

The Leaflet

California Rare Fruit Growers - Central Coast Chapter

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2004...Year of the Berry

Blueberry—The Blues That Make You Feel Good!

Ericaceae

Vaccinium



Blueberries are my personal favorite berry, and I'm not alone—they are becoming more and more popular each day as new research discloses the health benefits they have! This beautiful, deep blue berry is one of the few fruits native to North America. The Northeast Native American tribes revered blueberries and much folklore developed around them—the elders would tell of how the Great Spirit sent "star berries" to relieve the children's hunger during a famine. Meat and blueberries were dried into a special jerky that was eaten all year long. The colonists learned from Native Americans how to gather blueberries, dry them in the sun and store them for the winter. In time, blueberries became an important food source and were preserved, and later were among the first fruits to be commercially canned. A beverage made with blueberries was an important staple for Civil War Soldiers.

The native blueberry is *Vaccinium corymbosum* (Northern Highbush) and it has been crossed with *Vaccinium ashei* (Southern Rabbit Eye) to create the Southern Highbush Blueberry (*V. corymbosum* x *V. darrowi* or *V. ashei*) Our area of California was never considered a prime blueberry growing area until the development of these Southern Highbush plants that don't need many "chill" hours. The Southern Highbush blueberry is becoming more and more popular as an alternative crop for California fruit growers.

Mark Gaskell, PhD., Farm Advisor for UC Cooperative Extension of [San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties](#) is especially "high" on blueberries as a viable commercial crop for this area. For detailed information on growing blueberries, visit Mark's site. He is even willing to come to your property to advise you on the ins and outs of blueberry growing, or to meet you at the experimental plot that is located near the Cal Poly Crops Unit Classroom and show you the varieties that seem to be doing best here.

Blueberries are very particular about the soil they grow in, even the low chill varieties. Just like their wild cousins, they need an acid soil of pH 5 or below and they are intolerant of either drought or poorly drained soils. Since most of the soil in our area ranges from pH 6.5 to 7.5, extensive use of amendments (sulfur being the most common) and mulch is needed to get it into the proper acidic range. Planting your blueberries in specially prepared raised beds or mounds seems to be the best way to accomplish this.

Are blueberries lots of work to grow here? Yes! Are they worth the effort? Yes! There is nothing better than having fresh blueberries to pop into your mouth right off the bush, sprinkle on your cereal, or bake into delectable desserts. Not only are they delicious, they are healthful!

Blueberries are full of anti-oxidants that help neutralize harmful by-products of metabolism called "free radicals" that can lead to cancer and other age related diseases. (Actually, researchers at the USDA Human Nutrition Center have found that blueberries rank #1 in antioxidant activity when compared to 40 other fresh fruits and vegetables!) Anthocyanin—the pigment that makes the blueberries blue—is thought to

be responsible for this benefit. In Sweden, dried blueberries are used to treat childhood diarrhea. This use is again attributed to anthocyanin, which is believed to be "lethal" to *E. coli*. Ellagic acid, in its most biologically active form, ellagitannin, is found in blueberries and is considered to inhibit cancer cells.

In January of this year, I planted 13 Southern Highbush blueberry plants in a raised bed. (Thanks, Joe Sabol, for your info on how to build a raised bed planter!) I filled the bed with "Cal Poly compost" and added peat moss and special high acid soil amendments to each planting hole. My plants were from one-gallon containers that had been potted from bare root stock by the nursery the prior season. I'll keep you informed on the success of my blueberries. I fully intend to have enough of them in a couple of years to put my grandkids to work selling them on the street!

If you have access to lots of blueberries, freeze them. The secret to successful freezing is to use berries that are unwashed and completely dry, then place them in a single layer on a cookie sheet. When frozen, transfer berries to plastic bags or freezer containers.

My favorite blueberry dessert is blueberry pie! However, **one** serving of traditional blueberry pie has 448 calories, 23 grams of fat, and 58 g of carbohydrates. Since I'm trying to choose a healthier lifestyle, I look for options that are still tasty, but not so calorie/fat laden. Here is a delicious alternative to the traditional pie with only 272 calories, 10 g protein, 8 g fat, and 40 g carbohydrates per serving.

