

# CENTRAL COAST CHAPTER CRFG

## Next Meeting

**Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

**Annual Scion Exchange & Grafting Demonstrations**

### Where:

Cal Poly Crops Science Classroom 17-101/102, corner of Highland Dr and Mt. Bishop Rd in San Luis Obispo.

There will be free scions, free grafting demonstrations, a store, rootstock sales, and free snacks!

Cash or checks preferred. Credit cards, Zelle, Square, and Venmo will be accepted.

### Schedule:

*(Note: these times are approximate and may change slightly due to actual time needed.)*

(10 am: Members volunteering for setup should arrive.)

**11:00 am:** Grafting demonstrations, store, and rootstock sales begin.  
People with scion wood to share should drop the scions off at the scion exchange room door. Members will be there to receive them.

**12:00 pm:** Chapter members and people who contributed scions get early entry into the scion exchange room.

**12:30 pm:** All attendees are welcome to enter the scion exchange room.

**3:00 pm:** **End of Scion Exchange.** Clean up begins.

Members: Please bring snacks to share with the public.

**Important scionwood tips on next page.**

## Important Tips On Scionwood:

### *If You Are Planning To Get Scions At The Scion Exchange:*

- Bring your own Ziploc bags, painter's tape, and a Sharpie.

### *If You Are Bringing Scionwood:*

- **Thank you!**
- Please:
  - Do NOT bring any Citrus stems, buds, or leaves to Cal Poly! NO EXCEPTIONS!
  - Do NOT bring patented varieties.
  - All Scion wood must be clean, pest, and disease free!
  - Scions need to be bagged in Ziploc-type bags. All bags need labels. Unlabeled scions will be discarded.

Please refer to our website for sample labels, patent information, and more:

<https://www.crfg-central.org/scion-exchg>

Arrive at 11 a.m. to donate your scions to the exchange. By donating, you will also be among the first admitted to the scion exchange room to choose scions.

### *How to Collect Scion Wood for the Scion Exchange:*

(Taken from: <https://www.crfg-central.org/contributing-scions>)

Label your bags of scion wood. You can print these labels and tape them to your bags, or print them on Avery label #8164. Write the specific varietal: scions of unknown/unmarked varietal will not be accepted. Please also include the variety's chill hours and whether or not the variety is self-pollinating, if you know that information.

How to select and cut scion wood:

It is a good idea to clip the top of the scion at a 45 degree angle to distinguish it from the bottom. For more information, watch this video: [CRFG Scion Exchange Collecting Scions](#).

Step-by-step instructions:

- "[Selecting and storing scion wood for grafting](#)" provided by Michigan State University Extension
- "[How to Collect and Save Scion or Bud Wood.pdf](#)," is a helpful instruction sheet created by Tom Del Hotal (CRFG San Diego chapter). Please note his strong emphasis on checking the dormant buds!
- "[Collecting and Storing Scion Wood](#)" provided by the Watauga County Center

This flyer from the Golden Gate chapter explains when to cut scions from certain varieties and how long the scions will last: [Collecting and Grafting Evergreen Scionwood](#).

### Merchandise for sale

We will be selling fruit trees this year.

We will have the store this year:

Items for sale: pre-cut bird netting, pruners, green and white tape for grafting, Buddy Tape, grafting knives, Doc Farwell's grafting goop, No Cry gloves (to be sold as a single glove) great for grafting and using a mandolin for slicing food, aluminum ID tags, pheromone loops, aprons, hats, and t-shirts.

We will also have an area for gently used items donated by members! If you have any garden-related items you would like to donate, please bring them to the store at the February meeting. Feel free to price the items for easy sale ahead of time. NO JUNK! All items donated that are left over will be taken to the thrift store for donation.

### Additional Info:

The public is welcome to the Scion Exchange! Please bring a friend.

Restrooms will be available.

### Location & Parking:

Parking will be free in the H1 parking lot on Mt. Bishop Road next to the J. Lohr Viticulture Center. Do NOT Park next to fire hydrants or where curbs are painted RED. You will be towed.

