



MIND BENDER...

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MEANING BEHIND THIS OLD ENGLISH PROVERB?
"PLANT PEARS FOR YOUR HEIRS."

WE THINK IT'S PRETTY COOL THAT ALL OF CANADA'S COMMERCIALY GROWN D'ANJOU PEARS COME FROM BC ORCHARDS.

MEET JOHN CASORSO AND HIS BROTHER ROB, OKANAGAN PEAR GROWERS...

Our farming roots go back. Way back. In 1882, our great-grandfather started up a farm near Kelowna. Since then, many of our family members have carried on farming. For much of the past 30 years, we've been in charge, growing Bartlett, Bosc and d'Anjou pears.



John and Rob Casorso, Okanagan Pear Growers

Pear farming is a true family affair and we hope that our own grandchildren will take over when we retire. It's a family operation with three generations together helping out. Our ancestors were one of the first families in the Okanagan Valley. Those living in Kelowna will know Casorso Road, named after our grandfather! Since pear trees produce fruit for as long as 100 years, we could be harvesting pears from trees planted by our great-grandfather and grandfather - that's the ultimate in long-term sustainability.

What challenges did our grandfathers and other BC farmers of their generation face? Trucks and trains weren't refrigerated as they are now and cold is key when it comes to keeping tree fruits fresh, especially pears. Also, road conditions were completely unreliable. In those days farmers worked more or less on their own. Today we combine our skills and efforts with the 580 other grower families in the BC Tree Fruits Cooperative. We also collaborate with the Pacific Agri-Food Research Centre in nearby Agassiz and Summerland. Here they study ways to keep plants healthy by protecting them from insects and a wide range of bacteria. The centre also researches and develops new and delicious fruit varieties - created specifically to thrive in our marvelous, magical Okanagan climate.

We take great pride in the fruit we grow, and as one of Kelowna's long-time families, look forward to continuing to do so for years to come.

SKETCH THIS BRAINTEASER OUT ON A SHEET OF PAPER...



PAIRS OR PEARS?
TWELVE PAIRS HANGING HIGH, TWELVE KNIGHTS RIDING BY, EACH KNIGHT TOOK A PEAR, AND YET LEFT A DOZEN THERE.

BONJOUR, MY FULL NAME IS "BEURRE D'ANJOU", WHICH IS FRENCH FOR "BUTTERY PEARS OF ANJOU" (AWN-JOO), A REGION IN FRANCE.



Photo courtesy of BC Tree Fruits Limited

Fresh Story: Get to Know Your Fruits and Vegetables

INTERMEDIATE

PEARS



PEARS HAVE BEEN AROUND SINCE THE STONE AGE. Records from the first century show that there were 38 different types of pears in cultivation by the Romans. Today there are over 3,000 varieties. We will be serving you 4 types of pears this year, each with its own unique qualities. Get to know your pears, pick your favourites.

BARTLETT

- SIGNATURE PEAR FLAVOUR WITH TONS OF JUICE
- SWEET AND BUTTERY, ALMOST TRANSLUCENT ON THE INSIDE
- CLEAR, YELLOW SKIN WHEN RIPE

D'ANJOU

- REFRESHINGLY SWEET AND JUICY WITH A HINT OF CITRUS
- LARGER, EGG SHAPE, STAYS LIGHT GREEN EVEN WHEN RIPE

ASIAN

- ROUND SHAPE, WITH THE CRISP, FIRM, TEXTURE OF AN APPLE
- VARIES IN COLOUR FROM GOLDEN YELLOW TO RUSSETED GREEN

BOSC

- TEAR-DROP SHAPE WITH LONG NECK
- NATURALLY OCCURRING RUSSET GIVES IT A GOLDEN COLOUR
- CRISP AND WOODSY WITH A HONEY SWEETNESS

MAP IT OUT...

THERE ARE 3 MAJOR PEAR GROWING REGIONS IN BC: THE **Okanagan, Similkameen & Kootenay Valleys**. WHICH IS THE LARGEST?

DO THE MATH...



Unlike most fruit, pears do not fully ripen well on the tree and need to be picked by hand while still slightly hard. Timing is key. With hundreds of acres of orchards to harvest, a grower needs to determine when their fruit is just near ripe. Some growers count days from bloom to harvest as a guideline for predicting when their pears will be at peak maturity.

The optimum maturity time from bloom to harvest is 115 days. Let's say the Casorso brothers' orchards bloomed on May 20th this past spring (remember we had a cool spring this year so blooms were a little later than usual).

When would the Casorso brothers have started harvesting their pear crop this season?



THE **Okanagan valley** IS DEFINED BY THE BASIN OF **Okanagan Lake** AND THE **Okanagan river**. THE INTERIOR SALISH (THE REGION'S FIRST INHABITANTS) GAVE THE OKANAGAN ITS NAME, WHICH MEANS "PLACE OF WATER". WHERE WOULD YOU FIND CASORSO ROAD IN THE **Okanagan valley**?



Similkameen valley IN THE SOUTHERN INTERIOR OF BC EXTENDS ALONG THE CROWSNEST HIGHWAY FROM THE GOLD RUSH HERITAGE TOWN OF **Princeton** (EAST OF HOPE) TO THE DESSERT-LIKE TOWN OF **Osoyoos**. THIS RICH GROWING REGION IS HOME TO THE TOWN OF **Keremeos**, KNOWN AS THE "FRUIT STAND CAPITAL OF CANADA". ADD **Princeton** & **Keremeos** TO YOUR GROW BC MAP.



Kootenay valley WINDS ITS WAY THROUGH THE **monashee mountains** AND **Selkirk mountains** BETWEEN **North Kootenay Lake** AND **Creston**. THERE'S A LONG HISTORY OF AGRICULTURE ALONG THE **kootenay river**. IN WHAT DIRECTION DOES THE **kootenay river** RUN?