



## Old Apples Find a New Market

**Nina Williams**

For the first time since Mountain Sun Juice closed its Dolores doors 14 years ago, local apple juice shipped out of Montezuma County this October. Montezuma Orchard Restoration Project produced and sold 2,200 gallons of Montezuma Valley Heritage Blend raw apple juice to hard cider makers in Denver, Boulder and Cortez. MORP used proceeds to purchase local heirloom apples, engage

sold wholesale or retail, even when pasteurized. So we turned our efforts to press juice for hard cider which is exempt from regulations as fermentation effectively kills pathogens.

In order for Ryal Schallenberger of Montana’s Northwest Mobile Juicing to bring his mobile juice press—currently the only one in the United States—to Montezuma County, MORP needed to guarantee we would have 800 bushels of apples to press. Knowing there was a bumper crop on the trees, and that one orchard alone could produce 800 bushels, we said, “Sure!”; and when Ryal set a date in mid-October, a 12-day crash-course on juice manufacturing ensued.



**Heirloom Winesap and Rome apples leave Risenhoover Orchard for processing into raw juice.**

Montana’s NW Mobile Juicing, lease cold storage and processing facilities, ship juice and coordinate the project. Funded in part by a recently awarded USDA Local Food Promotion Program grant, MORP undertook this project to evaluate whether mobile juicing can help fruit growers reach juice markets. With the preponderance of juice apples in our orchards, market opportunity exists not only for hard cider, but for fresh juice as well. Wouldn’t it be great if local apple juice could again be available in our own community?

We learned some valuable lessons in piloting this project. One of the most surprising was that health and juice regulations would not allow juice pressed on a mobile processor to be

MORP set a goal to pick 100 bushels a day. After our first day yielded 20 bushels, albeit with only three pickers, we got nervous. MORP put out a call to pay fruit-growers for picked and delivered apples, Carolyn Dunmire offered to coordinate volunteer picking crews and seven orchard owners opened their gates to mostly complete strangers. Over the course of eight days, 32 volunteers (see p. 5) and four orchard owners picked, shook, and packed and moved 32,000 pounds of apples. Over and over we heard old-timers recount, “on a good day, my mom/dad/uncle could hand-pick 100 bushels”. We were humbled by our fruit-growing pioneers.

Picking apples was one thing. What about selling juice? How would we price juice in a market ranging from \$1.50 to \$9.00/gallon? Where exactly does one put 800 bushels of apples and how do they get there? Furthermore, how do we move a tote of juice weighing 2,600 pounds, and how do we get six of them to Denver? Thanks to years of getting to know old orchards, their people, and folks in the cider business, we knew who to ask. The juice sold out, and box-by-box, MORP purchased and borrowed wooden fruit crates, 20-bushel bins and milk crates. We borrowed trucks, trailers, barns, rented a loader and leased a forklift, tractor, warehouse and cold storage from Russell Vineyards to finish the job. Well, almost. There was still that

*~continued on p.3*

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*.....working to preserve our fruit-growing heritage and restore an orchard culture and economy to our region.*

*MORP envisions southwestern Colorado being renowned for an orchard culture and economy based on the legendary quality of Montezuma Valley Fruits.*

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MORP operates as a not-for-profit corporation under the 501c3 sponsorship of Mancos Valley Resources.

## Hard Cider Renaissance

**Sarah Syverson  
 Board President**

If you've lingered around Montezuma County apple orchards this past year, you might have heard about the latest buzz in the heritage apple revival movement. A hard cider revolution is spreading like wildfire across the country, rivaling artisanal craft brewers and local wineries for a seat at the proverbial drink table. And Montezuma County, with its rich apple history and current focus on saving and propagating rare apple genetics—thanks to MORP—is standing on the precipice of great possibilities as an apple leader in the hard cider industry.

There are a handful of orchardists and cider makers in Montezuma County that will undoubtedly unveil their artisanal hard cider blends in 2017. Local fruit growers have been toiling away, resuscitating old orchards and developing new ones that contain a full spectrum of flavor palettes suitable to hard cider, or plain old apple juice for that matter. Alongside orchard cultivation, cider makers have been developing yeast, fermentation, and bottling techniques that yield award-winning ciders. (See the Fall 2016 Edible Southwest Colorado article, *The Revolution in the Orchard*).

