

## **Stemilt's Fast Facts: The Cast Tells Retailers To Remember Their GFPs: Granny Smith, Fuji, and Pink Lady®**

WENATCHEE, Wash. – After quite the winter snowstorm in the northwest, we are back with another episode of [Fast Facts: The Cast](#). Marketing director at Stemilt, Brianna Shales, meets with Stemilt merchandising manager, Tim Harrington, to discuss apple category performance data from Nielsen over the latest 12 weeks from November 7, 2021, to January 29, 2022.

“We had some wild weather in the west in January that caused a few hiccups for apple shipments, but it was good to see that apple sales continued to show those 7% dollar increases year over year with Gala and Honeycrisp leading the pack at 44% of apple volumes,” explained Shales.

Apples made up 6.1% of total produce department sales nationally during this time period which reflected the same percentage the year prior. In the Midwest, apples made up 6.9% of total produce department sales during these most recent 12 weeks. Nationally, apples were down in volume by 2% during this timeframe compared to the same time last year. This is due to a smaller crop size, and the previous 12-week period from October through January 1 had apple volumes down 3.3 percent year-over-year. Closing the gap on apple volumes during a short crop was a good sign of category health through the holiday period.

“There are opportunities to promote Granny Smith, Pink Lady®, and Fuji this season,” shared Harrington. “Granny Smith apples are a very strong number three in the category and volume is down 5.7% from last year. I suggest retailers look back and refocus on Granny Smith to give it more power through promotion.”

The top five apples remained unchanged: Gala and Honeycrisp combine to make up 44% of the category volume, followed by Fuji, Granny Smith, Red Delicious, and Pink Lady® as the #6 apple. Supplies of Gala and Honeycrisp are tightening a bit as regionals wind up and due to smaller crop volumes in Washington State. Retailers should react to these crop differences by shifting bulk promotions to other core apples – Granny, Fuji, Pink Lady®, and Cosmic Crisp®. Continue the strategy of promoting multiple varieties on ad at once and using tiered pricing to attract different shoppers.

“If we look at Fuji apples, they’re down 2.5% in volume, but they’re up 6.9% in sales, making it a strong number four in your apple varieties,” explained Harrington. “Pink Lady® is a rising star in the category this year, and is showing exceptional fruit color, quality, and sizing in the industry. Pink Lady® is up 39.4% in volume and 40% in sales. We absolutely want retailers to capture those sales. Remember the GFP’s: Granny Smith, Fuji, and Pink Lady®.”

Apple dollars remain elevated over last year and are up 7%. This is due to inflation and a shorter national crop. The average retail price per pound on apples during the latest 12 weeks was \$1.90. During this timeframe last year, it was \$1.75 per pound.

“We also know that 60% of apples are being sold in bulk and 40% in bags, but let’s talk about those per-pound prices and how retailers can approach that as part of their strategy this year,” said Shales to Harrington. “Retailers are definitely going to want to work on finding that balance between bag and bulk because it will take both for the category’s success.”

It’s going to be important for retailers to know what a dollar driver bulk apples are for the category and plan bulk apple promotions accordingly. Conventional bulk sells for \$0.46 per pound more on average than conventional bags. For organic bulk, it is more exaggerated at \$0.78 per pound more than organic bags.

“Having both bulk and bag is an important part of having a successful category,” explained Harrington. “Bulk apples are giving you 46 cents more a pound than that of the bagged price per pound. Having bulk in your mix and a strong representation will blend right into that bottom line in sales. When you look at organics, you can almost double that. I would encourage bulk sales on both conventional and organic apples, it certainly makes those cash registers sing!”

Another variety, the Cosmic Crisp®, has moved from being #13 on the national apple list to #12! Cosmic Crisp® was up 14% nationally in volume vs. last year during this timeframe. This is expected because the volume of this apple is growing continuously. It had its top retail week of the season in mid-January that follow what Shales and Harrington have observed at retail via increased promotions and display space. This apple will be highly promotable all spring.

“Those four varieties would be great for multi variety ads on apples,” said Shales. “I can definitely see that display space expansion and Cosmic Crisp® promotion picking up as volumes increase. It’s exciting to see the apple’s growth in the Midwest and Northeast regions.”

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#### About Stemilt

Stemilt is a family-owned grower, packer, and shipper of tree fruit. Owned and operated by the Mathison family, Stemilt’s mission is to cultivate people and delight consumers with its World Famous Fruits. Stemilt is a leader in sweet cherries and organic tree fruits, and a key supplier of apples and pears. The company stewards an environmentally sustainable and socially responsible business through its Responsible Choice® program, which has been in place since 1989. For more information about Stemilt, visit [www.stemilt.com](http://www.stemilt.com).