BLUEBERRY CHEESECAKE PIE

1 cup graham cracker crumbs	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup non-fat cottage cheese
3 tablespoons honey, divided	1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 container (8 ounces) nonfat orange yogurt	2 eggs
4 ounces low-fat cream cheese	2 cups fresh blueberries

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a small bowl, combine graham cracker crumbs and 2 tablespoons of the honey; transfer to a 9-inch pie plate. Use the back of a spoon to press mixture onto bottom and halfway up sides of plate. In a food processor container, place yogurt, cream cheese, cottage cheese and cornstarch. Whirl until smooth, about 1 minute. Add eggs; whirl until blended. Pour about half of the cheese mixture onto the crust. Top with 1/2 cup of the blueberries. Cover with remaining cheese mixture. Bake until firm, about 35 minutes; cool on a wire rack. In a microwavable dish, microwave the remaining 1 tablespoon honey just until liquefied, about 15 seconds. Add the remaining 1-1/2 cups blueberries; toss to coat, then top the pie with berries. Loosely cover pie; refrigerate until firm, about 3 hours. YIELD: 6 portions

February Meeting

February 14—Cal Poly Crops Unit Classroom and Parking Area—Grafting Demonstration and Scion Exchange—It was another blockbuster meeting! **Chris Darway** counted **157 attendees** who came to exchange scion wood, buy rootstock, and learn grafting techniques. The weather, once again, was most cooperative and the tables set up in the outdoor paved parking area gave us the perfect venue for further learning after the general meeting indoors in the Crops Unit Classroom. The Scion Exchange Committee did an outstanding job of organizing the event.

Kudos and thanks to: **Carol and Robert Scott, David Gurney, Paul and Marie Moyer, Pet Daniels, Jenny Weaver, Lloyd and Barbara Mathews, John and Choung Crowe, Patti Schober, Larry Hollis, Carmela Vignocchi, and Art DeKleine.**

There was lots of action already going on outside before the 1:30 PM meeting time—as many members were busy sorting or selecting scion wood. I tried to get the names of those who'd brought cuttings, but soon gave up! So, instead of naming



who brought what, I'll just list a few of the varieties that I saw represented there: apples (dozens of different types!), red and white grapes, kiwi (both green and orange), cherries, apricots, plums, prunes, pears, Asian pears, persimmon, peaches, and passion fruit. There were probably lots I missed!

Inside the building, co-chair, **Art DeKleine**, finally got everyone settled down to business as he welcomed new members and guests and invited them to introduce themselves. He also thanked **Dorothy** and **Wally Seelos** for bringing extra goodies (éclairs, no less!), as well as thanking **Jill Sabol** for making the cake to celebrate our chapter's **10th Anniversary**. (Wow, that carrot cake was so good!) **Sandra Pirghaibi** brought a cake in honor of her husband, **John**, who was celebrating his "39th" birthday and Art mentioned that, too, as well as extending our best wishes to John.

Doris and **Art Henzgen** spoke about the need to establish a memorial committee (volunteers would be most welcome on this committee and should contact the Henzgens) and Art read a lovely letter of thanks from **Elsie Shimamoto** who so much appreciated the Japanese maple that was planted in January in our Community Orchard in honor of her husband, **Richard**.

Joe Sabol, our Program Chair, took over in his usual dynamic manner and updated us on future programs (see information at the end of the newsletter) and also talked about the apple grafting program that would soon begin in the local high schools. He introduced **Marv Daniels**, the volunteer coordinator for the high school apple grafting classes, and he encouraged members who hadn't done so already to sign up as assistants for the popular event.

Joe then talked about the importance of safety in using grafting knives, giving as an example of "what not to do" a Cal Poly student who, only a week earlier, had cut herself while grafting. Her wound had required 13 stitches to close it! We were asked to raise our right hands and Joe led us in the safety pledge he gives to the high school grafting class students.

