

The Leaflett

California Rare Fruit Growers - Central Coast Chapter Newsletter
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2006 – The Year of the Healthful Grape

April Meeting

Seventy-five lavender aficionados gathered for our April meeting held at the Green Acres Lavender Farm in Atascadero owned by Janice and Bob Silva. A brief business meeting was followed by an interesting and informative talk by the farm owners. They mentioned that they are the largest growers and distillers of lavender in San Luis Obispo County with over 12,000 plants thriving on their 4 ½ acre parcel.

Although they cultivate several varieties of lavender, the majority of their planting is Grosso because it has the highest oil producing qualities and is very tolerant of the cold winters and hot summers associated with Atascadero. They mentioned that lavender is a near perfect plant to grow in the area—it needs very little care and actually dislikes rich soil and too much water.



by Joe Sabol.)

Using a low-pressure copper steam distiller, the Silva's process only the **buds** of their plants to produce oil. This results in very high quality oil that is 100% organic. They sell the pure oil as well as other products made from the oil, such as lavender water, body oil, soap, and also use it for scenting soy candles. They sell buds for cooking and making lavender bags, too. One can even purchase lavender plants in 1-gallon containers from them so any garden can have the scent of Provence (or Atascadero)!

Perhaps the Crowes (Forest, John, and Choung) are planning their new lavender garden here! (Photo taken

Festival of Fruit 2006

This event promises to be spectacular! If you have access to a computer, visit our website for the latest updates on events and speakers: http://www.crfg-central.org/2006_Festival/festival_2006_home.htm. It

isn't too late to join in—meetings are held at the **Pismo Prime Outlet** on **Monday, May 15**, and **Tuesday, June 13**, and **July 11**, from 5 pm to 8 pm.

See Art DeKleine's list in last month's newsletter if you are soliciting contributions (of money, plants, food, gifts, memorabilia, etc.) for the 2006 Festival. Every contribution helps!

The CRFG Development Fund has received check for \$2000 from the Dole Food Company. The donation is to offset the expenses of bringing to California, Markku Hakkinen, a researcher at Helsinki University Botanic Gardens. Specifically this will permit CRFG to feature Mr. Hakkinen at the Festival of Fruits. Edgar Valdivia was the key individual in establishing the relationship with Dole that resulted in this donation. We anticipate that this \$2000 will cover all his expenses!

Community Orchard News

On Palm Sunday morning, 15 dedicated CRFG Members came to Cal Poly at 8:30 a.m. to plant 14 new fruit trees in the CRFG Demonstration Orchard! The trees were donated by Steve Veyna of the Orange County Nursery, a major wholesale nursery in Visalia and Southern California. The trees were all bare root, low chill fruit trees. We now have three new apricot varieties, two new Asian Pears, four new peaches, three new persimmons, and two new plums. Our orchard is now FULL!



Joe Sabol gave the planting demonstration and attempted to supervise the planting! Each of members planted one tree, watered it, and then pruned it. We encouraged each of them to take responsibility for pruning their young tree for the first few years so they can see the new "framework" come to life and bear fruit. A good time was had by all. (Photo of planting crew above was taken by Joe Sabol.)

We also did some badly needed fruit thinning of the other trees in the orchard. There is much more thinning to be done and members are encouraged to go to the orchard and thin the peaches and nectarines to a spacing of 4-6 inches between fruit.

Those dedicated volunteers who planted a tree included:

Owen Baynham - Apricot - Flavor Giant
 Dave Christie - Apricot - Gold Kist
 Mark Woelfle - Apricot - Katy
 Billy Mounts - Asian Pear - Tsu Li
 Liz Helgerson - Asian Pear- Ya Li
 Mark Woelfle - Peach - Santa Barbara
 Ruth Mounts - Peach - Tropic Snow
 Mei Hoh – Peach - Unknown variety
 Pet Daniels – Persimmon - Chocolate
 Sandy Ahearn – Persimmon - Fuyu
 Don and Marlene Jeung – Persimmon – Giant Fuyu

Ron Helgerson - Plum - Beauty
 Marv Daniels - Plum - Persian Red
 Richard Phillips – Peach - Ventura

CRFG Orchard/Cal Poly

Fruit Thinning
 Sunday, May 7, 2006
 9:00 - 11:00 AM
 Free Parking
 Bring your hand pruners

RSVP

Marv/Pet Daniels marvnpet@aol.com or 773-9311

Local Rare Fruit of the Month—May—Macadamia Nut

By Norman Beard



Macadamia nuts were first introduced to the United States from Australia. The two most popular types that grow well in our area are Beaumont and Wonderful. (Photo of Norman's heavily laden tree taken by Joe Sabol.)