Throughout this emergence, MORP has been an invaluable partner. From the first grafts of rare and specifically sought after hard cider varieties, to piloting a mobile cider press operation in 2016, MORP has been supporting and

developing economic, social and cultural pathways for emerging artisanal hard cider operations to bloom and prosper.

To cut a new pathway in uncharted territory is not the easiest of tasks. But MORP is a willing advocate, leader and supporter of the new burgeoning local orchard economy. We are fortunate to be led by a staff and board that is deeply passionate about our local fruit trees and values the priceless gems in our region's rare fruit genetics and exceptional growing conditions. MORP holds a strong and experienced vision for the future of Montezuma Valley Fruits that will float all of the proverbial orchard boats.

If you haven't yet had the occasion to try the full spectrum of flavor profiles coming from Montezuma County cider makers and the unusual orchards that we are privy to, look for an opportunity in 2017. And don't stop at one taste. To know Montezuma County, its people and its history, is to eat and drink from its orchards. At MORP, we know this to be true from the hard-working orchard folks that grow the fruit to grace your table.

Join us in supporting this renaissance of hard cider and all things apple. In giving to MORP, you support the future of land, trees, Montezuma Valley Fruits, local orchardists and your fellow community members that enjoy these invaluable apples. Come! Give what you can and join us at the table! There is a seat and an apple for each of you.



**Former Mountain Sun Juice owner, Bill Russell, having fun moving apples again as part of MORP's mobile juicing pilot. Thank you Bill!**

# In Memoriam

## Samuel William Dunning

### February 3, 1928—November 3, 2016

#### Jude Schuenemeyer

It was from Sam W. Dunning that we first learned the final resting place of Jasper D. Hall, Fruit Wizard of Montezuma County. Sam's father Frank Dunning provided the burial plot at Summit Ridge Cemetery in Dolores when Mr. Hall passed away unexpectedly, still in his prime, in December of 1915.

It was also from Sam that we learned of the Gano, Grimes Golden, White Winter Pearmain, and Strawberry apples. On the first thunderstorm of the season, with lightning flashing, Sam walked with us through Uncle Dunning's orchard, calmly pointing out this from that. Sam introduced us to Bill Olson, he hopped into our car, and up the road to Bill's place we went.

Though Jasper Hall first started orchards deep in McElmo Canyon at the mouth of Goodman Canyon, by 1902 he had moved up to the Lakeview Community. He planted a large orchard, started the Montezuma Valley Nursery Company and "inspired others with what was possible." By the early 1920s Bill Olson's grandfather acquired



**Kind Sam Dunning could grow anything well**

Hall's land. Mr. & Mrs. Olson, Sam, Addie and I sat on Bill's porch in the warm sun of a fall afternoon. Sam told Bill that we were looking for Jasper Hall. Bill's face lit up, shoulders raised, his back straightened. Something near forgotten was being remembered. Sam and Bill swapped stories of the people and the land, the orchards and this place. Finally, Bill pointed out two old apple trees near each other. One was a Winter Banana, the other they called the Jasper Hall Jelly Crab. "Those two trees

were planted by Jasper Hall," Bill told us. "They are the last of the Mohicans."

If we have learned anything in these orchards over several years it is that kindness is invaluable. Kindness builds communities and orchards are our common ground. They give as much as the people who tend to them; and the people are as unique and persistent as the trees themselves—each with their own story and perspective. Orchards unite us all with their simple act of giving. From their beautiful bloom grows a fruit to be enjoyed and shared through generations, across cultural lines, religious affiliations and political or ethnic divisions—leaving pleasant memories of taste and happiness. In all of agriculture, orchards stand peculiar. Though seed may be passed through time from hand to hand, trees are rooted in the culture of the land.

On another recent warm fall day I stood by the grave of Jasper D. Hall, standing as erect as I could manage, for the memorial service to Sam Dunning. Many of his neighbors from Lakeview were in attendance—a tribute to the big-hearted kindness of this man.

#### *Juice Pilot, from p. 1*

question of getting 10,400 pounds of juice to Denver, after numerous unsuccessful attempts at sourcing a refrigerated truck. But as luck would have it, Lang Livestock had just purchased a truck from our friends at Geisinger Feed; they left the next evening for a nighthaul on an open-air flatbed to keep it cool. How happy we were envisioning a 75' Kenworth semi delivering Montezuma Valley Heritage Blend apple juice in downtown Denver early the next morning. Next time, we envision the truck being full.

