

# **U-Pick Apple Orchard In Edwardsville Celebrating Tenth Season - Hosting Benefit For American Cancer Society On September 24**

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EDWARDSVILLE - Liberty Apple Orchard, a U-pick orchard located just east of Edwardsville, will celebrate its tenth season by opening on August 27, 2022. The orchard features 18 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 treats from local businesses. The orchard will be hosting a Golden Apple Harvest Festival and 5k Run on September 24 to benefit childhood cancer research through the American Cancer Society.

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 on Saturday from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, Sunday from 12:00 - 4:30 pm, and after school Tuesday – Friday from 3:00 – 5:00 pm. On Labor Day the orchard will be open from 10:00 – 3:00 pm.

A traditional family orchard, Liberty Apple Orchard is owned and cared for by Lugene and Steve Miller, an “entrepreneur.” “There are no access fees, parking fees, or reservations needed to visit our orchard and enjoy the sights and fragrances of autumn and taste a crispy, sweet apple from the tree,” said Steve Miller.

“To celebrate our tenth year, we will be offering for the first-time apple cider slushies in the farm market,” said Lugene Miller. 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, caramel apples, children’s books on how apples grow, mother and child homemade apple-print aprons, Amish conserves and salsas, gourmet popcorn, fudge and apple crisp and apple cake mixes,” added Lugene Miller.

Starting in late August, Gala, McIntosh and some Blondee apples will be the first of 18 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, Ludacrisp, Enterprise, Evercrisp, Candycrisp, Goldrush, Pink Lady, and Granny Smith will be available for picking.

The orchard will host its third Apple Harvest Festival and 5k Run/Walk on Saturday, September 24. The festival will celebrate the life of Adam Behrhorst, a former Liberty employee who died in 2017 after battling Ewing Sarcoma. All proceeds from the festival will benefit childhood cancer research through the American Cancer Society. “After a two-year pandemic pause, we are looking forward to hosting this event supporting the American Cancer Society’s fight against pediatric cancers,” said Lugene Miller.

“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 supports the local economy by hiring students from local schools and home school groups. “We try to assist in the development of the students by providing recommendations for college, scholarships, and future jobs,” added Steve Miller. In its first nine years of operations, Liberty Apple Orchard employed 53 high schools, college, and retired men and women to assist with pruning in the winter and orchard maintenance in the spring, summer, and fall seasons.

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 youth, mission, or school groups, or to provide a source of healthy snacks for fall festival/Halloween celebrations.

Liberty Apple Orchard plans to expand its assistance to food banks in the Metro-East and St. Louis areas by partnering again with Operation Food Search, a non-profit food distribution organization 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, Three Rivers Community Farm in Elsha, and, on Saturday mornings, at the Land of Goshen Farmers' Market in Edwardsville.

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 for approximately two miles, turn right on Staunton Rd., cross the Bike Trail, and turn left on Kuhn Station Rd. 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 Rd. and proceed for about a mile. At the "T" with Goshen Rd. turn left and then take the first right back onto Staunton Rd. Cross the Bike Trail and turn left onto Kuhn Station Rd. The orchard is down the road on the right. For further information on the ripening schedule and times and dates for special events, follow us on Facebook ([libertyappleorchard](https://www.facebook.com/libertyappleorchard)), our website ([www.libertyappleorchard.com](http://www.libertyappleorchard.com)), or call (618) 659-9217.