



15 Varieties: U-Pick Apple Orchard In Edwardsville Opening For Season

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - Liberty Apple Orchard, a U-pick orchard located just east of Edwardsville, marks its ninth season by opening on Saturday, August 21, 2021. The orchard features 15 varieties of apples from August through November, a replica of a one-room schoolhouse, and a new farm market building filled with products from the orchard and local farmers.

Liberty Apple Orchard is a traditional family operation, and is owned and cared for by Eugene and Steve Miller.”

The owners say Liberty Apple Orchard is conveniently located near Edwardsville, Glen Carbon, Troy, Highland, Granite City, and St. Louis, yet still situated in a rural setting.

Guest may pick their own apples from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, from noon to 4:30 p.m. Sunday, and after school from 3 to 5 p.m. On Labor Day, the orchard will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Liberty Apple Orchard will open with COVID-19 safeguards in place.

“The health and safety of our guests and associates are foremost,” said Steve Miller. Associates will wear masks inside the schoolhouse and farm market building. In accordance with evolving state and federal guidelines, non-vaccinated guests will be asked to wear masks inside. Associates will not work if they have symptoms.”

“With over 1,000 large trees, the orchard provides plenty of room for social distancing and a healthy and happy outing for families,” said Lugene Miller.

Steve Miller added: “There are no access fees, parking fees, or reservations needed to visit our orchard and enjoy the sights and fragrances of autumn.”

Lugene Miller said the construction of a new farm market building was expedited in 2020 to provide more space for social distancing for guests and school field trips.

"Now in its first full year of operation, the farm market will be filled with “pre-picked apples, cider from local orchards, apple cider donuts on Saturday mornings, apple butter and apple sauce made from our apples, local honey from hives on the orchard, and caramel apples," she said. We also have children’s books on how apples grow, mother and child homemade apple-print aprons, Amish preserves, and apple crisp and apple cake mixes."

Starting in late August, Gala, McIntosh and some Blondie apples will be the first of 15 varieties ready for picking. By early September, Jonathan, Empire, and Cortland apples will be available, followed by Liberty, Fuji, and Ultra Gold varieties. In October, late-season Fuji, Braeburn, Enterprise, Candycrisp, Gold Rush, and Granny Smith will be available for picking.

“Growing an orchard is a year-round endeavor, but we were fortunate again to have some dedicated high school and college students and retired folks to help out,” said Steve Miller. "The orchard employed 14 high school and college students over the past year to assist with pruning in the winter and orchard maintenance in the spring through fall seasons.

“While some of our excellent employees are returning or starting college this year to pursue degrees in engineering, business, journalism, finance, nursing, and information systems, we are looking forward to their return again during the winter break to assist with pruning."

As in past years, the Millers’ objectives are to provide high-quality local fresh fruit, an educational experience for children and families, and community participation and outreach. Liberty Apple Orchard will again offer opportunities for class or group field

trips to pick apples and learn about growing an orchard (call ahead for arrangements): 618-659-9217, fundraisers for your youth group, mission group, or school, and a source of healthy snacks for your fall festival/Halloween celebration.

Liberty Apple Orchard plans to expand its assistance to food banks in the Metro-East and St. Louis areas by partnering again with the St. Louis Area Foodbank, Operation Food Search, and Urban Harvest, non-profit food distribution organizations serving Illinois and Missouri.

In addition to providing a local "U-Pick" opportunity, Liberty Apple Orchard's produce is available at Dierberg's in Edwardsville, Local Harvest in Tower Grove, and, on Saturday mornings, at the Land of Goshen Farmers' Market in Edwardsville.

Directions:

Liberty Apple Orchard is located at 8308 Kuhn Station Road, just a few miles east of Edwardsville.

From the Meyer YMCA in Edwardsville, go east on Goshen Road approximately two miles, turn right on Staunton Road., cross the Bike Trail, turn left on Kuhn Station Road. The orchard and schoolhouse are down the road about one-fourth of a mile on the right.

From St. Louis via I-55, take exit 23, travel east on Route 143 for one-fourth mile, turn right on Staunton Road and proceed for about a mile. At the "T" with Goshen Road and turn left and then take the first right back onto Staunton Rd. Cross the Bike Trail and turn left onto Kuhn Station Road. The orchard is down the road on the right.

For further information on the ripening schedule and times and dates for special events, follow the orchard on [Facebook](#), the website (www.libertyappleorchard.com), or call (618) 659-9217.