MORP is grateful for everyone's generosity and confidence, and the true community effort it took to accomplish this project. Stay tuned as we unwrap what we learned to keep moving our fruit economy forward.



**Ten years in the making, it was a happy December day when MORP signed a 10-year lease with Phillip and Vivienne Kenyon to replant the historically significant Gold Medal Orchard. Thank you Phil and Vivienne!**

# Historic Apple Identification ~ the Old-Fashioned

## Addie and Jude Schuenemeyer

The question we hear more often than any other is, "What kind of apple is this?" With 100-year old apples, it can be hard to know, as few aspects of apple culture are as bedeviling as apple identification. Two apples of the same variety can look quite different, and two apples that look alike can be different. Besides costly and inaccessible DNA fingerprinting, the gold standard in apple ID is to ask a person that grew up with the tree to name the apple; alas, with historic trees, that can range from difficult to impossible.

In the 1800s there were 17,000 individual varieties of apples in America compared to 6,000 today. In documenting 500 apples grown historically in Colorado, MORP has narrowed likely choices for our area to those listed in our *Old Colorado Apples* list. But confusion still exists. As the number of varieties dwindled, so did knowledge of them, and apple taxonomists are rare and scattered far and wide.



Jude and Sam Dunning get to know Gano apple by making tracks around the tree.

## Start Local and Practical

Wise old-timers will tell you that the only way to get to know an apple is to make a lot of tracks around the tree. Become familiar not only with the apple, but with the tree's bark, leaves and shape. Taste fruit repeatedly season after season. The subtle complexities of flavor, texture, and appearance will imprint upon your senses and begin building a basis for comparison.

Learn which varieties grew historically in your area. Research state and county fair lists, horticultural reports and newspapers. A tree's age can be determined through orchard assessment, interviewing knowledgeable people and reviewing property abstracts.

Apples can be grouped into simple terms, **Uses:** dessert, culinary, juice, cider; **Season:** summer, fall, winter, and **Flavor Profile:** acid, sub-acid, sweet, bitter, sharp, etc. Practically speaking, knowing an apple's use, season and flavor is all one needs, until we learn its historical name.

## Getting Technical

Two online tools that MORP finds useful are **Orange Pippin**, an online description of over 600 apples, and the **USDA Pomological Watercolor Collection**, paintings from the 1800s & 1900s that are worth a thousand words.

Historically, there are three important works on the subject: **The Fruit Manual** by Robert Hogg, **Apples of New York** by S. A. Beach and **Hardy Fruits** by Edward Bunyard. Beach lists about twenty-five attributes for the tree, leaves, bark and fruit. Bunyard breaks apples into seven different groups, and Hogg uses four specific structural components. Let us become familiar with the work of these early pomologists.

## Hogg

The 1884 Fifth Edition of Hogg's work contained in his words, "The new classification of the Apple upon which I have for some years been engaged." Hogg used four structural parts of the apple to distinguish it from others: stamen, tube, carpel and sepal. For example, an apple with marginal stamens, a conical tube, axile round cells and an erect convergent calyx in a late red apple historic to Colorado, might be a Melon apple. The only possible problem with this system is what the heck do these terms mean?

## Bunyard

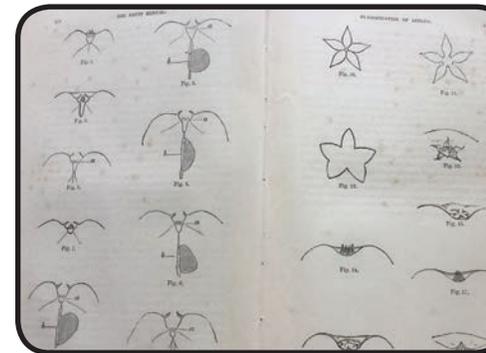
Published in London in 1920, Bunyard classifies apples into seven groups.

