

# The Leaflett

California Rare Fruit Growers - Central Coast Chapter Newsletter  
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## 2007 – The Year of the Mango

***Mangifera indica***

***Anacardiaceae***



Mango is considered to be the “queen of fruits” in tropical areas of the world and, as tropical fruits go, it is rather more forgiving than some others in being successfully grown in cooler climates. Winter temperature is a major consideration as leaves and twigs, especially on younger trees, can be damaged at temperatures below 30 degrees. Flowering and fruiting are seriously affected at temperatures below 40 degrees during bloom. There is no apparent difference in cold hardiness among varieties.

There are two principal types of mangos: Indian and Indochinese. Varieties of the Indian type typically have monoembryonic (single embryo) seeds, highly colored fruit and are subject to anthracnose disease. The Indochinese type have polyembryonic seeds (multiple embryos), and fruit is usually lacking in coloration, but they may have some resistance to anthracnose. There are some varieties that do not fit definitely into either group.

Polyembryonic types generally come true from seed, which is the common method of propagation in the tropics. Monoembryonic types do not come true from seed, so they must be grafted onto seedling rootstocks, using almost any available mango seeds.

The fibrous stone or pit should be removed from the seed. The seed should be planted concave edge down and about 1 inch deep in any good potting soil. Germination may take two to three weeks; seedlings big enough to graft (about ¼ inch diameter) take about six months.

Veneer or side veneer grafting and chip budding are the most successful methods of propagation. Most propagation occurs in winter, using rootstocks grown from the previous summer's production. Cleft grafting is also practiced.

Because of frequent freezes in our area, mango trees will not achieve maximum size, so they can easily be spaced 12 to 15 feet from each other or other trees.

Trees are normally grown in containers of soil-less media, so when planting them in the ground, much of the outer layer of media should be washed off the sides and top of the root ball immediately prior to setting the tree in the ground. This practice exposes the outer part of the root system to the actual soil in which the tree must grow, thereby enhancing tree establishment. Newly planted trees should be staked for support for the first year.

Build a water ring several inches high and thick atop the soil around the tree. The ring should be a little wider than the planting hole--take soil from elsewhere in the yard if there's not enough left over from planting. Fill the basin with water--after it soaks in, more soil may be needed to fill in holes made as it settles around the root system.

Even if you never get much fruit, the tree is beautiful with its glossy green leaves. Give it a try!

## CRFG Contributes to SLOBG

By Art DeKleine



At our March meeting, Liz Scott-Graham gave a tour of the new energy-efficient straw-bale-insulated Education Center at the San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, followed by an inspiring presentation on the big-Big-HUGE vision for the Garden. Docents lead tours of the Garden followed the presentation. (Photo at right by Joe Sabol shows some of the more than 65 people that showed up for this fascinating tour.)

Dick Pottratz suggested that our Chapter make a \$250 donation to the Garden to

support a needed project. A quick positive response was made by queried Board members. I (Art DeKleine) agreed to deliver the check. Liz pointed out that the wastewater treatment project was the top priority at the moment. \$250,000 is needed for the project and \$50,000

remains to be collected – as soon as possible – if the building is to be open for public use this fall!

The Education Center is oriented and designed to be sun-tempered, climate-responsive, and light-efficient. Water conservation and using water run-off are part of the design.

To open the building a wastewater treatment system must be in place first. In keeping with the high environmental standards being applied to this project, an environmentally sensitive system will be incorporated. It will utilize three alternative waste treatment systems. It will contain a series of ponds with valuable wetland habitat for native plants and animals.

The photo shows Liz holding the CRFG contribution in a junk filled area that will soon become the treatment area and wetlands. Two hundred more contributions equivalent to ours will make the waste water project a reality!

SLO Botanical Garden is located approximately 4.5 miles northwest of San Luis Obispo off Highway 1 adjacent to El Chorro Regional Park, across from Cuesta College. It is a peaceful, interesting, and educational place to visit. There are selected Saturday Docent tours and garden-related programs. See [www.SLOBG.org](http://www.SLOBG.org) for details. Each CRFG member can be proud to have made a small contribution to this outstanding project!