The many participants who had made the scion exchange possible were then thanked, especially the Cal Poly Crops Faculty, for the use of the facility, and the Cal Poly Ag students for selling fruit and fruit trees before our meeting. Joe also thanked the **Orange County Nursery** for donating some of the apple rootstock and scion wood that would be used by the grafting demonstrators, as well as **Bill Spencer** of Windrose Farms for his donations of more than a dozen apple varieties to the scion collection and to **Jan** and **Mike Pasenti** who brought scion wood from more than a dozen different fruit trees for the fifth year in a row.

At last **Roger Eberhardt**, our co-chair, introduced the guest speaker and grafter, **Todd Kennedy**, who had driven from the San Francisco area (where he grows moss and ferns) to talk to us about plant patents and show us his grafting technique. Todd is a respected attorney who began his program by giving us an overview of plant patents, trying, as he said, to keep a "ponderous" subject light.

According to Todd, although Congress had provided for the protection of inventions in the Constitution, plant patents are relatively new. Luther Burbank, who had developed over 800 plants through the years (200 of them were fruit varieties) lived and died in relative poverty, having little to show for his incredible success since others would take his plants and propagate them without his permission. He died in 1927. However, the Plant Patent Act passed by Congress on May 13, 1930 and signed by President Hoover on May 23, 1930 was enacted mainly because of Luther Burbank, due to the persistence of his friends like Henry Ford and Thomas Edison. Although still limited, it was meant to *"afford agriculture, so far as practicable, the same opportunity to participate in the benefits of the patent system as has been given to industry, and thus assist in placing agriculture on a basis of economic equality with industry."*

Todd discussed how the patent process works and noted that the length of a plant patent last for 20 years from the date it was applied for, with the application process usually taking three years. A patent allows the plant patent owner the right to exclude others from asexually reproducing the plant and from using, offering for sale, or selling the plant so reproduced. (Todd mentioned that roughly 1/3 of the scions that had been

brought for our exchange were patented materials!) He also talked about trademark protection (i.e.: Scarlet Sentinel is a Trademark name for a patented apple.)

Then, Todd began the second and more exciting (to most of us!) portion of his talk—his demonstration of his cleft grafting technique. Coming from four generations of California fruit growers, Todd says he prefers “budding” trees (a summer activity) over “grafting” trees, but that grafting is certainly an acceptable and successful way to propagate plants.

Beginning with his tool kit, Todd showed us what he uses with his method of grafting. The bucket he carries into the orchard includes two knives (one for paring and one for splitting), adhesive-free plastic tape, tree seal paint, a paint brush, a wooden mallet, clippers, labels, and, most importantly, two Band-Aids (one for each thumb to protect them from cuts)!



Taking a scion of about three buds length, Todd used his grafting knife to make a double bevel cut at the base to form a wedge. With his clippers, he cut his rootstock off about 6” above the soil line and used his larger knife and a wooden mallet to make a crack in the rootstock about 2” long. Then, he inserted the scion with the thicker side toward the outside with the cambium layers in contact, reminding us that the bark of the larger stock is thicker than the scion bark, so the scion should not be flush with the stock. A very slight tilt will assure a contact, at least where the cambium layers cross. (Pay attention to which direction the buds are pointing, too. A scion will not grow if inserted upside down!) So that the root stock doesn’t force the scion out while it tries to heal its “wound”, use adhesive-free plastic tape to bind the graft. Then, paint it with tree seal to cover exposed cuts. A rain coming shortly after the sealing process--before the paint is thoroughly dry--means repainting. Be sure to label your graft!

Todd repeated the process so we could see how fast it really can be once one is comfortable with the technique. He then fielded a few questions from the audience. (Yes, size does matter! Grafting a larger scion to smaller root stock is not a good idea as the rootstock can’t get enough nutrients to the scion.) We then went outside for further demonstrations of grafting techniques and more scion exchanges.

