



fifty chances

Posted by [Michael Phillips](#)

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[Michael Phillips](#)

[fifty chances](#)

August 24, 2014 12:35AM

Had visitors today ... and I always try in these unarranged situations to be charming (even though work time gets so interrupted!) ... and the wife passes on a great perspective they had received from a commercial grower near their home:

We get 50 chances to learn how to grow fruit.

Yeah. Age 30, give or take, you plant trees. Fifty years later, you are in your 80s ... so all things considered ... this is about right. Bloom comes once a year; go from there -- good bad sometimes outright ugly. Mistakes are made, you grasp a certain lesson, you shift, you dance, you accept. But only once a year, never more.

I'd sure like more chances than that to learn the depths of trees and fruit. But there's the reality. Kind of adds a proper intensity to every season, eh?

[Lost Nation Orchard](#)

Zone 4b in New Hampshire

Edited 1 time(s). Last edit at 09/05/2014 05:27PM by Michael Phillips.

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[Steve Dagger](#)

[Re: fifty chances](#)

November 11, 2014 12:47AM

My first post as a new member and I thought I'd jump in here...

Registered: 9 years ago

Posts: 28

Like Michael I only recently came across the 50 chances way of conceptualizing my orcharding efforts. My introduction was by way of the book "40 Chances" by Howard Buffet, Warren Buffet the well-known billionaire's, little brother. And an interesting fellow is he. It seems Howie is a conventional grain farmer from Illinois who was duly impressed a decade or two ago by an older ag extension specialist who told a group of big iron grain farmers they had 40 chances to get it right. The book is a worthwhile read if only to see how a wealthy conventional farmer who has spent millions funding agricultural initiatives around the world has become incrementally more holistic in his thinking.

As for me, my fruit growing inclinations started young but suffered from distractions associated with a career in silviculture and forest ecology and several moves that left planted trees behind. It was only around age 50 that I put down roots and began to focus on really growing fruit organically. Now I'm well into my 60's. Dad passed away at 93 so I'm hoping for 30 more chances to enjoy refining the process and passing on what I've learned.

[Pommes de Terre Acres](#)

USDA Zone 5 - Dixon, Montana

Intermountain West Region

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[Paul Weir](#)

[Re: fifty chances](#)

November 18, 2014 02:57AM

Hi Steve.

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 187

Cheers to your 30 more chances! and to your abundant future of Holistic fruit successes up in the great state of Montana.

Welcome to the forum

Thanks for the Howard Buffet book recommendation too.

[Gopher Hill Apples](#)

Zone 8 in California

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