

# Apple scab (*Venturia inaequalis*): Robust cultivars for Northern Europe

## Problem

Apple scab (*Venturia inaequalis*) is a major problem in organic growing, especially in northern regions where production is smaller, and only a few new cultivars are bred or tested.

## Solution

A list of robust cultivars tested for northern regions is expected to help choose the suitable cultivars when establishing an apple orchard.

## Benefits

The suitable cultivars will give a high yield of coloured, good tasting cultivars harvested in the period from August to November.

## Applicability box

### Theme

Crop production, temperate fruits

### Keywords

Disease and pest control, disease tolerance

### Context

Northern Europe

### Application time

Orchard establishment

### Required time

From two months to two years

## Practical recommendations

- Check information about local cultivars tested at research stations and on established orchards<sup>1</sup>. Talk to your retailers.
- Here is a list of cultivars for organic pome production that are suited in northern Europe that can ripen and develop a good taste and nice finish<sup>4,5</sup>:
  - Earliest ripening cultivars: Nanna, Discovery, Sansa, Red Aroma, Alkmene, Santana, Red Ingrid Marie (Picture1), Holsteiner Cox, Red Topaz, Rubinstep (Pirouette®) (Picture 2), Topaz, Wellant, Red Belle de Boskoop and Bramley. Belle de Boskoop and Bramley are mainly for juice<sup>4,5</sup>.
  - Recommended pear cultivars for organic production: Anna, Carola, Conference, Concorde (Picture 3) and in the warmest areas also, Xenia and Gräfin Gepa.
- It is important to know which pollinators are needed for the different cultivars, the optimal harvest time, and the optimal selling and storage time for the cultivars<sup>2,3</sup>.
- Remember that even the cultivars described as scab resistant may develop a scab race that can break down the resistance. Always control apple and pear scab from bud break and at big infections peak in the primary ascospore discharge period.
- Even robust cultivars against apple and pears scab do not significantly reduce the need for treatments. There is always the risk of other diseases, such as sooty blotch.



**Picture 1: Apple cultivar Red Ingrid Marie.** A Danish cultivar, harvest around 1st of October, a firm robust high yielding cultivar. Photo: Hanne Lindhard Pedersen, HortiAdvice.



**Picture 2: Apple cultivar Rubinstep (Pirouette®).** Origin Czech republic, harvest September a high yielding, firm, fine tasting robust cultivar, suited for long storage. Photo: Maya Bojesen, HortiAdvice.



**Picture 3: The pear cultivar Concorde** is relatively robust and one of northern Europe's best cultivars for organic production. Photo: Maya Bojesen, HortiAdvice.

## Further information

### Further reading

1. Håndbog for Frugt- og Bæravlere (2022). HortiAdvice. Pp. 192.
2. Korsgaard, M. (2020). Økologisk frugt i haven. Koustrup & co. Pp. 247.
3. Korsgaard, M. and Lindhard Pedersen, H. (2007). Frugt og Bær, Landbrugsforlaget. Pp. 304.

### Weblinks

4. Reports (in Danish):  
HortiAdvice.dk: [Robust varieties of apples and pears for organic cultivation](#)  
Havensfrugt.dk: [List of leaflets on fruit and berry selection](#)
5. [Production instruction on apples and pears](#) on hortiAdvice.dk (in Danish)
- Ecofruit proceedings 2022 for more practical recommendations:  
[Testing apple and pear cultivars for organic production in Denmark](#)  
[On farm testing of organic apple and pear cultivars](#)
- Check the [Organic Farm Knowledge platform](#) for more practical recommendations.

## About this practice abstract

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