**Group 1:** Smooth. Green. Sour. May have blush, no stripes. Rhode Island Greening is in this group.

**Group 2:** Smooth. Striped. Sour. A few are a little sweet. Bramley's, Twenty Ounce, and Tom Putt.

**Group 3:** Smooth. Striped. Sweet. Nearly all of sufficient sweetness to be classed as dessert. Distinct stripes not obscured by blush. Duchess of Oldenburg, Wagener, Wealthy, and again Twenty Ounce, noting the difficulty of fitting an apple into one basket.

**Group 4:** These apples have markedly golden skin, flushed but not striped. The beautiful



Hogg's 1884 *Fruit Manual* illustrates the structural parts of an apple.

Winter Banana is our area's finest example

**Group 5:** Dark brown, red flush, absence of russet, rarely striped. Many historic Colorado varieties are in this group: Northern Spy, Delicious, Fameuse, Bietigheim

**Group 6:** Very large proportion of the best flavored fruits, characterized by a mixture of red and russet. Colorado Orange apple joins Autumn Pearmain, Ribston Pippin, and Golden Reinette here

**Group 7:** Russeted without red. Colorado Golden Russet and Ashmead's Kernel

Each of these groups is further sorted in a matrix of apple shape: flattened or oblate, round, oblong, oval or conical, and mode of ripening: summer through winter. If you know what was historic to your district, with good enough descriptions to assign apples to one of Bunyard's groups, you should be able to get a match, or at least narrow the options

## Putting it All to Use



# Way

## Beach

Beach's seminal **Apples of New York** demands a place in every fruit explorer's library. Beach uses roughly twenty-five characteristics to differentiate apples, including tree form, vigor, bark and leaf patterns, fruit size, form, uniformity and numerous properties in the actual apple.

Here is where Beach meets Bunyard, "Certain characteristics of fruit are more consistent than others. To my mind, considering all classes of fruit, there is no one characteristic so fixed as the form. It is true of the immature as well as the fully developed specimens." (Van Dieman, quoted by Beach). Bunyard ultimately identified apples by season and form, after sorting into broad groupings. Even if off as to his apple groupings, form is form, and season is season.

If we know the month an apple ripens, and its shape by comparing numerous specimens, we can classify that apple into certain basic groups as per Bunyard. Then we analyze the apple properties from Hogg and Beach: stamens, tube, carpels, cavity, basin, stripes, dots, blush, etc, and we might differentiate these apples into their respective varietal groupings. A detailed examination of season and form, combined with features and history, enables us to methodically describe and identify an apple.

Though confusion comes easily, all you need to do is pick from a tree an apple or score, take a bite or more, slice, look, feel, smell, taste, and repeat. Make your own tracks around trees. Worry about the details later. It can be simplified, and one must take the first step to know "What apple is this?"



## Thank You Volunteers!

**A HUGE SHOUT OUT** to all the MORP volunteers that helped pick and transport Apples, collect scion, work the Orchard Social, work on the tractor, loan equipment, write articles, serve on our Board and many, many other tasks. We could not do it with you.

- |                            |                    |                             |
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**Unknown winter apple:** large; variable shape form roundish, oblate, slightly oblong, slightly tapers to end, blocky, lopsided, slightly ribbed from top to bottom; orangish-pinkish red ripening to burgundy red over green background, green cavity with red streaks over raised broad shoulder, streaked and mottled red ripening to solid red; small, scattered dots, mostly white, sometimes russet, mostly raised; cavity is broad, acute, not often russeted; thick, short, stem below shoulder; basin medium depth and width, obtuse, slightly sloped, green with russet, cavity closed to open; skin thin, glossy, slight bloom; calyx tube elongated conical to funnel; stamens marginal; core closed; carpels obovate; white flesh tinged yellow, very juicy, course, crisp, crunchy, firm, sometimes with pink veins, subacid.

**Martha and Dusty Teal (pictured at right) resigned from MORPs Board of Directors to pursue their cider business full-time and care for their lovely restored TLazyT Orchard in Arriola. Thank you for your years of leadership and help Martha and Dusty! We miss you already but are looking forward to sipping your cider in the coming years.**

**Many thanks also to Michael and Sharon Demers for your time on the Board; good luck with your move!**



# Apple Market Study Findings

## Carolyn Dunmire

As part of MORP's goal to return an Orchard culture and economy to our region, we are interested in the economic viability of a renewed local fruit industry. In 2015 the Colorado Department of Agriculture's Enrich Colorado Agriculture Program awarded MORP a grant to conduct market research for southwestern Colorado heirloom apples. The Gates Family Foundation, Whole Foods Market and the Kenney Bros. Foundation provided matching funds. Assessing the markets for heirloom apples is a first step towards understanding the economic feasibility of restoring historic and planting new orchards.