## Bob Asbell's Beautiful Orchids and Low-Chill Fruit



Neither snow, nor rain, nor gloom of night--well, at least threat of rain—keeps us enthusiastic Central Coast Chapter Members from our appointed meeting place! Even though showers were expected, as Joe Sabol says, “There are no wimps in CRFG!” Over 90 people showed up, most with umbrellas and rain gear, to listen to Bob Asbell explain his “hobby” turned business. (Photo of the stalwart crowd was taken by Ron Blakey!)

Many people brought \$5 and bought a symbol of peace--a nice olive tree from Tom Burchell—some of the very same kind we sent to Iraq. Several people brought their check for \$30 to join or extend membership in CRFG and received a free Pluot tree.



After a brief business meeting, Bob Asbell jumped right into his explanation of his choice of what type of orchids he had chosen to grow. He stated he didn't want to grow orchids in a greenhouse, so he chose Cymbidiums. He explained that a mature plant will tolerate temperatures down to 30 degrees F before needing protection and they will take temperatures into the 100's as long as humidity

is provided. They are perfect for growing outdoors in our area. They are especially well suited for growing on a patio or covered porch where they get bright, but indirect light. While Bob grows his plants in a mixture of two sizes of fir bark and sand, he maintains they will grow in a variety of media—as long as it is well drained. They need regular, light fertilization and they need to be re-potted when the plant reaches the edge of the container.

Bob explained how he develops a new orchid and the long procedure from pollination to bloom—a process that takes nearly eight years! It is amazing that these beautiful plants aren't more costly! (Photo of Bob above and orchid below was taken by Ron Blakey.)

We were also given a tour of the “covered house” where the blooming plants are kept so that their blossoms aren't damaged by wind and rain. Bob sells his orchids mostly at local orchid shows, but one of his best sales venues is the Tulare Country Farm Equipment Show—an exhibition he encourages everyone to attend!

Bob is an articulate and interesting speaker who also shared with us his low-chill fruit finding efforts! He was very open to hearing the experiences of others who have his same love for stone fruit.



## PEST ALERT



Beth Grafton-Cardwell, Director of the Lindcove Research and Extension Center in Exeter has sent out the following warning: “Light Brown Apple Moth is a pest from Australia that was found this week in the Bay Area (March 2007). It is a serious pest of citrus and other crops.”

Light brown apple moth, *Epiphyas postvittana*, is a pest of economic importance in many fruit crops in Australia, including apple, apricot, citrus and grape crops. In citrus, the moth causes fruit drop and a ‘halo’ type scar around the stem end of the fruit.

The moth’s eggs are pale green and are laid in flat, overlapping masses that resemble fish scales. The preferred egg-laying sites in citrus are the leaves, although eggs can occasionally be found on fruit and young stems.

After hatching, the larva passes through six stages, reaching a maximal size of about 18 mm before pupating. Young larvae are pale yellow-green, while the mature larvae are pale green. Larvae of all ages construct silken shelters at the feeding site. When disturbed, the larva will wriggle vigorously backwards. Adults are light brown and appear bell-shaped. Female moths have a wingspan of about 18 mm, but male moths are much smaller. Female moths can also be distinguished by the presence of a dark spot in the centre-front of the folded wings. Males have a dark band across their folded wings. Keep your eyes out for these pests!



## ANTS IN PANTS

My brother-in-law sent me an e-mail recently with “**Ants in Pants**” as the subject line. He asked me to send him the info on an easy, non-toxic ant bait station I’d told him about some time ago. I did so, then thought it was such good information, it bore repeating—so here it is for those of you who are newer to our group, or who just need reminding of a great way to keep those pesky ants out of your garden—and your pants!

**Question:** Help! The ants are taking over my garden. Is there any safe (non-toxic) way to get rid of them? (The spray I used doesn’t work for long anyway!)



**Answer:** Next to gophers, ants are the major nuisance in our garden, too. They "farm" aphids and scale on many of our plants. We have smashed, sprayed and poisoned ant hills without any long term effect. So when a workshop on Ant Entomology was offered at the **Festival of Fruit** in Riverside, I checked it out. I learned that a liquid bait delivery system made from PVC pipe and filled with water, sugar and boric acid would work in eliminating the ants and their nests without harming beneficial insects. We have made and tested

several bait stations and placed them where we had an ant problem. It takes a while for the ants to start taking the bait back to their nest, but in a short time, we see that they are gone and it seems to work long-term.