At tables that had been arranged in the parking lot, Todd answered questions about his cleft grafting method, while **Dick Pottratz**, **Gene Santos**, **Dave Christie**, and **Walter Thoma** all demonstrated other grafting techniques. Walter Thoma, a member of the **Central Valley Chapter CRFG**, came from Porterville with his “tree” to demonstrate his unique grafting method using a wood plane to make flattened points on both the scion and the rootstock before binding them together. He says his method nearly always “takes” and that is important to him as he eats a diet consisting of about 70 % fruit!

At another table, **Art DeKleine** demonstrated **my** kind of grafting technique! He used a tool that made a “puzzle piece” of both the scion and the branch it was being grafted to. The two pieces then “snapped” together and Art wrapped the graft with “Buddy Tape”--a special tape that allows the graft to breathe and even allows buds to grow through it. Like I said, it’s my kind of technique—no sharp knives or black sticky goop! Art gave away small pieces of the tape and he also had various sized sections of it for sale. I’m sure he still has some if you are interested. It’s amazing stuff!

Nearby, **Choung Crowe** and **Chuck Atlee** sold grafting knives. “She can sell anything,” Chuck said of Choung, mentioning that they’d sold 18 of the 20 knives already and Choung was out “pushing” the last two. **Marv Daniels**, at his station, was doing a “Marv-elous” job of sharpening tools, while **Lark Carter** and **Roger Eberhardt** managed the rootstock sales.

The weather was perfect, the demonstrators enthusiastic and well-informed, and the selection of scion wood was absolutely outstanding. Thanks again to all of you who brought scion wood! And, for those of

you who missed this meeting, you missed a great time. As Joe Sabol is so fond of saying, **“What fun it is to be a member of CRFG!”**

Stay Safe Out There!

Spring is in the air and many of you are making plans to work in your garden. But before you start thinking about what to plant and where, think **safety**.

Start by ensuring that you're not overexposed to the sun. This can be done by avoiding gardening during the midday, wearing a hat, and most importantly by wearing sunscreen. Take time to warm up with some slow stretches before beginning to prevent pulling a muscle. To avoid fatigue, take frequent breaks, drink plenty of water, and be realistic about tackling large tasks in a single day.

Clean, sturdy, sharp tools make gardening easier and safer. Even more important, is using those tools properly. When using long-handle tools, such as a rake or shovel, try to keep your back straight. Grip your tools lightly when working to avoid injury. Avoid continual bending over while you're standing. Instead, use a garden stool, or kneel, and keep your back protected when rising by straightening the legs and knees, not lifting your upper body from the waist. Rotate tasks to avoid staying in one position too long.

One of the most common gardening tasks that can result in injury is shoveling. To avoid injury, first, make sure the shovel's head is perpendicular to the ground when you are pushing in with your foot. If you cannot push with one foot, don't attempt jumping onto the shovel with both feet to drive the tip in; if the ground is this hard, get a backhoe or pry bar for the job!

Second, when lifting dirt out of the hole, don't grip close to the bottom of the shovel or too far at the end of the handle, because this causes strain on your back. Grip in the middle and continue the upward motion of lifting the dirt to throw it into a wheelbarrow or onto a tarp.

Third, should you encounter roots while digging, don't attempt to use your shovel as a pry bar. Instead, use the tip of the shovel as a chopping tool and cut cleanly through the root by turning the shovel around. As with any other gardening task, keep your back straight while shoveling.

Always wear gloves—they'll save you from many injuries! Kneepads are also a boon to gardening comfort. Keep your tools close at hand in a cart or wheelbarrow.

Keep these simple tips in mind and gardening should be easier and safer for you this spring, leaving your garden beautiful and you injury-free.

Community Orchard Update

Don't miss seeing **your** beautiful orchard in bloom; take time to enjoy the flowers—pack a picnic and bring a friend! (Be sure you have the gate lock combination, though, or you'll be viewing it from a distance.) Joe Sabol says there is no work to be done this time of year, but he does ask that if you visit the orchard to please sign the orchard record and note which trees are blooming on that day.

High School Grafting Project

Apple grafting at the local high schools was to begin on February 19, but the rootstock didn't arrive from Montana in time. Joe Sabol and Marv Daniels quickly reorganized the school schedules and let the volunteers know to stand-by! The program began with **Nipomo High School** on February 23.

