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Local Varieties Signal Beginning of Apple Season (1:20)

Make way for the Orioles, Duchesses, Beacons and Wealthies--the earliest Minnesota apple varieties to appear at fruit stands. Food Technologist Shirley Munson says they are followed shortly by such varieties as McIntosh, Jonathan, Haralson and Delicious.

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Early apple varieties do not store or ship well because their skins are tender and bruise easily, but many apple lovers consider them among the best for pies, sauce and jelly.

Early apples are fully mature. They are not the green apples associated with summer complaint and upset stomach. They are a bit more tart and their first-of-the-season appeal makes them popular.

Cook apples with their skins on for applesauce and jelly. Most of the pectin is located in the skin and the fruit color turns the final product an appealing pink. Fresh uncooked applesauce is a seasonal treat. Peel, core and cut up six medium summer apples, placing the sections in cold, salted water for at least 10 minutes but not more than an hour. This helps prevent browning. About five minutes before serving time, drain the apples and place half in a blender with a half-cup apple juice, one teaspoon lemon juice and three tablespoons sugar. Cover and blend at high speed until pureed. Empty blender and follow the same procedure with the remaining apples. Makes three cups or about six servings.

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