Many people ask me how to crack the nut! Here's what I do. First, I cut a piece of exterior 5/8" plywood approximately 15 inches square, then lay a yardstick on the plywood and make a grid outline with a pencil. At each intersection of the lines, I drill a 3/4" hole. This allows me to lay the board on a newspaper on top of my concrete driveway. I fill each hole with a

nut, after the husk is removed. Then I take a sledge hammer and just pound lightly--like I would use a potato masher. The "goody" will come out nice, not broken up. Separate it from the shell for roasting or storage.

It is best to start out with a 15 gallon tree; otherwise you will wait several years for production. Choose a sunny area for your tree. When planting, dig an extra large hole and add lots of good mulch with good nutrients. Water and fertilizer as you would any other tree. The trees don't seem to have many pests that bother them, except ground squirrels and rats. You have to harvest the nuts before they arrive!

Macadamia nuts are very good roasted and covered with chocolate or used in muffins or banana bread.

(My friend, Linda, and her husband owned a 10-acre macadamia nut orchard on the island of Maui. I was part of a writing group that met every other week and I loved it when we went to Linda's house because she would often make the following muffins. Lennette)

Linda's Maui Muffins

Ingredients:

1/2 cup butter
 1 cup dark brown sugar
 28 pineapple pieces, fresh or unsweetened canned (approximately 1 cup)
 1 1/4 cup coarsely chopped macadamia nuts
 1 1/2 cup flour
 1/2 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
 2 tsp. baking powder
 1 1/2 tsp. grated orange peel
 1 tsp. cinnamon
 1/4 tsp. salt
 1/2 cup milk
 1/2 cup butter, melted and cooled slightly
 2 eggs, beaten

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Grease a 12-cup muffin tin with cooking spray. On stove or in microwave melt butter until bubbly. Add brown sugar and cook until sugar and butter are well combined. Divide mixture evenly between muffin cups. Place four pineapple pieces in butter/sugar mixture in the bottom of each muffin cup and sprinkle 1 Tbs. coarsely chopped macadamia nuts over the pineapple.

In large mixing bowl combine dry ingredients. In separate bowl, beat eggs together with melted butter and milk. Mix wet and dry ingredients until just combined. Divide batter evenly between muffin cups on top of pineapple and macadamia nuts.

Bake for 25 minutes or until tester inserted in center comes out clean. Immediately invert onto warming rack, removing muffin tin carefully. (If some of the pineapple pieces stay in the tin, you can remove them and place them on top of the muffins again.)

Allow muffins to cool for 5 minutes before serving. Serve upside-down.

Norman Beard sent the following recipe using our rare fruit feature for April:

WHITE SAPOTE CRUMB SQUARES

1 Cup of Flour
 1 Cup of brown sugar, packed
 1/2 Cup of butter or margarine
 1 Teaspoon of ground cinnamon
 3 Cups of Sapote pulp

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a bowl mix flour, brown sugar, butter and cinnamon until crumbly.

Oil an 8-inch baking dish. Arrange half the fruit in bottom, and spread half of crumb mixture on top. Pour on the remaining fruit and top with the remaining crumb mixture. Bake 40 minutes.

This recipe makes one dozen squares.

If you don't have a white Sapote tree and you want one, Norm has beautiful, grafted Sue Belles in 5-gallon containers for \$35.

Bob Tullock Receives SLO Rotary Club Award



On April 24, our co-chair, Bob Tullock was recognized by the San Luis Obispo Rotary Club for his outstanding leadership abilities. (The photo of Bob was taken at the April meeting, not at the recognition dinner!) Here's what Bob's colleague, Joe Sabol, had to say in his congratulatory letter to Bob.

