

# Apple producers seek emergency funds

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By MANDY MARTIN  
STAFF WRITER

Faced with millions of dollars in losses, the after effect of last Tuesday's freak hailstorms, apple producers Sunday asked the provincial government for financial assistance.

"This is not a matter of mere crop damage," Ron Knight of Knights Appleden Farms Ltd. explained to MPP Harry Danford, parliamentary assistant to provincial Minister of Agriculture Noble Villeneuve. "Many have lost their entire crop this year. We need the assistance to meet our (financial) commitments for this year and be ready for next year."

With The Big Apple tourist attraction looming behind, the apple producers and Mr. Danford huddled in a circle while hundreds of people filed by to line up for free food at the annual corn roast for Northumberland MPP Doug Galt.

Mr. Danford agreed to speak with Noble Villeneuve Monday to "come up with an answer" by Wednesday on the possibility of sending in a recognized crop inspector to uniformly assess.

"We need to do this as soon as possible," Mr. Vanderwindt explained. "After that, the apples will start falling."

"And it's no good us going back months later and claiming to you we lost this much," added Mr. Knight.

"What's left in the orchard is going to cost us more to harvest than we'll get for the crop," Jack Vanderwindt of Port Hope explained. "Even if we use the apples for juice, we still have to harvest them and then store them until the fall or winter (for processing)."

"I really wasn't aware of the extent of damage," Mr. Danford admitted, and asked if the storm's effect was limited to the local Colborne area.

John Hughes of Hughes Orchards, Waupoos, Prince Edward County, laid it out: "It started at Georgian Bay, swept south through Port Perry, into Northumberland County, right through and over the Colborne area and on to Prince Edward County and out over the lake." Apple producers along that hailstorm path report serious to devastating damage.

"We're talking millions of

dollars," Ron Knight told the MPP. "We're not asking for money to make money. We're asking for assistance to keep these businesses in operation. "We still must harvest these apples, damaged or not. You can't leave apples on the ground in these amounts. They'll sour (the acid from the apples) the ground from ever producing again. We still have to pay the cost of harvesting those apples. Even if we use them for juice, which we make almost no money from, we still have to cold store them until they can be shipped for processing. On top of that, there's the cost of trucking."

Holding a Golden Russet apple up for Mr. Danford to see, he explained the cuts and bruising have precluded any commercial market for his his-dollar specialty apple crops as well as his acres of "utilitarian" Macintoshes.

"This is really a storm of the century," Haldimand Township Reeve Bill Finley told Mr. Danford.

"I can vouch for all these folks here. I've picked apples for many of them, and I know their farms and operations. This is a very unusual event."



**Ron Knight of Knights Appleden Farms Ltd. brought examples of his damaged apple crops, including Golden Russets, to last Sunday's annual corn roast at the Big Apple hosted by Northumberland MPP Dr. Doug Galt.**

Photo by Mandy Martin

## Deaths Sept 3/98

### CHAPMAN, DONALD LEWIS

At the Queensway-Mississauga Hospital on Sunday, August 30, 1998. Donald Chapman, beloved husband of Emma Mae Chapman (nee Mutton). Dear father of Linda and her husband Alan Pinches of Brampton, Larry of Rexdale and Richard and his wife Marlene of Etobicoke. Loving grandfather of eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Dear brother of Dean Chapman and his wife Ruth of Colborne and Marjorie Rouse of Brighton. Following cremation a memorial service will be held at the MacCoubrey Funeral Home, 11 King St. W., Colborne on Saturday, September 5 at 2pm. Interment Shiloh Cemetery. Friends may call at the funeral home from 1pm. until the time of service. In memoriam donations may be made to the Eden United Church.