



APPLE PRESS

News, Hints & History from your Friends at Soons Orchards
www.soonsorchards.com New Hampton, NY 845-374-5471

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This Tree Needs a Haircut: Pruning Basics

A Little off the Top: Jeff Soons chooses just the right branches to cut during pruning season. He's using a seven-foot long air-powered pruner - perfect for those hard-to-reach spots!

Contrary to popular urban myth, there's no rest in winter for the apple grower. This is when the trees are dormant, and thus it's our chance to prune them. Why prune? Think about that giant old apple tree you remember as a kid ... ever wonder why it never seemed to have any apples on it? A big reason is because it was never pruned. Pruning shapes the tree and creates balance between vegetation (the tree itself) and the fruit it will bear. It also allows light and air to reach every part of the tree, which not only helps prevent and control disease, but also leads to better fruit, in color, size and taste.

We start in January, examining every tree for the appropriate cuts. Pruning one tree can take up to a half hour... so we don't finish pruning 'til almost the end of March! Some trees need a serious haircut, others just need a trim. A lot depends on the variety - for example, Northern Spys are toughest - think big, old, grouchy, gnarly trees...while Idareds are easiest - think nice, organized, sensible trees. A cut perfect for one tree would be disaster in another; or cut too much and you'll end up disturbing the tree's "balance" (resulting in too much vegetation) - so you've got to pay attention!

Obviously pruning is a skill that develops over time... you won't know until the fall if your cuts were the best ones. Just like a haircut that grows out perfectly, or somehow just never looks right...you go back next year and try again.

Happy Mother's Day
to all the moms and grand-moms out there! P.S.: Wouldn't mom love a yummy fruit basket from Soons...? Goes perfectly with breakfast in bed! Call now to order one for Sunday

For help pruning or taking care of your own apple tree, contact the Cornell Cooperative Extension at 845-344-1234.

Open All Night!

Well, not quite... but Soons is open all winter and spring, right into May (then we close and re-open August 1). We have Macs, Empires, Idareds and a bin of Winesap coming out of special storage, which keeps them super-crisp. So as it gets warm you can enjoy a cold, crunchy apple, along with freshly-made apple cider - also the perfect choice to help get you into swimsuit shape.

Visit us around the first week of May to see the orchard in bloom. We may run some walking tours - if you're interested, e-mail or call so we can let you know the details.

Cyber Press?

While we love to print and mail the **Apple Press** (and people tell us they love to read it), it is getting more expensive, so we may go to "online mailing." Be sure you're on the list by sending your e-mail address to **info@soonsorchards.com**.

Don't worry, we won't share your address and we only e-mail occasionally.

Coupon: Clip & Save



Double Coupon Fun!

Bring this original coupon for 10% off any apple and/or cider purchase now until we close in May. When the stamp is used, you can use it again in August for a **FREE 1/2 pound peanut butter with any \$10 purchase.**

You must have the coupon stamped for it to be valid August 1 to 31, 2005. One per person please. Gift packs/baskets excluded. Thanks!

APPLE PANCAKES

Something for that Mother's Day breakfast in bed perhaps? Soons has got applesauce ready to go, and of course plenty of maple syrup too!

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| 1 c Flour | 1/2 c Milk |
| 1/4 ts Salt | 1 Egg; beaten |
| 1 1/2 ts Baking powder | 1/2 ts Vanilla |
| 1 tb Butter; melted | 1 1/4 c Applesauce |

Sift flour, salt and baking powder. Combine butter, milk and egg. Stir into flour. Add vanilla and applesauce. Beat well. Spoon batter onto a hot, well greased griddle, allowing enough batter to make 4" pancakes. When edges are lightly browned, turn and cook on second side. Serve hot with maple syrup, apple jelly, and/or butter. Garnish with a freshly-cut apple.

From Just Fruit Recipes (www.justfruitrecipes.com).