

New apple variety from Minnesota

## Dancing in the orchard

A new apple is creating a whirlwind of excitement this fall. The new variety, 'Sweetango', may be the most exciting variety released since 'Honeycrisp', the leading apple in the Midwest.

'Sweetango' is a cross between 'Honeycrisp' and 'Zestar!', both leading varieties created by the University of Minnesota.

"It inherited the texture of 'Honeycrisp'—and that's a rare commodity—and it actually has more flavor than 'Honeycrisp'," said David Bedford, the apple breeder who helped develop 'Honeycrisp' and 'Sweetango'.

Another asset of 'Sweetango' is its early maturity. Its apples ripen in early September, much earlier than most quality apples.

The University of Minnesota has licensed the 'Sweetango' trademark to a group of growers who named their cooperative the Next Big Thing. The deal gives Next Big Thing control over who can grow 'Sweetango' and

where, and how the apple is marketed and shipped.

Growers will have to join the cooperative to grow the apples. The cooperative currently has about 45 growers in Minnesota, Michigan, New York, Washington, Wisconsin, Quebec and Nova Scotia.

'Sweetango' will start appearing in Minnesota markets during Labor Day weekend. If all goes according to plan, the apple should be available nationwide in 2011 or 2012. The general public likely won't get access to the variety until 2028, when the patent rights expire. 



**NDSU**  
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Published September 2009  
Revised October 2011

Source: Associated Press.

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