



# Tips for Managing Young High Density Apple Plantings



By Tyler Hardy  
Brookdale Fruit Farm, Inc.



# Brookdale History

Brookdale Fruit Farm Inc.

38 Broad Street

Hollis NH (603) 465 2240

- Brookdale Fruit Farm established in 1847
- Currently managed by the 5<sup>th</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> generations of the family
- Farming around 350+ Acres
  - Certified Organic 5 Acres
- 4 major business units
  - Wholesale, Retail, Pick Your Own, Supplies







## Apple Production

165 Acres of Apples

- Many different sizes and systems

Planting mainly tall spindle since 2008

- M9, B9, G11, G41, G935, Nic-29

M9-337, B10, M26, B9/111, Pajam-2

Rubymac

Lindamac

Snappymac

Macoun

Royalcourt

Gala

Early Fuji

Fuji

Snowsweet

Honeycrisp

MAIA-1

MAIA-11

Crimsoncrisp

Zestar

Dandee Red

Empire







# High Density Problems

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Biggest problem was inconsistent planting depth

- Scion rooting
- Lose production/increase vegetation



**AVOID THE DREADED SINKING PROBLEM!!!!**

-It starts with the tree planter





- Corrected planter problems
  - Adjust frequently pending on field
- Having consistent shank is very advantageous
- Easy to add soil – very difficult to take away
- Use more labor
- Smoother planting surface when finished

1. Plant Tree
2. Rake in the edges
3. Adjust tree height
4. Smooth surface around tree again





More consistent bud union depth  
Use the "fist" rule





Done right the first time  
Can help with drainage/pooling







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# Drip Irrigation



Get irrigation on ASAP!

Temporary header lines

2"x450' header hose is only \$145

T-tape starter or SWV \$0.60 -1.60



Gets water out if no time to dig  
permanent underground mains









# Things to Consider

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# Tall Spindle Chores

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Painting trees  
Weed Control is key  
Tree Training  
Extra support







# Let's tie some limbs!

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Rubber bands  
Max-tapener  
Weights/Rocks





# Pruning Newly Planted Trees

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# Single out the leader

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# Renewal cuts







# Don't crop too early!!!

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- Let the tree fill space before cropping heavy
- When thinking of cropload look at rootstock and variety combinations



Honeycrisp on B9 cropped to heavy

- Pruned very aggressive
- Plenty of N
- Single leaders like younger tree
- Allow fruit but hand thin hard





# Over cropped too early

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Cut off every limb leaving a renewal cut

- Treat tree like newly planted
- Single leader







# Tips for upright growing varieties







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# Tips for upright growing varieties







# Tall Spindle not for you?

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M26 or similar more vigorous root  
4'x14' = 777 trees/acre  
Less intensive trellis system  
Follow tall spindle rules  
Renewal pruning system  
Can still obtain high yields early  
If vigor gets to be too much  
crop heavy







# Tall Spindle not for you?

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Bud118

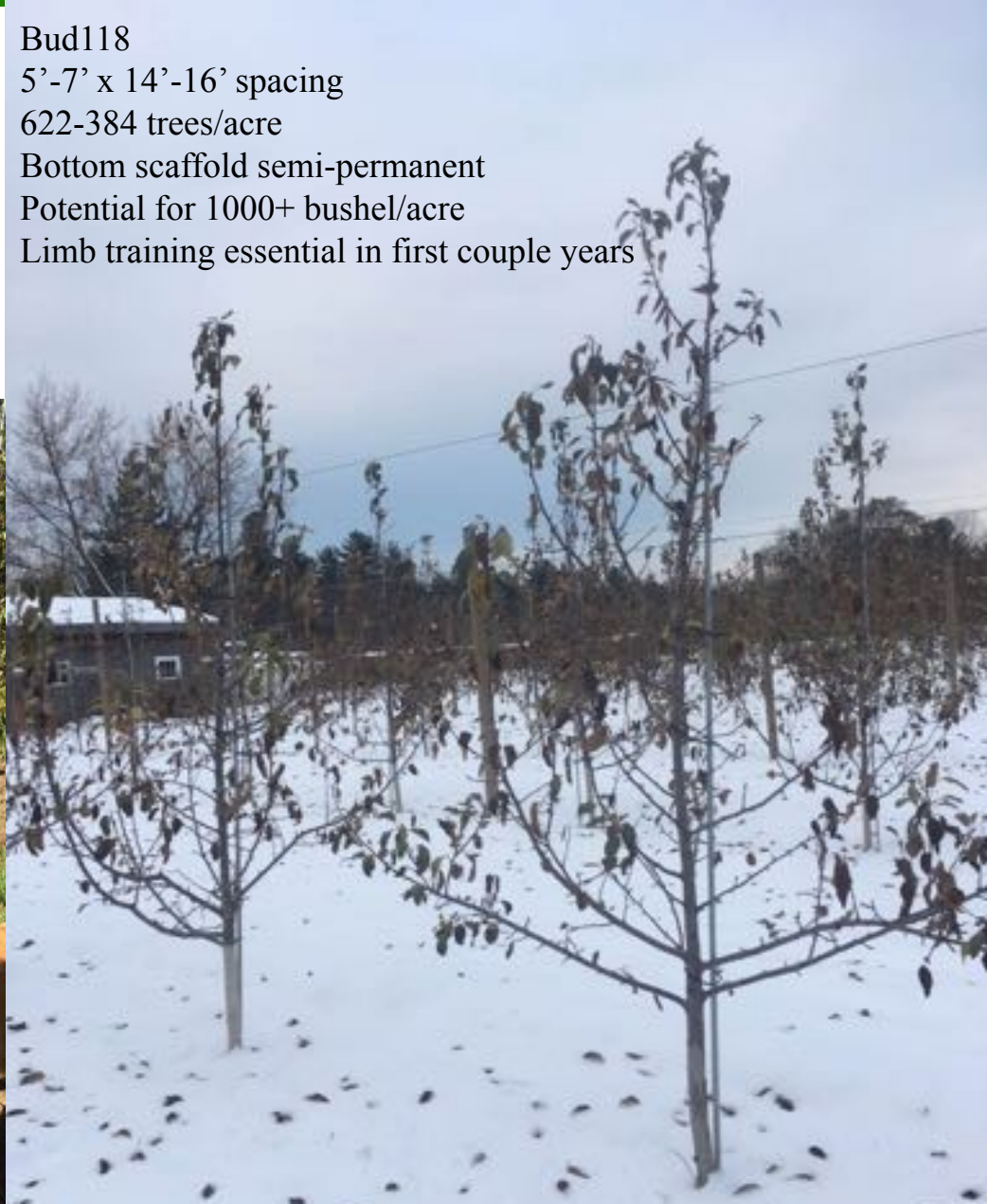
5'-7' x 14'-16' spacing

622-384 trees/acre

Bottom scaffold semi-permanent

Potential for 1000+ bushel/acre

Limb training essential in first couple years







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