The Market Study began by assessing existing apple market data. MORP staff and consultants Carolyn Dunmire and Bob Bragg then surveyed apple buyers representing local and statewide grocers, natural food stores and distribution cooperatives; orchard owners representing small to commercial growers; and cider makers representing hobbyist, craft, and commercial manufacturers. We estimated production costs from the surveys as well as in-person interviews with growers in Montezuma County. We crated enterprise budget cost models for rehabilitating historic orchards and establishing new ones.

## History Shapes Today's Orchard Economy

The future of Montezuma Valley Fruit is shaped by its history. Unlike Mesa County to the north, Montezuma County did not see widespread eradication of apple trees, nor full replacement with modern varieties. In 2002, Montezuma County had the highest percentage of old trees and unknown varieties in the state. This concentration and diversity of remaining historic orchards is unique and valuable not only for their history and rare genetics, but for their potential in our fruit economy. According to MORP's orchard survey data there are an estimated 10,000 trees in 200 orchards in the Montezuma Valley. We group them as follows:

### Historic pre-1920 Orchards

Our oldest and most genetically diverse orchards, estimated to have about 3000 trees, with varieties such as

Winter Banana, Chanango Strawberry, Original Delicious, Gano and more.

### Historic 1920-1960 Orchards

Later orchards, containing some 4000 trees, including Delicious, Golden Delicious, Rome, Jonathan, Winesap, and Stayman Winesap.

### Modern Orchards

About 2000 trees in these orchards contain Red Delicious, Golden Delicious, Rome, Jonathan, and "improved" Macintosh apples.

### New Orchards

Recent orchards that have been planted with heritage and cider apple varieties. These orchards will be productive in five to ten years and are estimated to have 1,000 trees.

## Recommendations

Reviving a sustainable Montezuma Valley fruit industry will require overcoming significant challenges.

### Vintage trees produce the most desirable apple varieties

These 80 to 100+ year-old trees have variable production and may only produce for a few more years. Most trees are on standard rootstock and in fragile condition requiring expensive hand-harvesting in tall trees. These orchards are best suited as genetic stock with minimal production to keep the "taste" for these apples alive in the marketplace while new trees grafted from these varieties mature. MORP's nursery is focused on propagating these rare apples.

### Infrastructure and labor constraints

The infrastructure required to get fresh Montezuma Valley apples to market is in disrepair after decades of neglect. Sorting equipment, packing boxes and storage locations require significant investment to get them back into commercial-scale condition. Similarly, the labor needed to harvest Montezuma Valley apples and prune trees has long dispersed and a new workforce would need to be trained and supported to have a steady apple supply available for market. MORP is exploring training infrastructure options needed to support the fruit economy.

### Long distance to destination markets

The major destination markets for Montezuma Valley apples include the Denver area (400 miles from Montezuma

Valley), Albuquerque (300 miles), and Salt Lake City (350 miles). These long distances require costly padded packaging and refrigerated transport to ensure that the apples arrive in good shape.

### Abundance of juice apples

The Mountain Sun juice plant in Dolores, Colorado closed 14 years ago, but the source trees for the organic apple juice are still producing. The Montezuma Valley has a predominance of heirloom Delicious as well as Jonathan and Rome apple varieties that are well suited to juice production. Juice apples do not have to meet the more stringent #1 fresh apple standards, but the distance to destination markets is even more of a barrier for these low-priced apples. MORP is evaluating the use of a mobile juice unit (see cover story). In addition to providing a value-added product for apples, a mobile unit could alleviate the transport problem of shipping juice apples to distant markets as shipping juice is much more efficient.

