

The new Bramber Community Orchard

We are pleased to report that the first eight trees were planted in the Bramber Community Orchard in late February. The varieties are as follows -

1. First and Last. Rootstock MM111



Old Sussex variety, first introduced in 1860. So named because of its long season of maturing, some apples ripening early, while others were later. Medium sized apples, ovate from the middle, tapering to either end. The skin is greenish yellow, prettily striped with scarlet and amber in the sun. It has a yellowish flesh with a rich sweet pineapple flavour. An excellent culinary apple, also useful for dessert. Emanating from the Horsham area and popular in Brighton markets in the late 1800's.

2. Egremont Russet. Rootstock MM111



Old Sussex variety, first introduced in 1872. As the name suggests, it arose on the estate of Lord Egremont, Petworth House. The head gardener Fred Streeter (the BBC gardener 1935-1975) maintained that it was raised at Petworth by Mr Slater and Lord Egremont together with Petworth Nonpareil (now lost) and Bossom. It was first recorded as a variety in 1872. It is usually picked under-ripe for the supermarket trade, so the full flavours never develop. If left on the tree until it is properly ripe, it has sweet, crisp, nutty, smoky flavour. Fruit picked in October will store until December.

3. Sussex Mother. Rootstock MM111



Old Sussex variety, first introduced in 1874. A nineteenth century dessert apple, still found growing in Sussex, especially around Heathfield. The green apples are conical and angular, become yellow, sometimes with a flush, sprinkled with russet dots. Has a sweet, spicy taste. Picked in early September it is used straightaway as it softens quickly.

4. Allington Pippin. Rootstock MM111



Introduced in 1884

Was raised in south Lincolnshire by 1884 by Thomas Laxton, as Brown's South Lincoln Beauty and introduced by Bunyard's Nurseries in 1896 under the current name. This dessert apple is a cross between Cox's Orange Pippin and King of the Pippins, so it has a rich aromatic flavour and crunchy texture. The attractively striped fruit is of medium size and will also cook well, keeping its shape. Fruit is ready at the end of October and can be stored for a month. The crop is heavy, but can be biennial, unless thinned.

Good for damp areas. Bitter sweet eater and good for juice and cider.

5. Cornish Aromatic. Rootstock MM111



Introduced in 1813

Cornish late dessert apple, believed to be very old although not widely known until 1813, when fruit was sent to the London Horticultural Society. The fruit is medium/large and golden yellow striped with red and russet patches. In some years it is very red with many light dots. The flesh is firm, with a sweetly aromatic, spicy flavour. Trees are vigorous and upright spreading, with good crops. Free spur bearing.

Good for wet areas. Resistant to scab/canker.

6. Dabinett. Rootstock MM111



Bittersweet Cider Apple.

An old cider variety found by Mr Dabinett in a hedge, as a wild seedling, near Middle Lambrook, Somerset. A prolific and regular bearer with medium sized conical apples, flushed red and ready in mid November. Used as a bittersweet in blends and also as a single variety cider apple. Middle flowering and reported to be self-fertile, though this is best not relied upon.

7. Kingston Black. Rootstock MM111



Bittersharp Cider Apple.

A bittersharp cider apple used for vintage cider and probably named after the village of Kingston St. Mary, in Somerset. It was first recorded in the 1826 catalogue of the London Horticultural Society. Small, very dark maroon apples, which are sometimes almost black. The cider was also darkened by it. It became very popular, supposedly producing the champagne of ciders, and was once planted all over mid-Somerset. Middle flowering and ripe in mid-November. It doesn't keep. Some consider it a tasty eating apple if caught right, but it can become dry and woolly. Pollination Group 4

8. Yarlington Mill. Rootstock MM111



Bittersweet Cider Apple.

Yarlington Mill is a cider apple of the Somerset 'Jersey' type. Arose at Yarlington, near North Cadbury, Somerset, where it was found growing out of a wall near a water mill, probably in the early 1900's. It was transplanted into the gardens of Yarlington Mill and probably propagated by nurseryman Harry Masters, very soon achieving local fame for its high yields. It was widely distributed and intensively planted in the orchards of Somerset and the West Midlands. The small fruit, flushed red over pale yellow, produces a sweet, slightly astringent medium bittersweet cider having a good aroma and flavour.

The Bramber Community Orchard is kindly being sponsored by **Graves Son & Pilcher** of Brighton, who have paid for the trees and the materials required to protect the trees from the resident population of roe deer.

Dr Petra Billings of Sussex Woodlands has applied on our behalf for a Stewardship Grant to assist with the cost of gates and fencing at Bramber Brooks. This will include fencing to enclose the Community Orchard with a gate onto the public footpath. We hope to hear the result of this grant application by the end of March, with works to be completed in the early Summer.

Bramber Parish Council have also organized a Steering Group of local residents and Councillors. This group will be involved in the setting up and co-ordination of a new nature reserve. They have applied for a Community Grant from the Rampion Wind Farm to help towards the cost seating, paths and bridges but if successful, some monies will also be available for works to the orchard to include signage and seating.

We would like to thank Roger Brown and members of the Steyning Community Orchard, who have helped with their invaluable advice, tree stocks and manpower in the setting up of the new Bramber Community Orchard.

Nick Mills

Riversong Ltd – Owners of the land at Bramber Brooks

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