

# Vineyards unaffected by frost

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are waiting to see what is salvageable from the June drop. But according to the Ontario Apple Growers Association, Mr. Passafiume can expect to see only 20 per cent of his normal yield.

Ms Huffman said many growers will be economically OK this season as they have already been paid for last year's crop, which is now coming out of storage and being sold.

Next year, however, will be tough on growers because they won't have anything to sell from this year, she said.

Some growers have crop insurance, which will help cover a portion of the damage "and keep (them) afloat for another year," Ms Huffman said.

To help make up what will be lost in apple sales, Mr. Passafiume planted double the number of pumpkins he normally would have.

The u-pick farm also grows strawberries, which Mr. Passafiume said "look really good. ... That's something."

"Our concern is this year obviously being able to keep our customers happy and giving them something to do," he said.

Applewood is also an award-winning winery, but Mr. Passafiume does not think they will be able to make any from apples this year. Instead, they plan on making more strawberry wine.

Just northeast of Applewood is Willow Springs Winery, which was not affected

by the early thaw/re-frost because grapes bloom later in the season, typically mid-May, according to Mario Testa, the vineyard's manager and winemaker.

"We are one of the rare people who are OK," he said.

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Some apple varieties weathered the temperature swing better than others. Honey Crisps, Ambrosias and Spies will be available, however, Ms Huffman said the Empires were completely damaged, while the Macintoshes were "quite hard-hit".

"The lower it was in the orchard, the harder they got it," Mr. Passafiume said.

Applewood grows Macintosh, Red Delicious, Spencer, Cortland/Red Cortland, Spartan, Royal Gala, Honey Crisp, Paula Red and some Golden Delicious.

The quality and taste of the apples that did survive will not be affected. However, what customers may see are misshapen or oddly shaped fruit, Ms Huffman said. She also noted growers may increase their farmers' market prices.

"I don't think there has been a price increase for quite a while. They're certainly not looking to gouge consumers," she said.



STAFF PHOTO/SUSIE KOCKERSCHIEDT

Matthew Passafiume shows a fruitless apple branch, a dry apple bud that was not pollinated at Applewood. By now, there should be 70 per cent more apples on this branch.

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