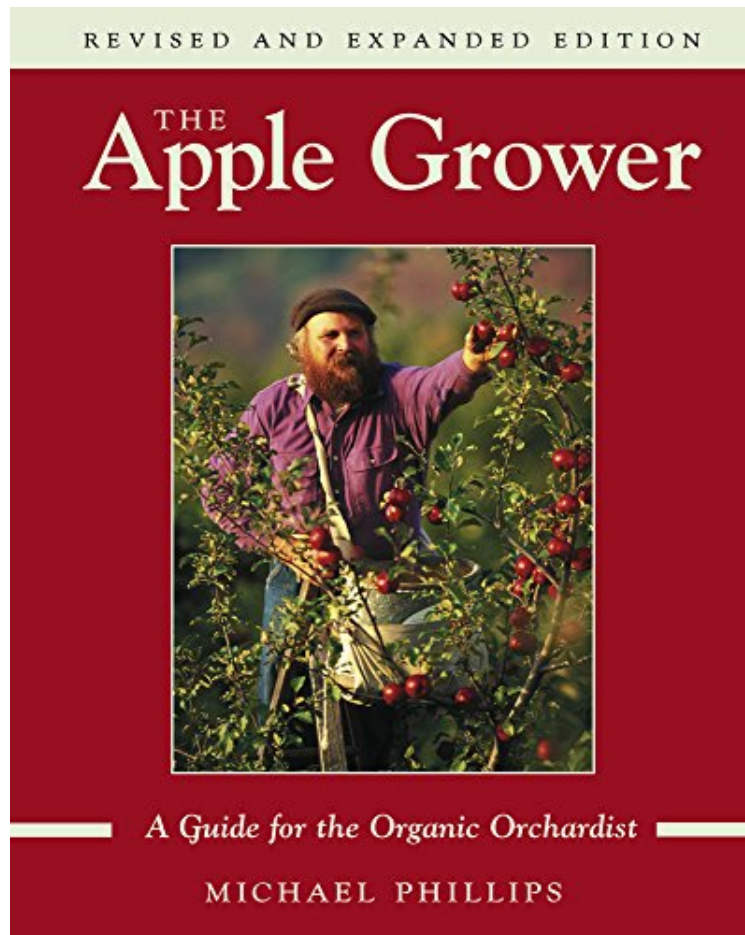


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The Apple Grower: A Guide for the Organic Orchardist

Michael Phillips

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#48513 in Books Chelsea Green Publishing 2005-10 Original language: English PDF # 1 10.00 x .79 x 8.031, 1.88 #File Name: 1931498911360 pages | File size: 74.Mb

Michael Phillips : The Apple Grower: A Guide for the Organic Orchardist before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Apple Grower: A Guide for the Organic Orchardist:

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translates to application in an orchard. For example, organizing by season so a home grower can pick up the book and easily assess what tasks should be done in winter, spring, summer and fall. Also consider reading Gaia's Garden for additional information on how you can help nature along with tasks like pest control, weed control and fertilization.

For decades fruit growers have sprayed their trees with toxic chemicals in an attempt to control a range of insect and fungal pests. Yet it is possible to grow apples responsibly, by applying the intuitive knowledge of our great-grandparents with the fruits of modern scientific research and innovation. Since *The Apple Grower* first appeared in 1998, orchardist Michael Phillips has continued his research with apples, which have been called "organic's final frontier." In this new edition of his widely acclaimed work, Phillips delves even deeper into the mysteries of growing good fruit with minimal inputs. Some of the cutting-edge topics he explores include: The use of kaolin clay as an effective strategy against curculio and borers, as well as its limitations Creating a diverse, healthy orchard ecosystem through understory management of plants, nutrients, and beneficial microorganisms How to make a small apple business viable by focusing on heritage and regional varieties, value-added products, and the "community orchard" model The author's personal voice and clear-eyed advice have already made *The Apple Grower* a classic among small-scale growers and home orchardists. In fact, anyone serious about succeeding with apples needs to have this updated edition on their bookshelf.

