

DEAR ABBY

Write to Dear Abby online at [dearabby.com](http://dearabby.com) or by mail at P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069



**Dear Abby:** I have been married to my husband for 13 years. He has lied about little things and also about emotional relationships he has had with co-workers. It went on for years, as he moved from one job to another.

A few months ago, I found out from the other woman that he'd had a sexual affair with her. He had been in counseling for months prior because of what he said were mental health issues. In reality, it was because of his guilt.

We are now in marriage counseling and individual counseling, as well. I don't know if it will help because he has been a gaslighter for years. Please tell me what you think.

— *Patient Wife in Minnesota*

**Dear Wife:** Give the counseling a try. But because of your husband's long history of lying to you, things will have to drastically change in your relationship. Until trust can be established, his life must be an open book — including his phone messages, texts and credit card statements. That he felt enough guilt that he started counseling is a hopeful sign, but there are no guarantees that your marriage can be saved.

**Dear Abby:** This message is for all those well-meaning people who ask women if they plan on having children (or more of them). Just don't! They may not want children or the inevitable discussion about why they have made that choice. They might be "one and done," and that's OK, too. They may be trying without success or had miscarriages. Or they might even be pregnant but not ready to announce it to anyone.

The last time I was asked was the day I found out I was

pregnant. I lost the pregnancy a month later. This line of questioning is not meant to be anything more than curious and kind, but at best it can be uncomfortable, and at worst, painful. Thanks for letting me vent.

— *Careful in Connecticut*

**Dear Careful:** You're welcome. You have stated it well, and I agree with you. Another common question that can be emotionally loaded is, "Do you HAVE children?" For someone who has lost a child, or has one in rehab or in jail, a truthful answer can also be painful.

**Dear Abby:** A co-worker moved into my town about 18 months ago. Because we have the same schedule, he asked me for a ride to and from work one day. Well, now it seems that I drive him about three times a week.

When he works and I'm off, he takes an Uber, which costs around \$25 round trip, but he has never even offered to buy me a cup of coffee. I stopped to buy gas one morning and mentioned I was only going to get \$10 worth because it was all the cash I had. He didn't even blink! My daughter says I should charge him a weekly amount or quit taking him. What do you think?

— *Frosted in New Jersey*

**Dear Frosted:** Shame on him. Feel free to tell your co-worker that providing transportation on a regular basis (three times a week!?) is not a free service, and in the future you expect compensation for your efforts. Frankly, he should have offered when it turned out he needed transportation so often. If he gives you an argument, quit allowing him to use you because that is exactly what he is doing.

YOUR HOROSCOPE *By Madalyn Aslan*

Stars show the kind of day you'll have

★★★★★ DYNAMIC | ★★★★★ POSITIVE | ★★★ AVERAGE | ★★ SO-SO | ★ DIFFICULT

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 14, 2021:** Intellectual, flexible and affectionate, you have a fine sense of humor, and you use it to great effect in a new project this year. There are many incredible opportunities in your work. Grab them! If single, be wary of idolizing someone you are unable or unlikely to attain. You meet your mate in May. If attached, you have certainly found your opposite, who complements you beautifully. SAGITTARIUS lights your fire.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19)**

★★★★ Life will be especially bright and beautiful today. You will receive invitations and can enjoy love opportunities. Be receptive to sudden chances. Flexibility and a progressive outlook will guide you toward success. Tonight: Dance like no one is watching.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20)**

★★★★ Today brings heightened intuition. If you have always wanted to learn to read the Tarot, meditate or interpret dreams, now is the time to do so. You will progress quickly with such studies. Good manners are a must when practicing reading others. Tonight: A sense of gratitude.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20)**

★★★★ Today affects your partnership sector in a powerful fashion, signaling that a relationship could either begin or end. Do not resist change. News from longtime friends and family members will recall happy memories. Tonight: An invitation to join a new group.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22)**

★★★★ New insight into who you really are comes into focus today. A friend could be jealous or troubled. You could be called to mediate a disagreement between companions. Annoying as this may be, your help will do much good. Tonight: A sigh of relief.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)**

★★★★ A delayed goal or dream is finally realized. Compose an affirmation relating to a second chance or starting over. Awakenings and vivid day-dreams occur. If asked to mediate a dispute, be sure to keep any personal bias concealed. Tonight: A well-traveled friend reaches out.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)**

★★★★ Loyalty is very important to you. It's important to recognize when a situation isn't working and let go in order to make way for something better. Today can bring a close link to someone considerably older or younger. Tonight: The stars smile on you.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)**

