



Marechal

Posted by [Claude Jolicoeur](#)
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[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

[Marechal](#)

December 08, 2016 10:14PM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 226

I would like to know if others out there grow the Marechal cider apple.

This is a French cider apple, generally classified as a douce-amère (bittersweet). It has been propagated quite a bit in BC by the BC Fruit Testing Association. I can also see that it was in the Geneva (NY) collection in 1944, but it isn't any more. It is also listed in the Nick Botner's list of varieties in Oregon. However, very few people mention this apple in the US. Neither in France as a matter of fact, and there is very little information available on the variety.

I am asking because I got my first good crop of it this fall. I am quite pleased with it, but I notice the shape differ significantly from what I can see in some French references. So, if you have it and have pictures of the fruit, please contact me.

Thanks

Claude

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

Author, [The New Cider Maker's Handbook](#)

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[Michael Phillips](#)

[Re: Marechal](#)

December 11, 2016 05:10PM

Moderator

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 621

Bring scionwood across the border, Claude, and I'll be happy to grow it out in Lost Nation. Sounds like a perfect addition to tone down *battery acid cider* in late October! It's interesting how classic varieties come into our awareness. Marechal is one you mentioned a few years back but I never picked up on it. Finding bittersweets in the wild is relatively rare, so I'm more than interested in ones that seem to do well in northern zones.

[Lost Nation Orchard](#)

Zone 4b in New Hampshire

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[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

[Re: Marechal](#)

December 11, 2016 07:13PM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 226

Michael Phillips Wrote:

> Sounds like a perfect addition to tone down
> *battery acid cider* in late October!

Michael, for that purpose, Marechal would not be my first recommendation...

Actually, as grown in my orchard, the juice rates more like a bittersharp than like a bittersweet, with acidities ranging between 4.5 and 6.5 g/L. This is a phenomenon I have seen with quite a number of varieties that I have tested: in cold short season climate, the acidities get higher than in their original milder climate. It is like if the season would be too short for the apples to transform this malic acid before they ripen. Also, in 2015, the fruit buds froze. So this variety might not have all the winter hardiness we would want.

Hence for the purpose of bringing the acidity of a blend down, a variety that has acidity like 1 or 2 g/L would be more appropriate. There are quite a number of them that are hardy enough for us:

Douce de Charlevoix - I think you have it, has it fruited yet? It might ripen a bit too early however to blend with your late October apples.

Bulmer's Norman - also maybe a bit early.

Yarlington Mill - most highly recommended late bittersweet.

Eastman Sweet - a hardy variety from St-Lawrence Nursery, a good late bittersweet with very low acidity.

Britegold - Canadian scab resistant with very low acidity

Muscadet de Dieppe, From Normandy

Kermerrien, from Brittany.

Plus there are quite a few natural seedlings that I am evaluating and seem promising.

Many old american heirloom sweets (Tolman Sweet, Pumkin Sweet...) would be good for that too, and should be tried.
Claude

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

Author, [The New Cider Maker's Handbook](#)

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[Richard Hostetter](#)

[Re: Marechal](#)

September 03, 2018 11:46PM

Registered: 6 years ago

Posts: 2

Claude - I've not been active on the forum before, but I thought I would respond when I saw your post about Marechal. I have a large block of Marechal trees in my (commercial) cider apple orchard near Salem OR. Although we're only in our second (actual) and first (commercial) harvest with these trees, I have found Marechal a great variety so far. It's productive and, up to this admittedly early-stage point, it doesn't appear readily biennial. More to come on that front, obviously.

Flavor wise, Marechal has performed for me like a classic bittersweet in our Oregon/Willamette Valley climate with its hot and completely dry summers. When ripe, sugars are high and acid seems low (haven't put the pH meter on it yet). Tannins are harsh until the fruit gets really ripe, at which point they mellow out considerably. It has been ripening a few weeks earlier than late bittersweets like Dabinett or Vilberie. It's definitely more tannic than Dabinett but less so than Vilberie or Reine des Pommes. It hasn't been lauded as one of the great varieties for orchardists or cider makers, to my knowledge, but I'm starting to wonder if it's been underrated.

I have not found much information at all from other growers about Marechal. I got the scionwood from another regional orchard, but don't know much about their (limited) experience with it. I do have Boré's [Pommiers a Cidre](#), which has an entry for Marechal that seems to match my experience -- but I wonder how authentic the ultimate source of the scionwood was and what other growers Marechal may look like.

I'd be happy to share photos, and would hope to see some from others too -- if there was interest and if I could figure out how to post them here.