Although I'd never done any grafting, I like working with teenagers, so I decided to volunteer to assist at Nipomo High School, which is a few miles from my house. Joe and Marv both assured me no previous experience was necessary! As a group, we were directed to sign-in at the office and then go to the Ag building where the teacher, Ms. Melissa Flory, waited for us.

Everything was well-organized and we began by getting some rootstock potted up before class was in session. The first class (shown below) was quite large—29 students—but they were amazingly attentive as we CRFG representatives were introduced and Dr. Joe began his informational talk. I watched the faces of the students—some of them started with a decidedly bored expression—begin to show interest in the project. The fact that they were to be trusted with knives really impressed some of them!

Dr. Joe's instructions were clear and well illustrated (teachers may retire, but their skills don't). After explaining and demonstrating what the students were to do once, he went over it a second time, and then the students were given their potted rootstock (from a semi-dwarf tree--#7) and a scion of a Gala apple cut from Dr. Joe's tree the evening before. The volunteers assisted the students with their grafts. Out of 29 trees, we only had three with "Australian" scions (you know, things in Australia grow upside down!) and those were quickly replaced with scions whose buds were properly growing **UP!** I heard quite a few of the students talking about how they wanted to buy "their" tree and take it home to plant. They were so pleased with themselves and the results of their labor.



The CRFG volunteers for the Nipomo High School classes were: Dr. Joe Sabol, Marv and Pet Daniels, Dorothy and Wally Seelos, Art Henzgen, Reo Cordes, Bob Tulloch, Patti Schober, Carolyn Jones, Hal Tuchinsky, and Lennette Horton. We were also aided by non-member, Bruce Dykstra, of Santa Maria who is taking the Master Gardener course and learned of our grafting project from Patti. Everyone agreed it was an informative time for us, too, and we all thoroughly enjoyed the experience. If you haven't signed up to assist at one of the high schools yet, it's not too late. The program goes through **March 12**. Contact the grafting volunteer recruiter, **Marv Daniels**, at marvnpet@aol.com or phone him at **(805) 773-9311**.

Organic Advantage Trials

By David Maislen

At the March 13th meeting 25 members will have the opportunity to sign up to participate in the free trials of Organic Advantage. This is a fertilizer that is called "The Perfect Balance of Nature & Science". More information on the product can be found at www.humatech.com. Each participant must be a member of CRFG and be receiving "The Fruit Gardener" magazine.

Participants will receive two gallons of Organic Advantage having a retail value of \$39.98 plus tax. There will be no charge for the fertilizer, however, each participant must agree and ultimately provide written documentation of its use and outcome on specific trials forms that will be provided or downloaded. You also must be willing to allow Humatech to use the written information that you provide in future advertising if they so choose. Please understand before you ever sign up that you **MUST** provide the completed feedback forms at the end of the trials. If you sign up and fail to turn in the feedback forms, you will have to pay for the product which will be \$42.88. The object here is **NOT** to collect a single dime, but to have 100% participation with completed trial forms. If you turn in the completed feedback forms there is no charge for the product.

Jonathan Matteson of Humatech will give a brief informational talk at the beginning of the meeting on March 13th and will be available afterwards to further discuss the product and provide participants with their liquid fertilizer. Trials are open to the first twenty-five CRFG members who sign up by return e-mail to

dmaislen@charter.net . If you are not currently a member of CRFG you may sign up by joining the organization and then e-mailing me your name. This is a great opportunity to try state-of-the-art liquid fertilizer on your plants and trees. I will assemble the participant's list and a waiting list if necessary and look forward to your enjoyment of the product and good quality feedback.

Meet Your Board Members

Joe Sabol
Program Chair



Even after spending 30 years at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo in the Agriculture Education Department, Dr. Joe Sabol, our lively Program Chairman, maintains that he still isn't an expert in the field of agriculture and that the reason he so enjoys being part of CRFG is that he keeps learning!

