



Apple Bins in Washington State

Washington farmers use a variety of apple bins for harvest depending on the area they are farming and storage or travel of the fruit. Wood bins have been used in the industry for decades. Wood bins typically sell for \$45 a piece whereas plastic apple bins are about \$100 a piece. Plastic bins are slowly becoming more popular as the seasons pass by.

New bins are created every year. There are some bins in circulation dating back to 1987 and some even older than that.



Wood bins:

Wood bins are the most common bin used for apple harvest. They are a cheaper investment, easier to work with when wet and farmers have been using them for years making them easily attainable. The most common size is 48in by 48in by 28in tall, pictured below (Figure 1).



Figure 1.

Additionally, there is a slightly smaller size utilized which is 47" x 47" x 28" and in the Wenatchee area, they use a nesting bin which is 45" x 48" x 24".

Plastic bins

Although plastic bins are more expensive, they have a lot more benefits. Plastic bins are lighter in weight, easier to clean, disinfect and stack, they have better ventilation for the fruit and

comply with USDA/HACCP standards. Plastic bins last years longer than wooden bins. The most commonly used size for plastic bins is 48” x 48” x 28” referred to as MacroBin 29-FV on macroplastics.com (Figure 2).



Figure 2.

Additionally, there are a couple smaller sizes utilized. MacroBin 32NG which is sized at 44.75” x 48.31” x 29.93” and MacroBin 28-FV, sized at 49” x 49” x 30 5/8”.



Figure 3. MacroBin 32NG, MacroBin 28-FV. Photo source: macroplastics.com

Features & Benefits:

- Impact grade plastic – will last longer, no splintering, bin repair is inexpensive.
- Light weight – a plastic bin has a good interlock system to make them safer to stack (allows to stack up to 10 high), 40% lighter than a wood bin, reduce on shipping costs
- Nonporous surface - this material will not absorb water, dehydrate like a wood bin typically would, they also have consistent tare weight throughout their use
- Rounded corners and smoother surfaces – less scuff and damaging, risk of contamination is less and less places for bacteria to hide
- Easy sanitation - with a pressure washer it will remove debris, with a brush will help remove any remaining debris
- Plastic is more pest resistant and easily recognized

Add-ons

Additionally, there are materials that assist in harvest and protecting the fruit.

- Padding – layer for the bottom of the bin that helps protect against bruising
- Plastic Liners – used with wood bins around the inside to protect against abrasive bruising