

# The Leaflet

Newsletter of the Central Coast Chapter  
of California Rare Fruit Growers, Inc.

Volume 16 • Issue 1—January-February 2013



Pushing the limits and  
the range of fruit culti-  
vation worldwide!

## The Annual Scion Exchange

—by Gary Fourer, with parts from John Valenzuela

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HE BIGGEST YEARLY EVENT FOR MOST CRFG CHAPTERS IS THE SCION EXCHANGE. This is where we share not only our knowledge of plants that have edible seeds, fruit, leaves, stems or roots, we share the materials needed to grow them.

This age-old ritual involves saving and exchanging scions—special fruit tree prunings used to propagate more fruit trees—then trading them like baseball cards, and finally grafting our new “players” onto our old trees or onto new rootstock, or in some cases rooting them directly into the soil.

At this annual event our chapter will be sharing hundreds of varieties of fruit scions to graft onto your own trees. You may find apples, pears, quince, plums, peaches, nectarines, apricots, cherries, and others. Also, cuttings to root may include grapes, figs, pomegranate, kiwi fruit, mulberries, and more. Available for purchase will be rootstocks and grafting supplies. There will be grafting lessons and demonstrations for those ready to graft new varieties to their trees, and custom and assisted grafting of your selected varieties onto rootstock purchased at the exchange.



February 2012's scion exchange was well attended

*continued on page 3*

# EDITOR'S MESSAGE



**W**ith the new year, I thought it would be a good idea to refresh our memory about what CRFG is and what we do. Following are excerpts from "Who We Are" from a 2010 issue of *The Leaflet*.

We are the Central Coast chapter of the California Rare Fruit Growers, Inc., a group of friendly, dedicated, and down-right interesting folk who share a love and fascination for growing food. Although the name may sound a bit exclusive, our mission is simple and inclusive. Chapter meetings are open to all CRFG members and guests. With few exceptions, we meet on the second Saturday of each month, including the summer months. The meetings usually start at 1:30 p.m. and rotate to different locations. We visit members' gardens and orchards, tour commercial operations, and learn from a wide variety of speakers and programs.

Membership in CRFG, the parent organization of our chapter, includes delivery of *Fruit Gardener*, a bimonthly magazine. Membership dues provide funds for the daily operation of the non-profit organization. Applications are available at any of our meetings or online at [www.crfg.org](http://www.crfg.org).

As a member, you can also subscribe to our newsletter, *The Leaflet*, delivered either by email or "snail" mail. The cost is only \$6 per year, or \$25 for five years. This money will help our chapter to continue providing local community enrichment through educational and fun activities throughout the Central Coast, such as developing a Community Orchard at Cal Poly, conducting a unique High School Apple Grafting Project, and the annual February Grafting Party and Scion Exchange.

Happy Harvesting, Gary Fourer  
[LeafletEditor@aol.com](mailto:LeafletEditor@aol.com)

## The Leaflet

Distributed bimonthly by the Central Coast chapter of the California Rare Fruit Growers, Inc. to share ideas, news, and activities of interest to our local chapter.

Editor: Gary Fourer

Graphic Design: Margaret C. Lange

Writer: Margaret C. Lange

Contributors:

Cristy Christie  
Larry Hollis  
Robert and Carol Scott  
Henry Mulder  
John Valenzuela

**C**RFG promotes the environmentally-sound culture of any and all edible plants in the home landscape by encouraging and helping to facilitate public and scientific research, education, and preservation of plants worldwide that have edible seeds, fruit, leaves, stems or roots. The CRFG mission is to share knowledge acquired from these activities with home growers in particular and with anyone else in the world having an interest in edible plant cultivation.

" STRAWBERRIES ARE TO BERRIES  
AS PEANUTS ARE TO NUTS."

~ ROBERT FOURER (1950 – )

# The Scion Exchange —continued

If you are new to the scion exchange, you will be most successful if you take just a little time to prepare:

1. Make a list of your favorite fruit varieties.
2. Talk to your neighbors to see what kinds of fruit produce well in your area.
3. Gather up three things to collect your bounty: some sealable plastic bags (gallon size is best), masking tape, and a permanent marker to label your loot.

