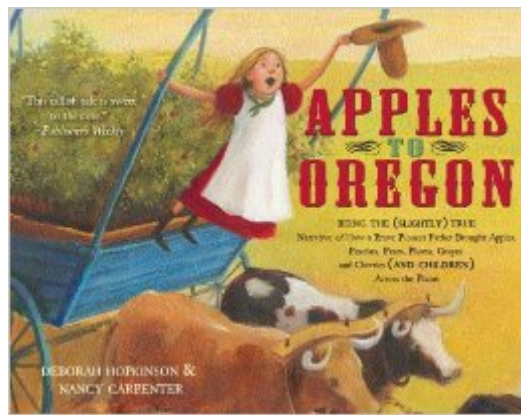


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# Apples To Oregon: Being The (Slightly) True Narrative Of How A Brave Pioneer Father Brought Apples, Peaches, Pears, Plums, Grapes, And Cherries (and Children) Across The Plains



## Synopsis

Apples, ho! When Papa decides to pull up roots and move from Iowa to Oregon, he can't bear to leave his precious apple trees behind. Or his peaches, plums, grapes, cherries, and pears. Oh, and he takes his family along too. But the trail is cruel -- first there's a river to cross that's wider than Texas...and then there are hailstones as big as plums...and there's even a drought, sure to crisp the cherries. Those poor pippins! Luckily Delicious (the nonedible apple of Daddy's eye) is strong -- as young 'uns raised on apples are -- and won't let anything stop her father's darling saps from tasting the sweet Oregon soil. Here's a hilarious tall tale -- from the team that brought you Fannie in the Kitchen -- that's loosely based on the life of a real fruiting pioneer.

**Apple Facts** More than 7,500 varieties of apples are grown throughout the world. About 2,500 varieties grow in the United States. The apple variety Delicious is the most widely grown in the United States. Apples are part of the rose family. The science of fruit growing is called pomology. Fresh apples float. That's because 25 percent of their volume is air. Cut an apple in half, across the core, and you'll see a star shape. It takes apple trees four to five years to produce their first fruit. It takes about thirty-six apples to make one gallon of apple cider.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

So I was doing my usual Thursday storytime (as is my librarianly duty) to a group of open-mouthed red-cheeked youngsters when I happened to ask if any of them knew what a tall tale was. You could have heard a pin drop. Now there were roughly ten or so children ranging in age from nine to toddlerhood and amongst these not a single child (that would admit it) knew that great family friendly and thoroughly American art of over exaggeration. I was sorely aggrieved but read from Anne Isaac's marvelous, "Swamp Angel" and felt much better in the end. Since that time, I have come to the conclusion that it is the duty of every good honest citizen of our fair Etas Unis that writes for children to make at least one tall taleish picture book in their lifetime. So far, there are plenty of writer/illustrators out there shirking their duties, but Deborah Hopkinson and Nancy Carpenter are not among them. Between the two of them they've concocted a rip-roaring, snorting, fit to be tied narrative based on true events and spun into utter silliness and fantasy. The result is the fun freewheeling, "Apples To Oregon", and after reading it your tots may well want to make the trip themselves. Delicious and her daddy are two of a kind. They both love their beautiful Iowan fruit orchard. And they'd give everything they have to preserve and protect those awesomely tasty trees. So when Delicious's daddy decides that the family should pull up stakes and head for Oregon, it's only natural that the trees should come along with. Trouble is, it's hard enough to get a family the size of Delicious's across the plains (there are eight or so children), let alone finicky fruit bearers. But her daddy's determined, so off go Delicious, her mother, father, and seven siblings to make it to Oregon.

This is the vegan version of "Oregon Trail," an ancient computer game that was once -played on the Apple IIe, and featured "blam-blam" cheesy sounds as you gunned down moose, deer, and bear. Here, there's no fishing or hunting, but you follow the same trail past Chimney and Courthouse Rock, ford a river, climb the Rockies, and raft down the Columbia River to Oregon. Although I wondered the book violated any copyright laws, all resemblance to the "Oregon Trail" ends there. Unlike the game, there's no dysentery, crooked traders, stampeding animals, or cranky settlers. Instead, a plucky family travels from Iowa to Oregon with a gigantic wagon holding a holding a whole orchard of fruit trees: Apples, plums, cherries, pears, and peaches. The book is more enjoyable than I expected, given its resemblance to the game, mostly because of the colorful girl, "Delicious," who narrates the story, and the sometimes silly obsession of her fruit-minded father. When "Delicious" (at least her father didn't name her "Gravenstein") alerts us "Daddy was ready for the most daring adventure in the history of fruit," you know you're in for a clever and exciting tall tale. On the way to Oregon, the family encounters nasty skeptical fellow travelers, weather changes,

and natural obstacles. They build a raft and start paddling the Platte River, the "muddy drink started to pull us down": "The peaches are plummeting!' my sisters shouted. "The plums are plunging,' boomed my brother. "Don't let my babies go belly-up!" howled Daddy. Apparently, Daddy's has unbounded concern for the apples of his eye...and he also loves his kids.

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