Richard Hostetter

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[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

[Re: Marechal](#)

September 04, 2018 03:52AM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 226

Richard, I have created an album with the photos of Marechal that I have.

See [\[photos.app.goo.gl\]](https://photos.app.goo.gl/)

You will note that 3 of the photos are from the variety grown in Canada, while the other 2 are from French books.

The 2 French images show a distinctly conical shape, while the 3 from America show a round shape.

So yes, we may wonder if the Marechal we have in North America is the true variety. However, this is not so important as long as what we have is good... Plus, this is a variety I have never heard about in France - my feeling is that it is not grown anymore over there. It may still exist, but certainly isn't grown as anything more than a curiosity...

Claude

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

Author, [The New Cider Maker's Handbook](#)

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[Richard Hostetter](#)

[Re: Marechal](#)

September 07, 2018 03:17AM

Registered: 6 years ago

Posts: 2

Claude,

Thank you for the info and for the photos. I added 2 pictures to your album (hope you can see them): 1) shows my Marechal apples in the upper left corner of the photo (marked with green label) at a quite ripe stage last year displayed alongside several other cider varieties for size, shape and color comparison; 2) shows a Marechal fruit cluster (still not ripe) from this year's heavy crop.

[\[photos.app.goo.gl\]](https://photos.app.goo.gl/) (hopefully this link worked)

My Marechal apples are round like yours and look quite similar. I fully agree they do not share the conical shape found in the French samples, so I guess the reference in Bore's book is not to the apple we have -- all the more so if, as you suggest, the apple has essentially disappeared from French orchards.

Richard

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[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

[Re: Marechal](#)

September 07, 2018 04:32AM

Richard Hostetter Wrote:

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 226

> Thank you for the info and for the photos. I added 2 pictures to your album (hope you can see them):

Yes I can see them. Not too sure however how you were able to add photos to my album!

In any case yours surely look like mine and like those from BC. This would indicate that the source of the variety in the US is the same than in Canada (which is not always the case - for example, the Tremlett's Bitter in Canada are the same as in England, but those in the US had to be renamed Geneva Tremlett as they didn't correspond to the true variety).

It would be interesting if you could measure the acidity (TA or titratable acidity) of a juice sample from your Marechal. As mentioned in a previous post, I think it is one of those varieties that need a longer/warmer summer season to metabolize the malic acid and become a bittersweet with low acidity. When the conditions are not met, acidity remains higher and it then is a bittersharp.

Claude

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

Author, [The New Cider Maker's Handbook](#)

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[Karen Brindle](#)

[Re: Marechal](#)

January 18, 2019 08:51AM

Registered: 9 years ago

Posts: 103

I would love some Marechal scion, \$ or trade, this thread has me intrigued to try this variety! Anyone able to share?

[Vista Ridge Orchard](#)

Zone 8a in Washington

235 Cider and heritage apple trees, 72 varieties,

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[gloria bell](#)

[Re: Marechal](#)

January 30, 2020 08:11PM

Registered: 5 years ago

Posts: 20

I have Marachel but I'm also in Canada.

Can be quite bitter as it's a strong hard tannin.

Mine should crop this year but got wood off of another cider maker.

Edited 2 time(s). Last edit at 01/30/2020 08:13PM by gloria bell.

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[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

[Re: Marechal](#)

January 30, 2020 09:07PM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 226

Hello Gloria,

From what you say, I gather you haven't seen the fruit yet.

It will be interesting to see if it turns out more like mine and others who have posted in this thread (i.e. round apple), or if it is rather like the French photos and distinctly conical.

You are in BC, right? So most probably the original source of yours would be the same as mine.

Claude

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

Author, [The New Cider Maker's Handbook](#)

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[gloria bell](#)

[Re: Marechal](#)

May 02, 2020 06:37AM

Registered: 5 years ago

Posts: 20

Hello Claude!

Sorry - just seeing your response now.

Yes I'm in BC. My wood is from Pico/Summerland.

How bitter are you finding Marechal and when does it crop for you?

What I am finding is it doesn't have much vigour at all. It's on M9 and everything around these two trees are out pining then in growth and general health (which I'm sad about). They are on the fence on whether they stay or go...

So your input would be grand!

Many thanks.

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[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

Re: Marechal

May 02, 2020 03:47PM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 226

Marechal does well here, good vigor and hardiness, quite bitter, alternate production however.

Certainly a keeper for me.

I got the wood from Derek Bisset who is near Vancouver, so doubtless originally from the same source as Summerland Vars.

Claude

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

Author, [The New Cider Maker's Handbook](#)

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