

US grew 13 million pounds of genetically modified apples in 2020, but most fruit growers still resist growing biotech crops

[G]rape and nut growers appear to have sustained a particularly rough 2020. But that was probably due at least as much to huge crops and attendant lower prices as it was to the pandemic. Stone fruit growers are more optimistic than they have been in years, and berry growers keep sailing along, with a solid 44% expecting to increase production in 2021.

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Here's a brief look at some of the other issues that drew the most comments from growers.

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GMO Crops: Despite the fact 13 million pounds of genetically modified apples were harvested in the U.S. (Washington state) this past year, grower resistance to GMO crops has not abated. When asked if they would produce a GMO crop if one was available to them, 52% say "no," up from 49% last year.

Representative comment on the anti side: "Not until the public is educated on the subject — that there is no risk to them."

On the pro side: "It depends whether there is any other alternative. For example, it appears that a GMO alternative may be necessary to save the citrus industry from HLB."

Climate Change: When asked if they believe in man-made climate change, 60% say "yes," the first time to hit that high a number in the survey and up from 54% in 2020. As usual, the issue is controversial.

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