★★★★ Today provides insight and perspective. Others are more sensitive to your needs. It will be easier to access the roles others play and to work out obligations or projects involving them. You'll feel accepted and included. Tonight: Intimate date night.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)**

★★★★ Intellectual thought and reason rule your health house. Learning all you can about health situations is especially important. The duality hinted at by different trains of thought shows that there might be multiple factors affecting your well-being. Tonight: A long, soothing herbal soak.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)**

★★★★ Today promises an interesting liaison or two. Mysterious, unpredictable and talented individuals are about to enter your circle. There is some deep attraction and some potentially meaningful romantic interludes. Tonight: The potential for true happiness is at a peak.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)**

★★★★ The day begins on a bright note, surrounding you with light and promise. Situations with children are about to improve. Discussions about travel will provide a new outlook. Be patient if there is a sudden lack of cooperation on the home front. Tonight: Productive.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)**

★★★★ A startling awakening will indicate where true love really is available to you. Explore the healing qualities of art, music and companionship. Subtle energy fields will be evident in your health picture. Tonight: Others exhibit care and concern about you.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)**

★★★★ You are cautious about acting upon risky advice from others, which is good. Today could bring impractical business associates or partners your way. Be progressive; realize that growth can come about if the old patterns are disrupted. Tonight: Not the time to be stubborn.

# Cosmic Crisp apple price plunges

BY DAN WHEAT

For the Capital Press

**W**ENATCHEE, Wash. — This season's smaller Washington apple crop has resulted in higher prices for growers, but a surprise has been a 39% drop in just two months in the price of the new state apple, Cosmic Crisp.

Industry leaders have called the unprecedented rapid volume ramp-up of Cosmic Crisp production a \$500 million gamble, so a drop in FOB — freight-on-board — price from \$71.86 per 40-pound box for the week ending Dec. 27 to \$43.83 for the week ending Feb. 28 may cause some to question the wisdom of that gamble.

"That sort of fall in two months is quite unusual. If I were a grower right now I would want an emergency meeting to find out what to do," said Desmond O'Rourke, world apple analyst and retired Washington State University agricultural economist in Pullman.

He said the drop has royalty ramifications for WSU, which bred and developed the apple over 20 years.

"It was a surprise to all of those who have millions of dollars invested in it," said Brian Focht, manager of the Washington Apple Growers Marketing Association in Wenatchee.

"With last year's debut, it started at \$65.90 a box and then up and averaged \$72 for the season. This year we started about the same and just didn't get the pull we needed to move the fruit," Focht said. "We anticipated big demand and it wasn't there."

He noted several causes. Cosmic Crisp is held in storage



Dan Wheat/For the Capital Press

Cosmic Crisp apples at an East Wenatchee, Washington, Safeway store in December.

Cosmic Crisp was priced at \$2.99 to \$3.99 per pound versus \$1.29 to \$1.99 for other varieties.

"After one season, consumers haven't had a chance to figure out it is a premium apple," he said.

There's also more Cosmic Crisp to sell this season than last.

Production increased from 360,000 boxes from the 2019 crop to 1.626 million boxes from the 2020 crop.

It is projected to be 5.1 million boxes from the fall 2021 crop and 22 million by 2026.

As of March 1, 734,000 boxes had been shipped this season and 892,000 remain to be sold, according to the Washington State Tree Fruit Association.

"We needed to move 80,000 boxes a week and were moving 40,000, so we needed something to kick it in the rear," Focht said.

Prices were dropped and some "incredibly expensive" deals have been struck with some big retailers, he said.

The severity of the price drop in mid-season led O'Rourke to suspect quality issues. He said Fuji and Honeycrisp both had quality issues in their early years.

Focht said this season's Cosmic Crisp is coming off two to four-year-old trees so quality is not as consistent as it will be when trees are more mature.

"This is a good apple. Nothing is a slam dunk. We will keep working at it. The 1 million single samples will be followed by other creative ideas," Focht said. "I'm confident we will make the necessary adjustments. A pandemic environment is not the best in which to sell a new product."

from fall harvest to December for proper ripening. When it reached grocery stores in December it couldn't get the same press attention that it got the year before because COVID-19 and the presidential election dominated the news, he said.

Retailers were too busy dealing with COVID-19 and keeping staple items in stock to think about Cosmic Crisp advertising and displays, Focht said, adding that in-store sampling was banned.

"Retailers were not displaying it as a premium apple but putting it in regular displays with all the other bi-colored apples. They didn't move because they were twice as expensive," he said.

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