- Frost/Freeze
- Chill Hours
- Pollination
- Graft Compatibility

These are critical to the success of your fruit tree. There will be plenty of help!

## From Points North

This year John Valenzuela, horticulturist, consultant, permaculture educator, and chair of the CRFG Golden Gate chapter, will again bring scion material from the Northern California scion exchanges.

From John's recent entry in the



To get ready for the scion exchange, gather resealable plastic bags, masking tape, and permanent marker

At the exchange, before collecting your scions, take the time to talk with some of the experienced grafters to learn about the critical factors to consider:

## [Permaculture San Francisco blog](#):

"This amazing diversity of propagation material of hundreds of fruit varieties comes mostly from four sources: The Heritage Fruit

Orchard at Prusch Park in San Jose, taken care of by volunteers lead by the Santa Clara chapter CRFG and Santa Clara Chapter Master Gardeners; Andy's Orchard, in Morgan Hill a commercial farm run by Andy Mariani, the restored orchard at Filoli, a property of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Woodside, and Lastly the USDA National Clonal Germplasm Repository for Fruit and Nut Crops at the Wolfskill Experimental Farm in Winters. According to rare fruit collector and fruit historian, C. Todd Kennedy, "Taken together, the four sources provide the largest and most varied offering of fruit-propagating material available at any place in the world today - for fee or for free."

"The goal is to offer these unique varieties to the general fruit-loving public. The hope is that people are able to successfully choose, collect, keep well labeled, propagate, nurture to fruiting, and to eventually bring back scions to share with others at the Exchange. When home growers are able to return scions to the Exchange, it reduces the burden on the other sources of scion wood. Also, more 'local favorites' continue to emerge. There are many backyard discoveries of unique seedling varieties that participants bring to share, which we encourage greatly."

John will also bring scions contributed by Santa Cruz, Sonoma, and Mendocino

# The Scion Exchange —continued

counties' famed apple (and other fruit) growers, many backyard growers from our five northern chapters: Santa Clara Valley, Monterey Bay, Golden Gate, Sacramento, Redwood Empire, and Mendocino Permaculture.

rooting? What could you bring to the Exchange as bareroot plants?

2. Cut scions and dig plants as close to the Exchange date as possible, while the donor plant is still dormant but BEFORE the buds

Moth (a new plant pest with many hosts) hides in both living and dead leaves.

4. Cut each scion 4 to 8 inches long. Aim to have at least 4 buds on each piece. Cut the bottom of each piece square

and the top end at a diagonal so others can tell which end is up.

5. Label your scions and store them in plastic bags to prevent drying. Keep roots of bareroot plants in damp sawdust or damp, leaf-free dirt.

6. Store scions in the refrigerator (not in the freezer!), a cold basement, or buried in the ground.

7. Before coming to the Exchange, place all the scions of one kind together in a plastic bag, preferably a 1-gallon Ziploc bag to preclude the bother of twist-ties. Label each bag.



Tool kit to start grafting your scions: clippers, knife, grafting goop, labels, green gardening tape

## Tips on Handling Scions

If you are ready to share some scions of your own, the Golden Gate chapter has assembled an excellent primer on preparing for this event. Here are their tips on collecting scions. For more info please visit their [web site](#).

1. Look around your garden. What do you have (that is dormant) that could be pruned to yield scions for grafting, budding, or

begin to swell. (Some of your prunings may be too old and hard to be useful, while others may be too young and tender. A book like *Sunset Pruning and Grafting* can help you decide what to keep and what to discard for any given species. Or bring the prunings to the Exchange and ask for help.)

3. Carefully remove all leaves and leaf litter from your plant materials. Light Brown Apple

**DO NOT BRING:** Any citrus or close relatives of citrus (because of Citrus Greening Disease), or any plant or seed you think may be infected with a pest or disease.

Our Central Coast chapter will hold its scion exchange on February 16th (see the Calendar section for more details). Come out for the fun of learning, trading, and adding prize plants to your collections!