Northern Woodlands ()-As anyone who has ever planted a few apple trees knows all too well, growing apples can be a perplexing and frustrating endeavor. The trouble is that apples are very attractive to many of nature's creatures besides humans. And at least one of these creatures, from deer to apple maggot flies, and from the roundheaded apple tree borer to mice (not to mention the long list of diseases that also affect apples), is sure to be working for its share of the fruit (and in some cases the tree) every day of the year. But if you've ever baked a pie made from your own apples, or pressed a batch of cider from them, the trials and tribulations all seem worth it with that first bite or sip. Michael Phillips' revised *The Apple Grower* has as much help as you'll find anywhere to get you to that first bite of pie or sip of cider. The previous edition, published in 1998, was the bible for many backyard orchardists and commercial organic growers. The new edition, boasting color photos and expanded and better-organized chapters, is a real treat for anyone interested in apples. The new edition's chapter on diseases and pests will be helpful to those left scratching their head about who or what is eating the apples or trees they are trying to grow. Phillips sprinkles tributes to other apple growers throughout the text. These persistent and dedicated souls, along with Phillips, are exploring uncharted territory: they are trying, without the use of traditional pesticides and chemicals, to keep ever-evolving pests and diseases away from trees that are themselves not evolving. All named apple varieties are genetic dead ends. A Macintosh today is genetically identical to a Macintosh from a century ago, but the bugs and diseases have spent that time evolving to break through the trees' defenses. Phillips presents intriguing ideas about orchard soils. Since people started growing apples in orchards, those orchard soils have largely been bacterially based, meaning that fertility has been maintained by the addition of bacteria-laden manure. Sheep and cattle were allowed to graze the grass and eat dropped apples, adding manure to the soils, and often the orchard was formerly pasture or hayfield, where manure was regularly added to maintain fertility. Bacteria-based soils are great for grasses and hay crops, but not necessarily for trees. Phillips argues that apple trees are still, well, trees, and like other trees, they prefer forest soils, which rely mainly on fungi to break down organic matter such as bark, wood, and other plant matter to maintain soil fertility. Phillips believes that this soil is what apple trees naturally want, and that it makes them healthier and better able to deal with pests and diseases. He has been experimenting with using fast-growing comfrey in his orchard, cutting it down to add rotting plant matter and to stifle the growth of grass, which can rob an apple tree's surface feeder roots of nutrients. He advocates adding composted branches, bark, wood chips, and even excess chunks of sheetrock to your orchard to promote the fungi in the soil and deter grasses. Phillips' style is more writerly than reference. His homespun stories about his many years of trying to outwit and outmaneuver the legions of apple-loving creatures are both entertaining and packed with tips. Phillips' extremely handy compendium of orchard tasks has always served as my basic plan of attack for what to do in my orchard, and the revised and expanded edition will be a welcome addition to my library. I have no doubt that over time it will take on the grimy, thumb-through, and well-used look of my copy of the first edition of *The Apple Grower*. (by Carl Demrow) Northern Woodlands- Michael Phillips revised *The Apple Grower* has as much help as you'll find anywhere to get you to that first bite of pie or sip of cider. The previous edition, published in 1998, was the bible for many backyard orchardists and commercial organic growers. The new edition, boasting color photos and expanded and better-organized chapters, is a real treat for anyone interested in apples. The new editions chapter on diseases and pests will be helpful to those left scratching their head about who or what is eating the apples or trees they are trying to grow. Phillips style is more writerly than reference. His homespun stories about his many years of trying to outwit and outmaneuver the legions of apple-loving creatures are both entertaining and packed with tips. Phillips extremely handy compendium of orchard tasks has always served as my basic plan of attack for what to do in my orchard, and the revised and expanded edition will be a welcome addition to my library. I have no doubt that over time it will take on the grimy, thumb-through, and well-used look of my copy of the first edition of