Joe's love of growing things began early as he followed in the footsteps of his father who was a "fantastic" gardener. "As a kid, I always had a small vegetable garden," says Joe. "I joined the 4-H at a very early age and it grew from there. My major in college the first two years was not crop science...it was ANIMAL HUSBANDRY!!!"

Joe and his wife, Jill, who have been married for 38 years, moved to "Sabol's Acre", about three miles from Cal Poly, 32 years ago. They raised their two sons there. Now the center of their attention, if their grandson isn't visiting from Riverside, is on their miniature dachshund, Throckmorton. "Throckie", who isn't as big as his name, is Joe's constant gardening buddy. With Joe's retirement from Cal Poly in 2001, the Sabols have more time to enjoy traveling--Joe can really utilize his second passion of photography then--and in the pursuit of raising perfect dahlias. Dahlias are salt sensitive and their well has hard water, so Joe has built a 5000 gallon rainwater collection system to water his plants that are intolerant of the minerals in the well water. His current "retirement" project is building a greenhouse. Jill and Joe also raise many varieties of fruit on their acre of Eden, which they enjoy sharing with their church and friends.

Ten years ago, Joe attended the first organizational meeting of the Central Coast Chapter of the CRFG and he has been a member since then. As a teacher, Associate Dean (5-6 years), and Dean (1-year) at Cal-Poly, Joe has many former students who are now teachers themselves. About six years ago, through those acquaintances, he began an apple grafting program with various high schools. The program has now spread state-wide and Joe feels it is a wonderful contribution to agriculture. The students love being able to make something valuable from a little twig and root. They are fascinated when he tells them that he has one apple tree grafted with more than 60 varieties of apples!

Besides coordinating our interesting meetings, Joe is a member of the CRFG State Board where he attends meetings quarterly. He is quite active there, too, as the CRFG organization faces some serious challenges right now. However, Joe is most proud of his involvement in our Community Orchard. He feels it is a wonderful partnership between Cal Poly and our chapter because it allows the ability for demonstration, experimentation, and growing with an influence that goes home to a person's own backyard.

Announcements

Welcome New Members: Paul Berdoulay, Carie Kedrick, Michelle Kong, Henry Mulder, Harry Toy, and Owen & Patricia Baynham.

Thank You: Rachel Rosenthal, a new CRFG member, had a surplus wheelbarrow wheel and tire. She learned at the January meeting that we needed them on our orchard wheelbarrow and she kindly donated hers. Joe Sabol took them to **Paul Moyer**, a machinist and member of CRFG, who bored out a pipe on his lathe and cut it to make the spacer bushings necessary to center the wheel on the axle. Paul did an

excellent job! Thanks to Paul and Rachel, we now have a working wheelbarrow just waiting for volunteers to use at the orchard.

Cal Poly Produce: Cal Poly Organic Farm's fifth annual CSA (Community Supported Agriculture Program) will begin on May 3rd. Members receive a weekly assortment of unique, fresh produce grown and harvested by Cal Poly students throughout a 26 week season (concluding at the end of October). This is a great way to form a connection to where your food is grown, and to support education in organic agriculture at the same time! Produce pick-up occurs Monday or Thursday afternoons. Membership for the season costs \$520 and includes a weekly newsletter and invitations to special farm events. To register or request more information, please contact Michael Silverman at 756-6139 or msilvermsd@lycos.com.

Cuesta College Online Class: Growing Plants for Fun and Profit. You can learn how to grow and market plants on a small scale without a major capital investment. For only \$79, instructors Michael and Linda Harlan will show you how, in an area as small as 1000 sq. ft., you can generate thousands of dollars worth of plant material in a single growing season. The first course is March 17-April 21 and the second is April 21-May 26. The Harlans began a backyard nursery on half-an-acre that grew into a successful 12-year business venture, so if you want to turn your love of plants into a profitable enterprise, this is the course for you. Register at: www.communityprograms.net

Join the State Association: Many of our chapter members are also members of the State association and those who aren't should consider joining. With state membership you receive a wonderful color magazine, *The Fruit Gardener*, filled with great articles on fruit growing, news, chapter activities and contacts. Yearly dues are \$30 as of January 2004. Applications are available from **Joe Sabol**. (Gregory Flick, **Redwood Empire Chapter** Chair, said that they signed up 80 new State CRFG members at their January Scion Exchange and Pruning Meeting! Good job!)