# LEAFLET CHRONICLE

## November 2012: Worming our Way to the SLO County Worm Farm



Joe Sabol gives Cristy an official CRFG cap

Cristy and Jac Christie of the SLO County Worm Farm hosted the CRFG November meeting. A pleasant drive on country roads east of Paso Robles took us there. Announcements by co-chairs Larry Hollis and Patti Schober included timing for spraying of copper on fruit trees, development of a planting calendar to be made available for our members, and timing of the 2013 Festival of Fruit in Hawaii at the end of September. Joe Sabol elaborated on the festival in Hawaii, mentioning that events will be held on four of the islands and there will be an option of traveling by

cruise ship. Joe also displayed an apple tree in blossom. The tree had been grafted using fresh scion wood in October by a fourth grader during one of our Chapter's educational programs. Joe gave the tree to our hosts, along with an official CRFG cap.

Cristy took the mic and told us about her adventures in the

vermiculture business. She is a former realtor who became passionate about worms and castings. "I work for them," she said, "I keep them happy." After visiting worm farms and researching vermiculture methods, the Christies developed their system and built their facility in 2011. Their preferred worm feed is dairy solids (washed and screened manure); it is

processed in an aerated composting system manufactured by the Sonoma Valley Worm Farm ([sonomavalleyworms.com](http://sonomavalleyworms.com)). The worms live in raised beds. Feed is spread on the top and after 60 to 70 days, castings (worm poop) are collected from the bottom. The result is Black Diamond Vermicompost. When added to soil, vermicompost will increase its fertility and help produce strong disease-resistant plants.

Producing vermicompost is a detailed process, one which Cristy will be sharing more about in a future featured article for this publication. Until then, more information can be found at the [SLO County Worm Farm website](http://SLO%20County%20Worm%20Farm%20website). And check out Cristy's note to us in Through the Fence. She was inspired by our visit, just as we were by our visit to her hilltop worm farm.



Aerators processing dairy solids



Cristy speaks to attendees next to a thriving worm bed

# LEAFLET CHRONICLE—continued

## December 2012 Annual Christmas Potluck and Meeting

On Saturday, December 8, we met at the PG&E visitors' center for our annual potluck and meeting. In order to keep up with last year's fantastic program on making ice cream, this year we had a presentation on cheese-making. We learned how to make string cheese, and we were all treated to a cheese course to finish off our well-balanced potluck lunch!

Phillip Tong, director of the Cal Poly Dairy Products Technology Center, explained how the first few steps of making cheese are the same for all kinds of cheese. After the curds are separated from the whey, they are processed to make all the unique cheeses in the world. Well, that's not entirely true; not all cheese is unique. Have you ever compared Monterey jack cheese to Colby cheese with your eyes closed? We learned that these two cheeses are identical but for the addition of coloring in the Colby!

It was almost time to bring in the curds and make our cheese. Our goal was to make mozzarella cheese. The technical name for this kind of cheese is pasta filata, or spun pasta cheese. Dr. Tong needed two volunteers to make the cheese. David Maislen and Joe Sabol immediately jumped to the front of the class and were promptly dressed in white smocks



Phil Tong demonstrates cheese making to Joe

and hair nets. Their job was to wash the curds in hot water until they became a gooey mess, then stretch the stuff again and again like pizza dough, then wrap it up in a ball. After much clowning and mischief, we had several pounds of fresh mozzarella cheese to pass around. It was quite tasty.



Joe distracts the teacher while David addresses the hot cheese curds



How it's really done

# LEAFLET CHRONICLE—continued

## A few interesting cheese facts:

\*\*France consumes the most cheese per capita, at 52.7 pounds per person. US consumption is 32.9 pounds.

\*\*Wisconsin leads in US cheese production with 25% of all cheese produced in the US. California is second with 21% and is catching up quickly.

\*\*Wonder where most of the cheese is eaten here? This statistic will help: Mozzarella accounts for more than 33% of all cheese produced in the US.