**BAIT STATION:** Take 1" PVC cut into 6" lengths and drill a 1/4" hole in the center (at 3"). Drill two 3/16" holes at 3/4" center on both sides of center hole. The holes should be in a straight row on the pipe.

**BAIT SOLUTION:** 32 oz. warm water, 9 oz. sugar (dissolved in water), and 1 teaspoon boric acid (we make a batch and store extra in a 1/2 gal. bottle). Place a 1" PVC end cap on one end. Cover the holes with one hand and fill pipe with bait liquid, tap on other end cap and place, with the holes up, wherever you have ants. Replenish with new bait as needed. Good luck! **Robert and Carol Scott**

## **The Absolutely Final 2007 Apple Grafting Report**

By Joe Sabol

Our chapter bought 3,300 apple roots this year, all from Lawyer Nursery in Montana! We sent 640 of them to our friends in the L.A. Chapter and they grafted apple roots at six schools in Southern California. We sold 250 of them to our own CRFG chapter members. That means we sold (for \$1.10 each) the rest--over 2400--to local high schools, middle schools, Achievement House, and Cal Poly!

Our Grafting Team (made up of Chapter volunteers) went to 23 schools! This includes two Cal Poly Fruit Science Labs (one cut finger) and a private school in Paso Robles! One of the highlights of the year was our grafting with the Grizzly Academy. We grafted 50 trees with these young men and women and they take them home during the spring break. The total

number of CRFG Volunteers was over 30 different individuals this year. They were joined in the grafting effort by about 20 Cal Poly students who were in a Fruit Science Class, taught by Dr. Lauren Garner. We even had three faculty/staff volunteers from Cal Poly: Dr. Wendy Warner, Assistant Professor of Agricultural Education and Communication, Dr. Lauren Garner and Launnie Ginn of the Crop Science Department.

We did not keep track of the number of students grafting, but we estimate there was probably an average of 60 per school so, 60 times 22 is over 1300 students! There were fewer than five students this year that were cut and those needed only a band aid.

The students who were cut were not following directions! We do not tolerate unsafe behavior and were very disappointed with these injuries this year—the most ever!



Nearly all of the students will take a grafted tree home and plant it! (Shown in photo above which was taken by Joe Sabol, is a Grizzly Academy Female Class holding their trees.)



Many of the schools invited their administrators, counselors, or science teachers out to watch and participate in the grafting! Five of the schools provided our team with a nice lunch! The Ag Ed Department donated the use of the Cal Poly van and we made trips to the north to Gonzales and Soledad and south to Lompoc and Santa Ynez.

Thank you Apple Grafting Team for all your super efforts,

dedication, and inspiration! Hundreds of students will never forget the time you spent with them, helping them to perform the magic! Every time they eat an apple from their tree, they will remember the special day when we came to their classroom!

What fun it is to be a member of CRFG and the Apple Grafting Team! (Photo on bottom of the preceding page, taken by Joe Sabol, was of the Team in Gonzales! See those smiles? This could be you next year!)

## **Santa Maria Home Show**

Thanks to Marvin & Pet Daniels, Ben Middleton, Ron Blakey, Lach MacDonald, and Karen Reinecke, for helping Norman Beard maintain the CRFG Plant Sales Booth at the Santa Maria Home & Garden Show. The show was very successful! The show attendees had plenty of questions to ask those CRFG members. The question asked most was; "Do you think my plant will die from the cold spell?" We advised them to use judicious pruning and to protect their damaged plant from sunburn by painting white latex paint 50/50 with water on the stem/trunk.

Norman Beard

## **What Should You Eat?**

25 March 2007: BLACKBERRIES MAY BE HEALTHIEST FOOD. What's the single best food to keep on hand in your healthy kitchen? It just might be blackberries, which will be coming into season soon in much of the country. Research published in the July, 2006, issue of the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition ranked blackberries as far and away the most antioxidant-rich food (on the basis of a typical single serving) out of 1,113 types tested. Next in line were walnuts - which had about 40 percent fewer antioxidants than blackberries - followed by strawberries, artichokes, cranberries, coffee, raspberries, pecans, blueberries and ground cloves.

