# Promising New Jersey Hard Cider Apple Trial Updates

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The 2018 apple growing season is in full swing and the hard cider variety demonstration plot at the Snyder Research and Extension Farm has been established. The majority of the grafts that successfully healed showed significant 1st year growth. A complete report of the trial will be published in the Winter 2018 Issue of *Horticulture News* and *Fruit Notes*. Overall grafting success in the trial was a bit lower than expected where the cleft grafting resulted in 82% success. Despite this, the failed grafts will be replaced next year in an attempt to develop the complete planned block of hard cider apples.

Preliminary data illustrates the varieties Stoke Red and Red Astrachan resulted in the most apical growth and largest trunk cross sectional area of

Newly grafted 'Ellis Bitter' scion in the hard cider apple topworking trial at the Rutgers Snyder Research and Extension Farm, Pittstown, New Jersey.

Six months of growth on 'Ellis Bitter' scion in the hard cider apple topworking trial at the Rutgers Snyder Research and Extension Farm, Pittstown, New Jersey.

the 31 cultivars respectively. As noted in the Summer 2018 Issue of *Horticulture News/Fruit Notes*, this variety demonstration trial holds a number of hard cider, heirloom, and dual purpose varieties, however both Stoke Red and Red Astrachan were notable in that both are particularly well suited as hard cider varieties. Stoke Red is described as having a bittersharp flavor with yellow skin and red flesh, while Red Astrachan is considered an astringent variety with dark red scarlet skin. Future work in this trial will involve assessing the varieties for disease resistance, yield, vigor and flavor profiles.

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