Local Chapter Fees Due through March (If your name is listed here, please send your check for \$6 (or for \$25 which will get you five years of membership and save you \$5!) to **CRFG Treasurer**, 2430 Leona Avenue, SLO, CA 93401. Our dues are "dirt cheap" and you get so much fun and great information for the price! I'm sure you won't want to miss an issue of this newsletter, either, so please don't delay! Get that check in the mail today! **Alberts**, Evelyn; **Ananda**, Shachi; **Blayney**, Tammy; **Byrd**, Tom; **Cordes**, Reo; **DeVries**, Dorothy; **Earl**, Larry; **Francis**, Hunter; **Frey**, Norma; **Furtick**, Bill & Anne; **Galbraith**, Brian & Cathy; **Green**, Charlotte; **Henderson**, Kay; **Hollis**, Larry; **Jamison**, Mary; **Malatesta**, Joe; **Meyer**, Father Albert; **Middlecamp**, Betty; **Muran**, Tom; **Nishida**, Ronald; **Odenbrett**, Rev. Stephen; **Openshaw**, Dale; **Pellemeier**, Sheree; **Philbin**, D. K.; **Rego**, Liesa; **Robbins**, Gabrielle; **Russ**, Harold & Marie; **Sabol**, Joe; **Santoyo**, Larry; **Scarbouough**, Eunice W.; **Seeley**, Linda; **Selkirk**, Shirley; **Shaw**, George; **Tuchinsky**, Hal; and **Walcher**, Mary M.

Calendar of Meetings - 2004

March 13: The home of Kit and John Long. Kit is an avid Cymbidium collector--she will show us her Cymbidiums, give us tips on growing these beauties, and demonstrate her special transplanting techniques. There will be a plant raffle in their driveway, so please bring a quality plant for this event. Leave your raffle plant in the front yard and go to the back yard for the meeting. Kit and John live at 657 Rancho Drive in SLO. Everyone should bring their own chairs. Since this meeting is in a residential neighborhood, it is especially important to carpool. Refreshments: **R** through **Z**

April 10: Paso Robles to Trees of Antiquity. We'll travel to Paso Robles for this meeting where we will visit Trees of Antiquity, a commercial nursery with 3-year-old plantings of heirloom fruit trees. The owners took over the Sonoma Antique Apple Nursery and moved it south to Paso Robles. Check their website at www.treesofantiquity.com. Our host will be Tom Linden. Refreshments: **A** through **H**

May 8: Mission Avocados at Cal Poly. We will tour this significant new planting of avocados, a unique partnership between Cal Poly and Mission Produce. Mr. Chris Rhoades will give us a guided tour. More details and a map will follow. Refreshments: **I** through **Q**

June 12: Willow Creek Olive Ranch in Paso Robles. This family-owned and operated olive ranch of 45 acres has an olive press operation that we will see and we will also be treated to an olive oil tasting session. Our contact there is Joeli Yaguda. Please bring chairs to this meeting. Refreshments: **R** through **Z**

Festival of Fruit: June 18, 19, 20 at Cal Poly Pomona Bronco Student Center - 3801 W. Temple Ave. Pomona for the Festival of Fruit, celebrating the “**Year of the Berry**”. Let’s all go! See the CRFG website or Joe Sabol for sign-up!

July 10: John Swift’s Place. John is a long time CRFG friend who lives in Cark Canyon, near Los Osos. He grows “rare fruit” for a living! He is an expert at growing a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. His specialty is Feijoa. He recently was featured in a story in the SLO Tribune! More details to follow. Refreshments: A through H

Program Ideas for 2004: If you have program ideas for 2004, please call **Joe Sabol** at **544-1056** or talk to any chapter officer.