**Warning: DO NOT PARK along the side of Highland Drive nor Mt. Bishop Rd as people have done in the past. The Cal Poly Police will ticket you!**

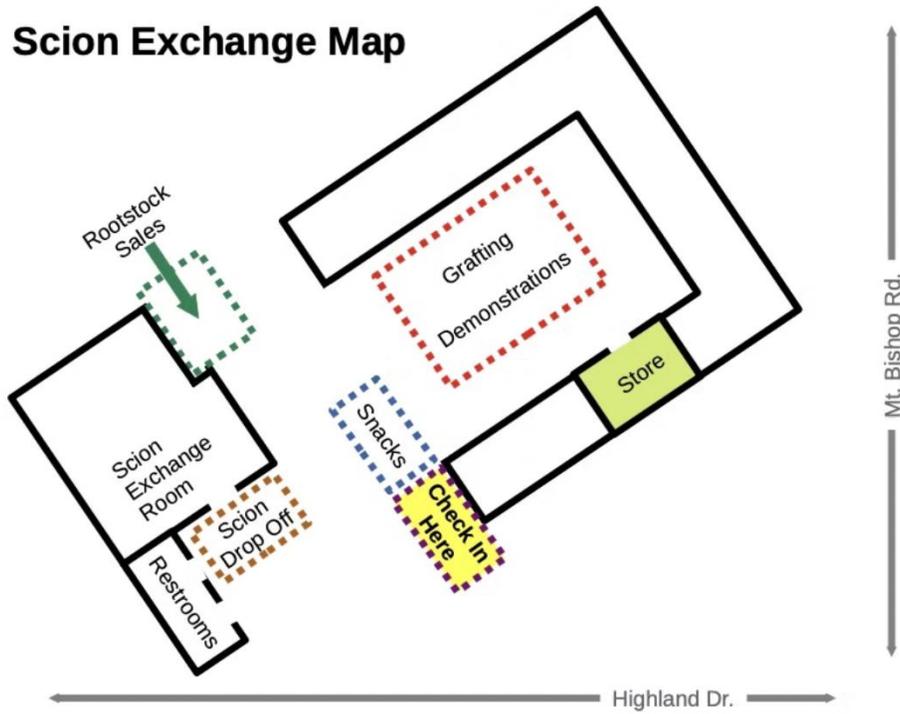
Due to construction, parking will no longer be available at the Crops Unit. The H1 lot on Mt. Bishop Drive is the only option for parking.

### *Directions* (see map on next page)

1. In San Luis Obispo, take Santa Rosa St. (aka Hwy 1) to Highland Drive.
2. Turn east onto Highland Drive.
3. Turn left at Mt. Bishop Rd.

4. In approximately 900 feet, you will see the H1 parking lot on your left. Park in the parking lot and walk back down Mt. Bishop Rd. to the Crops Unit at the corner with Highland Dr.





### No Pets

Don't bring pets! Please review "Our Best CRFG Manners While Visiting Homes, Nurseries, Growers, etc." below. We never bring pets to meetings or tours, and we never even ask if we may!"

# Announcements

## Next Orchard Maintenance Workday: Saturday, February 7th, 2026, 9 am - 12pm

This is a great opportunity to talk with your fellow CRFG members, swap plant information, and share plant stories.

**Maintenance Tasks:** We'll be pruning the trees with an eye for removing broken and dead branches and reducing tree height. We'll keep and package up usable scions for the Scion Exchange. Also on the list: remove weeds and suckers, cut the passionfruit off of some peach trees, and inspect fence for necessary repairs.

**Bring:** Please bring your gloves, hand pruners, loppers, and saws, and your favorite weed removal tools such as shovels and hoes. You may want to mark them with your name so we know to whom they belong. Also bring your water bottle, gloves, and shoes and clothes for working in dirt.

The public is welcome. Bring a friend.

We have requested that the restrooms at the Crops Unit be open, but there is no guarantee.

No parking permits required on Saturdays.

### Directions:

- 1) Take Hwy 1 to Highland Dr.
- 2) Turn east on Highland and proceed approximately 0.3 miles.
- 3) When you see the CRFG sign on the right, drive up the ramp and turn immediately right onto the dirt road beside the bike path. Do not drive past the fence and into the field.
- 4) Drive back toward the CRFG orchard. You'll see other cars parked in that area.



## Need Someone To Prune Your Fruit Trees?

**Cal Poly Student Pruners:** If you live in the San Luis Obispo area, use the email below to send your information (the job you need done, where you are located, the number and types of trees, what you will pay, your contact information etc.). The information will be available to Cal Poly Plant Science students who are looking for work.