The Apple Grower."A must read for anyone who grows apples or is contemplating doing so."--Lee A. Reich, garden author and Associated Press syndicated columnist
From the Publisher "Northern Woodlands" magazine, Spring 06 issue, pg.64. Book written by Carl Demrow The Apple Grower, Revised and Expanded Edition By Michael Phillips. Chelsea Green Publishing, 2005. As anyone who has ever planted a few apple trees knows all too well, growing apples can be a perplexing and frustrating endeavor. The trouble is that apples are very attractive to many of nature's creatures besides humans. And at least one of these creatures, from deer to apple maggot flies, and from the roundheaded apple tree borer to mice (not to mention the long list of diseases that also affect apples), is sure to be working for its share of the fruit (and in some cases the tree) every day of the year. But if you've ever baked a pie made from your own apples, or pressed a batch of cider from them, the trials and tribulations all seem worth it with that first bite or sip. Michael Phillips revised The Apple Grower has as much help as you'll find anywhere to get you to that first bite of pie or sip of cider. The previous edition, published in 1998, was the bible for many backyard orchardists and commercial organic growers. The new edition, boasting color photos and expanded and better-organized chapters, is a real treat for anyone interested in apples. The new edition's chapter on diseases and pests will be helpful to those left scratching their head about who or what is eating the apples or trees they are trying to grow. Phillips sprinkles tributes to other apple growers throughout the text. These persistent and dedicated souls, along with Phillips, are exploring uncharted territory: they are trying, without the use of traditional pesticides and chemicals, to keep ever-evolving pests and diseases away from trees that are themselves not evolving. All named apple varieties are genetic dead ends. A Macintosh today is genetically identical to a Macintosh from a century ago, but the bugs and diseases have spent that time evolving to break through the tree's defenses. Phillips presents intriguing ideas about orchard soils. Since people started growing apples in orchards, those orchard soils have largely been bacterially based, meaning that fertility has been maintained by the addition of bacteria-laden manure. Sheep and cattle were allowed to graze the grass and eat dropped apples, adding manure to the soils, and often the orchard was formerly pasture or hayfield, where manure was regularly added to maintain fertility. Bacteria-based soils are great for grasses and hay crops, but not necessarily for trees. Phillips argues that apple trees are still, well, trees, and like other trees, they prefer forest soils, which rely mainly on fungi to break down organic matter such as bark, wood, and other plant matter to maintain soil fertility. Phillips believes that this soil is what apple trees naturally want, and that it makes them healthier and better able to deal with pests and diseases. He has been experimenting with using fast-growing comfrey in his orchard, cutting it down to add rotting plant matter and to stifle the growth of grass, which can rob an apple tree's surface feeder roots of nutrients. He advocates adding composted branches, bark, wood chips, and even excess chunks of sheetrock to your orchard to promote the fungi in the soil and deter grasses. Phillips' style is more writerly than reference. His homespun stories about his many years of trying to outwit and outmaneuver the legions of apple-loving creatures are both entertaining and packed with tips. Phillips' extremely handy compendium of orchard tasks has always served as my basic plan of attack for what to do in my orchard, and the revised and expanded edition will be a welcome addition to my library. I have no doubt that over time it will take on the grimy, thumbed-through, and well-used look of my copy of the first edition of The Apple Grower.

About the Author
Michael Phillips is a farmer, writer, carpenter, orchard consultant, and speaker who lives with his wife, Nancy, and daughter, Grace, on HeartSong Farm in northern New Hampshire, where they grow apples and a variety of medicinal herbs. Michael is the author of The Apple Grower (Chelsea Green, 2005) and The Holistic Orchard (2011), and teamed up with Nancy to write The Herbalist's Way (2005). His Lost Nation Orchard is part of the Holistic Orchard Network, and Michael also leads the community orchard movement at www.GrowOrganicApples.com