

LOCAL NEWS

# Area farms ravaged by hail

*From the front page*

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What's left of the Moore Orchards crop will be picked and sold for juice production, at a price that will not likely cover the cost of harvesting the product.

Redland Fruit Farm in Colborne also felt the brunt of the storm.

"We're pretty well wiped out," said Ron Knight, co-owner of the business and head of the farming side of the operation.

His crop was devastated, with an estimated loss of \$1.5 million in crops.

Of 500 acres of orchards, Mr. Knight hopes to possibly salvage 40 or 50 per cent of 10 acres of Mackintosh apples which weren't hit as hard as the rest of the crop. Even that, he said, is hopeful at best.

The apples would have been shipped to grocery stores and markets, but will now be sold for much less lucrative juice production, in order to simply get the product out of the orchards, he said. Unfortunately, it actually costs more to harvest the product than it brings in through juice sales.

"It will cost more to get it in for juice than you will make from it, but it's a matter of cleaning up the orchard," he said.

While the Knights are one of the few local farm operations that does carry crop insurance, the pay-out will likely be barely enough to keep them out of the red.

"We carry crop

insurance, but with crop insurance you might be able to make ends meet at the end of the year," he said.

Last week's storm, which apparently affected pockets of land from Grafton to as far east as Bowmanville, was particularly nasty because of the strength of the wind that drove the weather. Mr. Knight was more fortunate than some apple farmers who had entire trees ripped out of the ground, but said the wind pushing the hail destroyed the entire crop, even on the leeward, and most protected parts of the trees.

"It was the severe wind behind it that did the damage because it drove the hail right through the trees," explained Mr. Knight, adding that often the fruit on the sheltered side of the tree can be salvaged, but not in this case. The last catastrophic hail storm hit local farmers in 1999. The one prior to that occurred 20 years earlier.

"It's more frequent, the way the weather has been going," he said.

Not one apple had been harvested when last week's storm hit. Picking was scheduled to begin in August.

Northumberland County work crews are expected to be kept busy through the week, removing fallen trees from area roads and properties.



PHOTO BY PETE FISHER

Clean up crews will be busy for up to a week cleaning up debris from a hail storm east of Cobourg that caused damage in the millions to area farms.

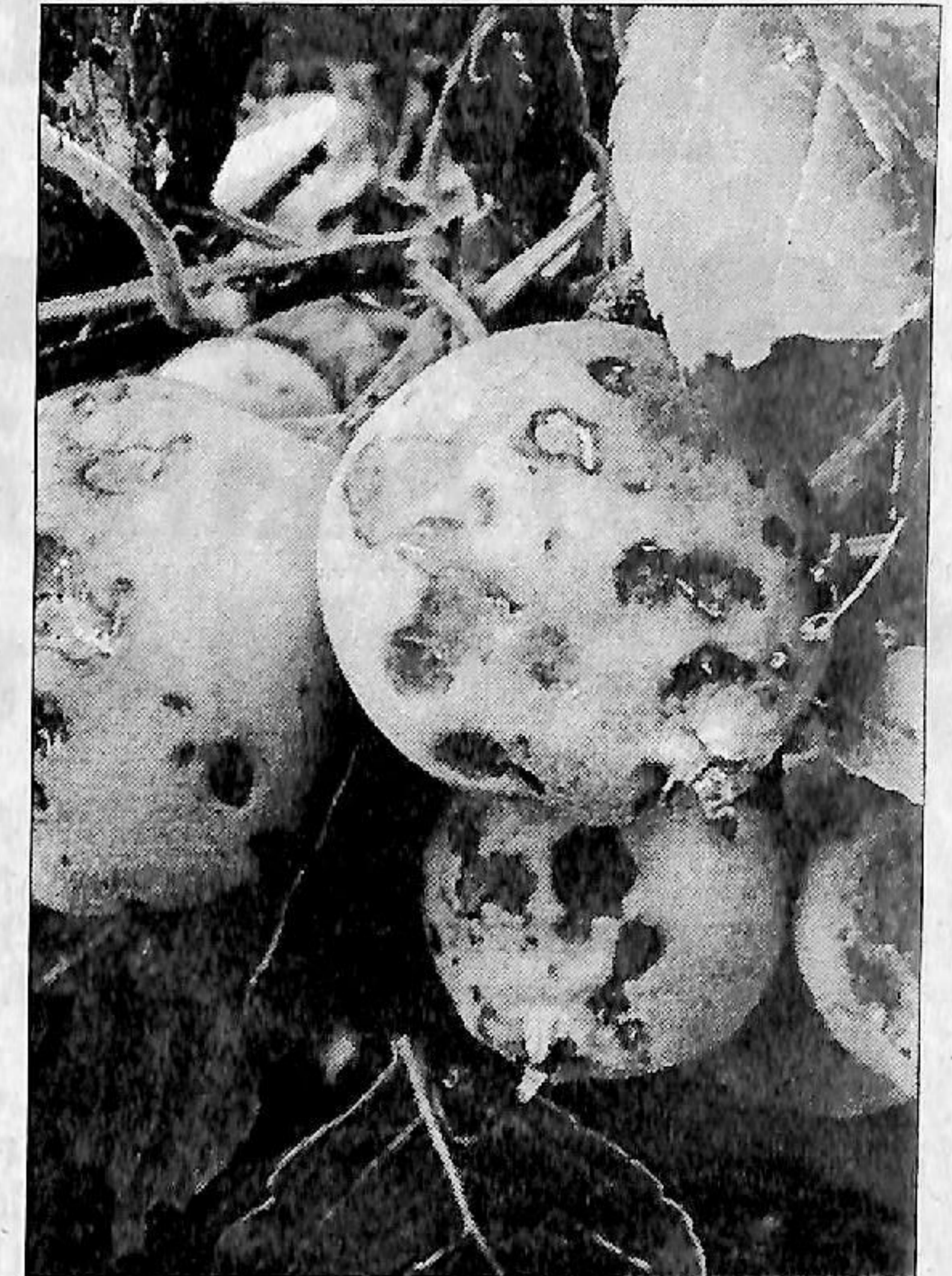


PHOTO BY PETE FISHER

Some of the apples still on the trees at Moore Orchard's along County Road 2 east of Cobourg.

**PETERSEN, SCOTT**  
Suddenly as a result of an accident on Sunday, June 27th, 2004 in his 40th year, Beloved husband of Katrina Gordon. Loving father of Brianna and Dakota Petersen. Dear son of Alexandra Petersen and the late Soren Petersen. Brother of John Petersen (Sarah) and Kristen Petersen (Steven). Son-in-law of Viva Morrison and the late Gary McGahay. Brother-in-law of Laurie Gordon (Van), Michelle Acorn (Adrian) and Brent Gordon (Stephanie). Uncle of Chase, Meegan, Ivy, Chloe, Michael, Alex and Brent. At the family's request there will be no visitation. A funeral service will be held in Old St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Colborne on Saturday, July 3rd at 2 p.m. If desired donations may be made to the Cramahne Firefighters Association. Condolences received at www.maccoburey.com.

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