

# NC Apple Festival Promises a Bite of Family Fun

North Carolina is one of the largest apple producing states in the country. More than a commodity, however, apples represent generations of tradition, from the incorporation of apples in many recipes to the annual picking itself. A free celebration of this special fruit, the 69<sup>th</sup> annual North Carolina Apple Festival will take place Friday through Monday, September 4-7. The street fair will cover nine blocks on Main Street in downtown Hendersonville, from Sixth Avenue to Caswell Street.

The fair will feature more than 150 vendors, from apple growers to artists and craftspeople. Musical entertainment at the historic courthouse will take place Friday through Sunday, with performances by Buddy K Big Band, Emily Minor, Carolina Soul Band, Jim Quick and Coastline, and Too Much Sylvia.

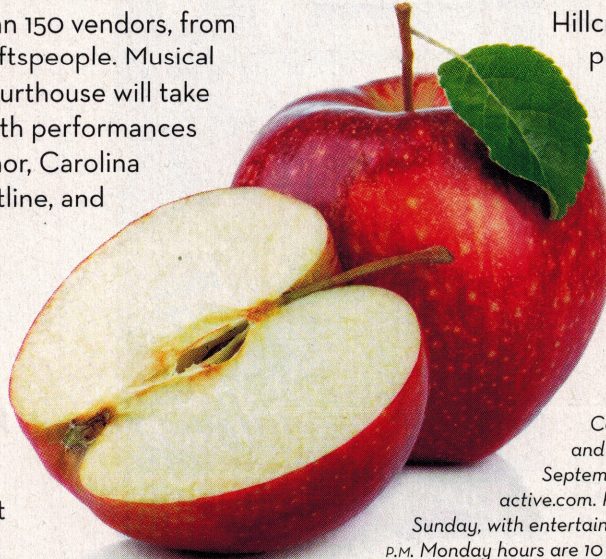
On Monday, the King Apple Parade begins at 2:30 P.M. with floats, bands, antique cars, fire engines, and yes, clowns! The Historic Seventh Avenue District will host a farmers' market on Maple Street in front of the Historic Train Depot on Sunday, from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M.

"People may come to the festival and not even realize that Henderson County is the seventh largest apple growing county in the United States," says Leslie Lancaster, of Grandad's Apples in Hendersonville.

Carolyn Atkins, co-owner of Apple Mill in Saluda, explains, "Customers enjoy the different tastes coming from a wide variety of Henderson County apples."

Many participating orchards have been in families for decades. Danielle Stepp McCall, of Stepp's Hillcrest Orchard, says her grandparents purchased the orchard in the 1960s.

"My mother and aunt had a small booth at the festival in 1979 ... We grandchildren won the best costume in the kiddie apple parade. We were all dressed as apples and carried a sign that said, 'We are the apple of our Papaw's eye.'"



*Hosted by the Henderson County Chamber of Commerce, the Pardee Apple Festival 8K Road Race and Chick-Fil-A Mini Moo Mile are set for Saturday, September 5. For more, call 828.692.1413, or register at [active.com](http://active.com). Fair hours are 10 A.M. to 8 P.M., Friday through Sunday, with entertainment, children's area, and food available until 10 P.M. Monday hours are 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. To learn more, visit [ncapplefestival.org](http://ncapplefestival.org).*