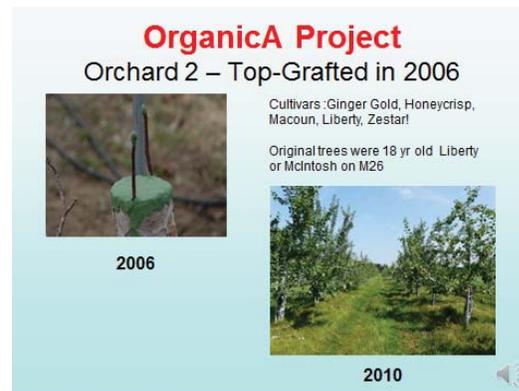
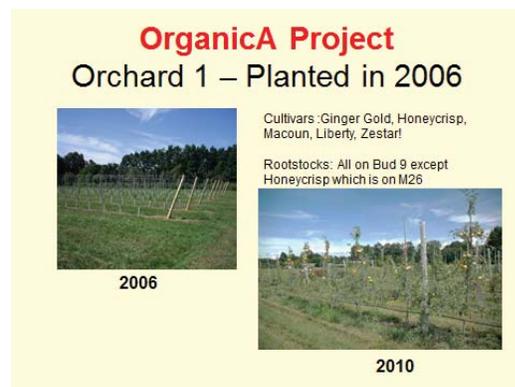


## Workshop on the Challenges and Opportunities of Organic Apple Production with Five Apple Cultivars: Six years of research results from the OrganicA Project

Berkett, L., Moran, R., Garcia, E., Darby, H., Parsons, R., Bradshaw, T.,  
Kingsley-Richards, S. and M. Griffith  
University of Vermont  
University of Maine  
University of Arkansas  
Email: [Lorraine.Berkett@uvm.edu](mailto:Lorraine.Berkett@uvm.edu)

### Introduction:

In 2006, after extensive grower input, we proposed to examine organic apple production systems that reflected consumer preferences for newer cultivars and organically grown food, and grower desires for sustainability and profitability. We initiated a transdisciplinary, multi-state research project to determine the opportunities and challenges of organic apple production within the two major production systems growers were using to change to new cultivars and with five of the top apple cultivars that growers identified as important to the future of the industry. The orchard systems are: (i) a new orchard planted with young trees purchased from a nursery and (ii) a “top-grafted” orchard, i.e., an established, older orchard onto which new cultivars are grafted. The cultivars being studied in replicated plots in each orchard system are: Zestar!, Ginger Gold, Honeycrisp, Macoun, and Liberty, a scab-resistant cultivar. Phase 1 (2006-2009) of the long-term project covered the orchard establishment period; a summary of progress during the first phase is on the OrganicA website at <http://www.uvm.edu/organica/OrganicAProject/2009ProgressReport/progress.html>. We are currently in Phase 2 – the early bearing years of the two orchard systems under investigation.



We are collecting an extensive amount of data in the two orchards to answer the following basic questions:

**Is organic apple production profitable  
and sustainable with the knowledge  
and tools we have ?**



**Will there be a long-term difference in  
profitability between the two organic apple  
production systems?**

OrganicA

**Workshop Presentations:** Project personnel will discuss results and insights in the following presentations - (look for summaries of these presentations on the OrganicA Project website)

- *The OrganicA Project - Research Objectives and Project Overview*  
Dr. Lorraine Berkett, University of Vermont
- *Horticultural Challenges and Opportunities in Two Organic Apple Orchard Systems with Ginger Gold, Honeycrisp, Liberty, Macoun, and Zestar!*  
Dr. Elena Garcia, University of Arkansas
- *IPM Challenges and Opportunities in Two Organic Apple Orchard Systems containing Ginger Gold, Honeycrisp, Liberty, Macoun, and Zestar!*  
Terence Bradshaw, University of Vermont
- *Ground Cover Management Trials in an Organic Apple Orchard in Maine*  
Dr. Renae Moran, University of Maine
- *Further Discussion on Economics, Soil Health, and Viewpoints of Organic Apple Growers.*

### Resources:

The OrganicA Project website: <http://www.uvm.edu/organica/>

Organic Orchard Observations.

<http://www.uvm.edu/organica/ListserveBlogs/listserveblogs.html>

OrganicA Project: Research Update, 2009 -2010.

[http://www.uvm.edu/organica/OrganicA\\_Feb082011\\_VTFGApresentation.ppt](http://www.uvm.edu/organica/OrganicA_Feb082011_VTFGApresentation.ppt)

### Project Funding:



Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative



Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program

Vermont Tree Fruit Growers' Association