[plantsciences@calpoly.edu](mailto:plantsciences@calpoly.edu)

Dr. Garner announced at the January meeting that while she and Cal Poly do not endorse any particular service, her former student Sai does pruning as part of his business at Wellspring Gardens and Pruning, (415) 261-8822.

**Looking for a professional arborist?** Use the ISA (International Society of Arboriculture) certified arborists by using the [International Society of Arboriculture \(ISA\)-run search tool](#).

## Pollinator Habitat Program

The [Pollinator Habitat Program \(PHP\)](#) supports California farmers and ranchers in creating pollinator-friendly habitats and adopting sustainable practices that support crop production and ecosystem health. It encourages the use of native, locally adapted plants to address pollinator decline linked to habitat loss, pesticides, disease, and climate change. PHP is a partnership between Ventura County Resource Conservation District (VCRCD), Cachuma RCD (CRCD), the Community Environmental Council (CEC), and the Santa Barbara Botanical Garden (SBBG). The program offers up to \$200,000 for eligible operations in Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo Counties to implement NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) standard-compliant projects.

**While the PHP is currently closed to new applications, CEC is submitting new projects on a case-by-case basis, providing technical assistance to prepare applications for CDFA. The grant requires all project requirements to be completed by December 2026.**

**To apply, please fill out the [Central Coast AgLink](#) form and CEC's team will get in contact with you.**

John and Sharon Broberg, who sent in this information, said that:

“We have been installing hedgerows with grants from the Pollinator Habitat Program at Lilykoi Farm in Arroyo Grande. There is still money available. CEC (Community Environmental Council) in Santa Barbara has been very helpful with guiding us through all the grant procedures.”

## Disinfecting Scionwood Before Grafting

By Larry Hollis

We are regularly advised to disinfect our pruning and grafting tools between cuts, or trees, or orchards, to prevent the transmission of fungal or bacterial plant diseases from one tree to another; but we are less often advised to disinfect scionwood before grafting. If you have ever wondered if one of the grafts you added to your trees had anything to do with a tree's sudden death or of its becoming diseased, you may want to consider disinfecting your scionwood prior to grafting.

I started disinfecting my scionwood by submerging it in a 10% solution of chlorine bleach for a couple of minutes, then rinsing before storing the scions in Ziploc bags. Like many gardening activities, this isn't an exact science. Prior to writing this article I Googled "disinfecting scionwood before grafting" and found a significant variation in the advice from universities, gardening sites, extension agents, and others. The advice on bleach bath concentrations varied from 1-2% to 10%, and the soaking time varied from a couple of minutes to five minutes. Some advised rinsing the bleach off and others said not to rinse it off, but to remove the scions from the bleach bath and allow them to air dry completely. It is reasonable that a stronger bleach concentration might not require the scions to soak as long as a weaker solution would. Similarly, it might be fine to leave a weak bleach solution on the wood, whereas it might be advisable to rinse off the stronger bleach concentration. Additionally, some suggest using fungicide, and other chemicals instead of bleach to sanitize scionwood. In the end, though, whether to disinfect is an individual decision. It is scion exchange season, and the question is, do you feel lucky...

## January Meeting: Annual Pruning Workshop

Our pruning workshop presenter this year was our own member, Larry Hollis.



Our first meeting of the year was the annual pruning talk and hands-on workshop, held at the Cal Poly Crops Unit and our demonstration orchard.

After the business portion of the meeting, Larry Hollis gave a talk on pruning to an overflow crowd in the Crops Unit classroom. Larry explained the basics of winter pruning, including the reasons why trees need pruning to produce more and better fruit, the types of pruning cuts and their functions, where on a branch to make the pruning cut, and how to tell which wood on a tree will produce fruit this year, to avoid cutting off all your fruiting wood and spurs. Using bare-root apple and apricot trees, he demonstrated two types of pruning widely used to shape trees for fruit production and to control height: central leader, mostly for apples and pears, and vase pruning for most stone fruit. After the talk, he answered questions from a very interested audience.



Luckily, we had sunny weather for the meeting, so after the talk, we walked to the CRFG-Central's demonstration orchard. There, several chapter members with expertise in pruning gave hands-on instruction to small groups of attendees and allowed them to try their hand at identifying branches and twigs that should be removed and cutting them out.

All in all, we were able to send our attendees home with a knowledge of basic pruning skills and perhaps more confidence in their ability to care for their trees.