IFTA Tours Ontario

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In late July, 2019, the International Fruit Tree Association (https://www.ifruittree.org/) held the Annual Summer Study Tour in the Province of Ontario, Canada. Nearly 200 IFTA members spent three days touring orchards on the Norfolk escarpment, just west of Lake Ontario, and in the Georgian Bay area of Lake Huron. Here are a few pictures from each day, but you can see more at http://jmcextman.blogspot.com/2019/08/iftaontario.html. All pictures and captions by Jon Clements, UMass Amherst.

Dr. John Cline, U. of Guelph in a cider apple planting at the OMAFRA Simcoe research station. We also visited the 2014 NC-140 (http://nc140.org) rootstock research planting featuring Vineland rootstocks that are winter hardy but somewhat more vigorous and less yield-efficient than Geneva 935.

At Lingwood Farms we saw a generally well-executed orchard including tall-spindle “tipped” trees (aka Wafler system) but the orchard has recently weathered a series of challenges including a tornado, fire blight outbreak, and tree loss to black stem borers.

Near Georgian Bay we visited a turn-key orchard system from Italy that consisted of cement posts, hail net, and overhead irrigation. The 30-acre planting is all Honeycrisp.

At T&K Ferri Orchard a discussion on the apple fruitlet growth rate model and chemical thinning was followed by a farm-table dinner in the orchard.

Botden Orchards in Georgian Bay included an equipment display and here Gerbe Botden demonstrates the tools he uses to monitor orchard and fruit conditions.

Tom Chudleigh at Chudleigh's Farm talks about their PYO varieties and systems in their popular agritainment business that draws large crowds from the millions of people in the greater Toronto-Hamilton metro.

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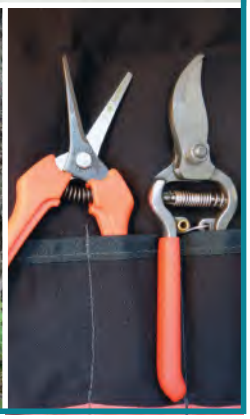
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