is its approachability as a family event.

"I think it's important for us to be a part of the community and make the place we live, the place we want to be."

Porchfest is free and takes place around the end of September every year.



Photo by Brandon White

Laura Todd and John Bokenkamp of Caesar's Shift rock the porch of 302 Blecker Ave.