

# Okanagan Specialty Fruits CEO Neal Carter Buys Back Company He Founded

*Acquisition Positions OSF for New Investment, Strategic Partnerships and Next-Generation Crop Development*

SUMMERLAND, BC, CANADA, June 23, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Pioneering orchardist Neal Carter has regained ownership of Okanagan Specialty Fruits ([OSF](#)) as the company he co-founded marks its 30th anniversary with a fresh new logo and bold plans to revolutionize the fresh produce industry through genome editing.



Neal and Louisa Carter, owners of OSF

OSF, which developed the world's first nonbrowning [Arctic® apple](#), is the only small company to develop a bioengineered product that is now sold at scale and then expand to genome-edited specialty fruit crops. OSF is singular in breeding, growing, slicing, packaging and selling the proprietary Arctic apple brand, which has contributed to its financial stability and growth. That unique experience positions OSF as a global leader in biotechnology R&D, regulatory proficiency and commercial success in the fresh produce industry.

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*Neal Carter*

“It’s exciting and humbling to regain ownership of OSF on this momentous anniversary,” Carter said. “We see the acquisition as a chance to plot a course that maximizes our experience and the genetic advances of recent years while

opening opportunities for significant new investment and crop development partnerships.”

In addition to developing its own products, OSF leverages its intellectual property and a leading CapEx-light Biotech Platform to introduce novel consumer and nutrition traits, as well as grower-focused traits like disease resistance, climate resilience and post-harvest protection, into tree fruits and other produce crops. The British Columbia headquartered company will be announcing its first big genome-edited product later this year.

Carter and his wife, Louisa, founded OSF in 1996 with a vision to leverage genetic engineering to create a nonbrowning apple that would reduce food waste. The dream came true in 2015 when the first two varieties of Arctic® apples were approved for commercial production in the United States and Canada. That same year, Intrexon Corp. bought OSF, selling it to another corporate buyer in 2020. On June 22, Carter bought it back, with plans for employees to assume partial ownership in recognition of their contributions to the company's success. Carter plans to bring in other investor capital to continue to grow the company in due course.

“The global gene editing regulatory environment is extremely positive,” Carter said. “We’re proud to be among the first to use this technology to improve the nutrition, consumer interest and sustainability attributes of fresh produce. It gives me optimism for the future.”

Though the innovative company has blossomed in the past 30 years, it retains its founding mission to solve real challenges to the specialty crop industry, including to reduce food waste, improve nutritional security, advance sustainable agriculture and expand access to healthy fresh fruit.

OSF's scientific team began by using RNAi technology to silence the expression of polyphenol oxidase (PPO), which causes fruit to brown when it is cut and exposed to air. The company then navigated a challenging regulatory process to bring four of its Arctic varieties—Golden, Granny, Fuji and Gala—to market in the U.S. and Canada. Another two varieties, Arctic Honey and Arctic Pink, are awaiting FDA approval and commercialization. As biotechnology tools advanced, OSF shifted its emphasis to genome editing, which offers greater flexibility in plant breeding.

OSF went on to build a state-of-the-art facility at Moses Lake, WA., where it processes Arctic



Overhead shot of OSF's processing facility located in Moses Lake, WA



Arctic apple trees in bloom in Othello, WA

apples grown on nearly 2 million trees in its 1,250-acre orchard in nearby Othello. By becoming a fully vertically integrated company, OSF carved out a new niche in both the apple and fresh-slice industries. Arctic apple slices are now sold in 31 states and Puerto Rico.

OSF recently launched the award-winning [Endless Orchard](#) cider line to maximize use of its apples and incorporate another value-added product into its portfolio. It continues to trail blaze by implementing orchard technology that saves money while supporting regenerative agricultural practices.

“It has been extremely gratifying to guide OSF as it’s grown into the leading-edge company that it is today,” Carter said. “But we’re not about to rest on our laurels. We’re aiming to help the global fresh produce sector embrace innovation to meet the many challenges ahead.”

To that end, OSF’s sophisticated lab in Saskatchewan, Canada, is using genome editing to introduce traits that benefit both consumers and producers into Arctic apples and other fruits, such as cherries, berries and grapes. OSF’s science team has experience in 20 different crops with capacity and know-how to accelerate its work in additional new crops. Some 2,000 square feet of greenhouse space and two diverse field test sites support OSF’s bench-to-field research capacity.

Carter also has articulated his vision for the “farm of the future” in a white paper that details how genome editing can change the architecture of the apple tree to reduce labor and production costs by facilitating automation.

“Through innovation and genetics, we can develop the products that will support the financial viability of growers while meeting consumer needs and addressing the challenges associated with climate change,” Carter said. “We’re committed to partnerships that will help us grow the future.”

## About OSF

Okanagan Specialty Fruits (OSF) is a world leader in tree fruit breeding and innovation, specializing in developing, cultivating, processing, and marketing novel tree fruit varieties through bioengineering, including genome editing. As a vertically integrated company, OSF is committed to advancing sustainable solutions that reduce food loss and waste while enhancing fruit consumption. Headquartered in Summerland, British Columbia, Canada, OSF was founded in 1996 by Neal and Louisa Carter and remains guided by its founders' vision of using innovation to reduce food loss and waste while improving the consumer fruit experience. Its flagship product, Arctic® apples, grown and processed in Washington, USA, offers a fresh-cut apple solution that stays orchard-fresh longer. OSF continues to push the boundaries of innovation with its latest venture, Endless Orchard Hard-Pressed Cider. For more information, visit [www.arcticapples.com](http://www.arcticapples.com), [www.eocider.com](http://www.eocider.com), or [www.okspecialtyfruits.com](http://www.okspecialtyfruits.com). For investment opportunities, please contact [info@osfruits.com](mailto:info@osfruits.com).

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