"The SLO Rotary Club has a very nice "Urban/Rural" BBQ dinner event every year and they take time to recognize leaders in the agriculture community. I am confident the SLO Farm Bureau submitted your name as one deserving of special recognition!!!

Yes, Bob Tullock, YOU were recognized tonight...

And Blanche Camino accepted your award and told the 120 members of the audience what a super star hero you are!!! Could you hear the audience applaud? Many of your CRFG Friends were there, proud of you!!!

Congratulations Bob Tullock!!!!"

Ambassadors of Happiness

This is a photo of Marv and Pet Daniels and Norm Beard at the Vender's Booth at the Santa Maria Home Show on April 1 and 2. "We had a good show with lots of very nice plants and trees, including a Sue Belle White Sapote!" said Pet.

"The booth was to promote membership for both the Central Coast Chapter and the Ventura/Santa Barbara Chapter of CRFG. Sometimes the show goes take a while to make up their minds to come to our meetings, but often they come out of curiosity and a few join us and are very happy they did!"



Announcements

Welcome to Our New Chapter Colleagues: Janice Silva, Sande Adkins, Charlotte and Jack Preston, Tom Lipp, and David Blakely.

Join the Parent Organization: Many of our chapter colleagues are members of the Parent association and, for those of you who aren't, perhaps you **should** consider joining. With parent organization membership you receive a wonderful color magazine, *The Fruit Gardener*, filled with great articles on fruit growing, news, many chapter activities and contacts. Dues are **\$30 annually** or **3 years for \$87**. Membership applications are available from **Joe Sabol**. Call him at **544-1056** if you can't find him at a meeting.

Calendar of Meetings – 2006

Meetings are held the **second Saturday** of the month and begin at **1:30 PM** unless otherwise indicated. Bring a friend, car pool, and, for most meetings, **bring a chair** for all in your party. Pet Daniels suggests we bring our own bottled water to drink, too. What fun it is to be a member of CRFG!

May 13—Bob Simola's Fruit Garden—Bob has a half-acre vineyard and a new two-acre olive grove as well as a very diverse fruit orchard with many of the deciduous fruit trees that grow well in the Templeton area. He also has some interesting figs and feijoas as well! We will focus on the practices and needs of fruit thinning! Bob will leave lots of clusters/small fruit on several trees to demonstrate this important step. Don't forget to bring your chairs and wear a hat! The sun has to shine one of these days! **Refreshments will be provided by the S through Z team.**

Directions to the Bob Simola Home and Orchard: From the northbound 101, exit to Templeton on Vineyard, go right on Vineyard. Vineyard quickly becomes Templeton Road. Stay on Templeton Road which becomes El Pomar. Stay on El Pomar for 2.6 miles then make a left turn on Neal Springs Road and go 1.4 miles to Bob's place, 1755 Neal Springs Rd. 238-1290

June 10—Wildwood in Arroyo Grande—Jane and George Roach will host. **This meeting starts early!** We will begin at **NOON**, with a BBQ lunch. We will enjoy a practical and memorable "Orchard Development" planning session for a community orchard on a north facing hillside! Details and directions will follow. Do not miss this meeting! No refreshments necessary.

July 8—The Nurses' Pistachio Orchard—Creston/Paso Robles: Three nurses own and operate this fascinating orchard with 2,200 organically farmed pistachio trees! Bring chairs and wear a hat. Details and map will be provided in the June Newsletter. **Refreshments will be provided by the A through G team.**

August 12—Dave Wilson Fruit Tasting—Cal Poly: This has been a **wildly** popular event that we weren't able to host in 2005. (Yes, I **do** mean "wildly". Have you ever seen fruit enthusiasts high on fructose?) Note that this is less than one month before we host the Festival of Fruit. **Your** assistance is not only requested, it is **NEEDED!** No business meeting and no refreshments necessary—we'll be slicing and serving lots of delicious fruit. This event is open to the public.

Central Coast Chapter CRFG Contact Information: Art DeKleine, co-chair, adeklein@calpoly.edu or 543-9455; Bob Tullock, co-chair, tullock@tcsn.net or 238-2868; Joe Sabol, program chair, jsabol@calpoly.edu or 544-1056; Dick Pottratz, treasurer, pottratz@sbcglobal.net; or Lennette Horton, newsletter editor, handynana@gmail.com or 474-6501.