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Opportunities in Production and Marketing of Integrated Fruit Production (IFP) Certified Apples in Poland

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Abstract

Poland is a large producer of apples, which are the primary domestic fruit available nearly year-round at reasonable prices. The apple industry had been undergoing adjustments to new conditions resulting from severe winter cold damage in 1986/87 followed by the emergence of the free market economy. These factors coupled with increasing environmental concerns led to rapid implementation of an Integrated Fruit Production (IFP) program for apple growers. Guidelines for apple growers participating in the program have been developed. Training includes accurate record keeping of cultural practices. Growers complete the training in two growing seasons and are certified as IFP apple producers. However, the opportunity to differentiate apples from IFP orchards and those from other domestic orchards or countries has not been utilized. Apple marketing is hampered by lack of a wholesale distribution network, storage facilities, adequate market information, and consumer studies. Increased collection and

dissemination of relevant information, attention to quality, and knowledge of consumer preferences will improve apple marketing and increase grower revenue, especially if IFP program participants communicate attributes of their product to buyers.

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