26 March 2007: DRIED TART CHERRIES MAY TOP ANTIOXIDANT LIST. Among the many flavonoids found in plant foods, anthocyanins possess the greatest antioxidant power. Tart cherries contain more anthocyanins than most fruits and contain two to three times more than sweet cherries do (Kim 2005, Chandra 1992).

You may ask, "What about blueberries?" Blueberries possess a very high antioxidant count, but they are beat by prunes, raisins, dark chocolate, pomegranates, and açai.

And we're not talking about fresh tart cherries, which approximate the antioxidant capacity of blueberries, but dried tart cherries, in which the antioxidants are super-concentrated, along with every other constituent in the fruit...

6 April 2007: STUDY SHOWS ARTICHOKE HAVE MORE ANTIOXIDANTS THAN MOST COMMONLY EATEN FOODS. A study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition

found artichokes have more antioxidants than all other vegetables and were fourth in antioxidant content out of all food and beverages tested.

So what should you eat? Seems like the “experts” come up with something new every day. Personally, I think that “health” is just the slowest possible rate at which one can die. Not only that, ever since I read that more people die of natural causes than any other way, I’ve given up natural food!

## **Announcements**

**Welcome New Members:** Brent LaMon, Glenda L. Guiton, Tony L. Duenas, and Tony Boyd.

**More on the Olive Trees for Peace:** <http://calpolynews.calpoly.edu/magazine/spring-07/olive.html>

**New Historian:** We have a new Chapter Historian. Mary Giambalvo has kindly taken over the job from Barbara Mathews. You can contact Mary at [mgiambalvo@earthlink.net](mailto:mgiambalvo@earthlink.net) with any information or photos you may have on Chapter events.

**Blueberry and Blackberry Informational Meetings:** The UC Small Farm Center and the USDA Risk Management Agency are holding Blueberry Field Day and Tasting on Wednesday, May 16, at the Kearney Agriculture Research and Extension Center in Parlier. The event begins at 8:15 AM. The following day, there will be a Blackberry Field Day and Testing. Contact Mary at 559-685-3303 for more information.

**Join the Parent Organization:** Many of our chapter members are also 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 – 2007**

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 12—BLUEBERRY MEETING—Cal Poly Crops Unit:** You and your guests are invited to learn all about growing blueberries! We’ll meet in building 17, at the Cal Poly Crops Unit. Parking permits are not required on Saturday. The meeting starts at 1:30 PM with a short business meeting followed by a program presented by Dr. Mark Gaskell, U.C. Cooperative

Extension Advisor for Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties. Dr. Gaskell has an extensive planting of blueberries (over 25 varieties) on the campus and will give a tour of the planting which is located close to Building 17.

Blueberries are a fascinating and healthy crop to grow on the Central Coast. Dr. Gaskell will discuss how to grow these delicious berries and will discuss all cultural practices including selecting the proper variety, planting, irrigation, and interesting soil pH requirements. If the weather cooperates, there will be some blueberry tasting! **Refreshments will be provided by the H - R team, please!**

**Directions to Cal Poly Crops Unit:** From San Luis Obispo, take HWY 101 Santa Rosa exit (Hwy 1) towards Morro Bay. Go to Highland and enter the Cal Poly campus. You will see Mt. Bishop Road to the left. Turn in immediately and park.

**June 9—C&M NURSERY or ANA’S ROSES—Nipomo—MEETING TIME CHANGE & ACTIVITY CHOICE:**

**Choice 1: C&M Nursery Tour**—Hosted by Kim (the manager)—This nursery was founded in 1972 and specializes in the production of citrus and avocado trees for sale to commercial growers and retail garden centers in California and Arizona. We meet at **9:55 AM** at C&M before a 10:00 AM tour. This tour is limited to the **first 49** people who sign-up.

**Choice 2: Ana’s Roses**—Hosted by Lori (Ana) Moffit—She has more than 250 varieties of roses listed for sale and June will be a good time to see them in bloom!

Following the tours (11:30-1:00 PM), the group will meet at the home of Gary and Marcia Epstein at 221 La Camarilla Place in Nipomo for a pizza lunch, tour reports, and a peak at Gary’s backyard demesne. (Gary is building a grape trellis using grape roots obtained at the Festival of Fruit last summer.)

**To sign up for either tour and to get driving instructions, contact Carol Scott by phone or email her at [cascott6@hotmail.com](mailto:cascott6@hotmail.com)**

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