



Overwhelming Demand Drives Lady Alice® Apples into New Markets

Selah, WA (February 1, 2015) One of the hottest new apples in the marketplace is arriving in grocery stores this February. Lady Alice® apples are quickly becoming the most eagerly anticipated apple each winter. As regional varieties begin to disappear from store shelves, the Lady Alice® arrives with peak flavor and texture. Discovered as a chance seedling in the orchards of eastern Washington, production of this apple has increased as its appeal with consumers has taken off. Lady Alice® will be available February through May (or while supplies last) at many major and independent grocery retailers.

"It has been incredible to witness the market's reception of Lady Alice® and the resulting growth. We have worked diligently over the past several years to better understand the unique characteristics of this apple- from growing and packing to storing and shipping," said Mark Zirkle, president of Rainier Fruit Company and primary grower of Lady Alice®. "Each year's crop is an improvement from the last, and this is substantiated by the increasing demand."

The story of the Lady Alice®'s growing popularity is truly a rags to riches story. It was discovered quite by chance on a farm near Gleed, Washington in 1978 when a grower accidentally cut an apple tree with his farm equipment. A chance seedling grew from the base, and over the next 25 years steps were taken to preserve and propagate the distinctive characteristics of the Lady Alice®. The Lady Alice® apple is named after Alice Zirkle, the co-founder of Rainier Fruit Company in honor of her memory.

What consumers really love is Lady Alice®'s mouth-watering flavor and delightful snap. Like all varieties, these heirloom-like apples are harvested in the fall, but the difference is that the Lady Alice® prefers to store for several months while the flavors continue to develop. The Lady Alice® is characterized by its red-striped skin with a yellow background and sweet, crisp flesh that has a hint of tartness. The density of the apple leaves those who eat them feeling satisfied after enjoying one.

The versatile Lady Alice® apple is an excellent choice for snacking, baking and cooking. Its distinctively sturdy flesh helps the apple retain its texture when heated at high temperatures. Just like fresh cherries, the Lady Alice® apple has a short season, resulting in limited supply and considerable excitement.

"We at Rainier strive to grow only the finest fruit – the Lady Alice® apple offers versatility, while providing consumers with a unique offering of the same high quality that we have been committed to for more than a century," adds Zirkle.

The Lady Alice® apple contributes to a healthy lifestyle and complements a variety of

recipes. According to the USDA, apples are among the top 20 foods with the highest antioxidant content per serving. Rich in antioxidants, apples may help boost weight loss and reduce the risk of chronic diseases.

For delicious and healthy recipe ideas including: Lady Alice® apple squash soup, roasted halibut with apple chutney, apple pancakes with apple cider syrup, and Waldorf slaw with bacon, please visit: www.rainierfruit.com.

Rainier Fruit Company is the exclusive supplier of the Lady Alice® apple. Lady Alice will be available at select locations throughout the United States. Consumers can find the store nearest to them by accessing the Lady Alice® Store Locator: www.rainierfruit.com.

About Rainier Fruit Company

The family-owned and operated farms that sell fruit under the Rainier label have been honing their craft for generations. Long before becoming one of the largest suppliers of apples, cherries, pears, and blueberries in the United States, the growers were simply chasing the American dream of many pioneers. Many of its ranches are now being managed by the fourth, fifth, or even sixth generation, some farming before Washington State joined the Union. Rainier is fueled by a united effort to grow, pack, and ship the best, most-flavorful fruit, working together to succeed. For more information, visit www.rainierfruit.com.

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