### Matching supply and demand for cider apples

While the Montezuma Valley seems to be a cider maker's ideal source for heirloom apple varieties, there are some constraints. True "cider-specific" apples have a bitter taste that adds complexity to cider but makes the fruit unavailable for multiple uses such as fresh eating; consequently they are not found in abundance in local orchards. Unlike many commercial varieties, older varieties may not be suited to closely-spaced production on dwarfing rootstock due to fire blight. Furthermore, annual production can be limited as many cider apple varieties are biennial bearers. There are however, varieties that are **prized** for cider that are also excellent fresh and juice apples, and many of these did grow here historically. MORP recommends planting a diversity of heritage and cider apples to alleviate the supply and demand mismatch. Toward that end MORP is increasing the availability of these rare genetics through tree sales, grafting classes and scion availability.

For more information, to support MORP or to download the full Apple Market Study go to: [www.montezumaorchard.org](http://www.montezumaorchard.org).

# Thank You MORP Members and Supporters....

## YOU make our vision to

### *Keep Montezuma County Orchard Country reality.*

Thank you for supporting MORP with your cash and in-kind contributions. We can't do it without you.

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 Whole Foods Market  
 Woods Canyon Archaeological Consultants



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**Apple judge extraordinaire Emmie Beckler judges an apple not only by its outer beauty, but by its inner beauty as well.**  
2016 Orchard Social, Dolores Harvest Festival

## Colorado Orange Apple added to *Slow Food USA Ark of Taste!*

**Editors Note:** In 2012 MORP rediscovered this Colorado Orange apple and helped owner Paul Telck, save it by grafting.

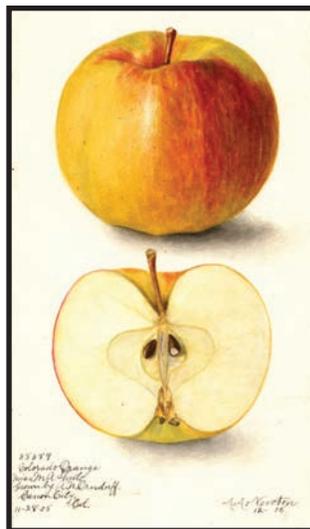
The Colorado Orange Apple has been added to Slow Food USA's Ark of Taste—a living catalog of delicious and distinctive foods facing extinction and champion of keeping them in production and on our plates. Their description of this apple could not speak better of our fruit growing past and for its future.

*When was the last time an apple asked more of you than just to slice it and smear it with peanut butter? When it seduced you into its color, aroma and flavor as slowly and deeply as a glass of Puligny Montrachet? Turn this heirloom in your hand and watch as pink-orange melts into yellow highlights and a sun-touched rosy blush. Breathe in the aroma of cider and soft rose. Smack into the crisp, crunch for a juicy explosion of complexity: lemon geranium, strawberry, bitter beer... even cheddar, butter and earth. Have you ever in your life? Well, have you?*

*The Colorado Orange Apple is an "apple by accident". The first tree sprang out of the root graveyard of a less fortunate variety of apple sapling planted by settlers in the late 1800s. After its first season of bearing fruit, the Colorado Orange Apple tree became the apple of many an orchard-owner's eye, and it was grafted widely across the state. In 1908, there were 3200 acres of apple orchard in Colorado, and the Colorado Orange Apple was one of only a dozen varieties that produced a full crop each season. Due to its late bloom, reliable harvest, sensuous flavor and buttery texture in pie, this*

*Colorado native was in high demand and fetched high prices. During its heyday, it was cultivated all over the Midwest and planting was continually recommended to be more widespread.*

*It is unclear how or why the Colorado Orange Apple fell out of favor with orchardists, but as of 2016, there is only one tree in still existence bearing fruit. Efforts have been undertaken to preserve this tasty treat by distributing scions to other orchards in the Colorado area, and though there are a total of 50-60 new trees, none of them have yet borne fruit. This means the apple is only available for home consumption. If only vintners could grow a passion for apples, helping us to highlight their terroir and complexity as they have wine, we may have a shot at successfully dedicating orchards to the production of the Colorado Orange Apple as preservationists recommend. Until then, the paper description of flavor will have to stand in for the real thing. Are you satisfied with that? Well, are you?*



*Visit: [www.slowfoodusa.org](http://www.slowfoodusa.org)*

**Colorado Orange Apple**  
Miss M.A. Shute  
Grown by A.N. Orndorff  
Canon City, Col. 11-28-05  
Artist: A.A. Newton.  
USDA Pomological Watercolors