## It Takes All These to Tango

During the business part of the meeting, our co-chairs took the opportunity to thank members who had participated in volunteer activities throughout the year. They were given young Tango tangerine trees in appreciation of their work for the chapter.

Those presented with "Thank you Trees" were: Nell Wade, Patti Schober, Larry Hollis, Art DeKleine, Dick Pottratz, Evelyn Ruehr, Gary Fourer, Margaret Lange, Marv Daniels, Pet Daniels, Lark Carter, John Crowe, Choung Crowe, Dattatraya Paranjpe, Lauren Garner, and Joe Sabol.



CRFG volunteers were given Tango tangerine trees as thanks for their contributions to our chapter's success

# Through the Fence

—continued

## IN THE PAW PAW PATCH —from Robert and Carol Scott

In 1997, we attended our second “Festival of Fruit” in Southern California and tasted our first paw paw. After tasting the banana-mango-tropical-custard-flavored fruit, we knew it was a tree we had to add to our orchard. So, we ordered a few varieties and waited for our first fruit. Growing impatient, we bought more varieties, grafted onto seedlings and waited longer. We did have a few flowers bloom over the years, but no fruit set. Last year we had lots of blooms and three fruit set, which the raccoons ate for us. This year we had lots of blooms and 25 fruit set. We built a fortress of fencing, netting and motion sensor sprinkler (which made it very difficult to harvest), but we were able to enjoy our first fruits.

The paw paw is the largest edible fruit that is native to the United States. They are indigenous to 26 states from Florida to southern Ontario and as far west as Nebraska. They also grow well in areas of California and Oregon. (You can access a fact sheet about paw paws online at CRFG.org.)

We will bring a limited amount of seeds to the scion exchange if you want to try growing your own paw paw patch.



The Scott's paw paw tree in fruit



The paw paw close up, about 4 inches in length

## More Fun Than a Barrel of Clover —from Gary Fourer and Margaret Lange

To bring some fertility to our Nipomo sand, we purchased a cover crop mix from Farm Supply and spread it out on a few patches of ground as well as inside a barrel. We've had fun watching the new seedlings of grasses and legumes poke up out of the soil. We'll plant a new herb garden once the cover plants have done their work.



Cover crop in a barrel - why not?!

# Through the Fence —continued

## MESSAGE FROM THE WORM FARM —from Cristy Christie

What a fabulous group you are! Thank you so much for making the trek out to SLO County Worm Farm! I'm sorry some of you had to hike up the hill a bit, but we appreciate you accommodating some folks that needed to park a little closer.

When I went out this morning, I really couldn't tell that anything had even taken place here! You came prepared and left everything so nice and clean! The only item left behind was the Guess How Many Attended board. I will make sure it gets back to its proper home.

Joe, thank you for all your co-ordinating efforts! And Larry, you obviously know how to steer the ship! You have your hands full with that crazy, fun-loving group of members! I am anxious to join and become one of you!

I'm wearing my cool new hat today too! What a thoughtful gift! I did take my flowering apple tree inside to save it from frost, but I will remove the flowers soon and let Nature "rest and rejuvenate" in preparation for a healthy spring bloom! Jac and I enjoyed several pineapple guava with breakfast and I sent some home with my sister, Barbara, too. She is always such a great help to me!

I neglected to pass around the email sign up list, so if you would like to receive an occasional email (which doesn't happen very often, really), just let me know. I'm happy to add you to the growing list of vermicompost enthusiasts!

In the excitement of the day, I forgot to tell you all the most exciting news! We are taking delivery on the 2nd flow thru system in 2 weeks! It will stand on the other side of the concrete slab so I will find a new home for the trommel. Supply and demand is indicating I will have to order the 3rd one soon!

As our vermiculture business expands and as the word of building healthy soil with vermicompost spreads, I feel the paradigm shift is similar



CRFG's November meeting at the SLO County Worm Farm

to a supertanker. It does not move fast, nor does it turn without an incredible amount of area in which to do so. It is like we worm farmers are one of a few tugboats moving this movement into a new direction. And as it gains momentum, the speed will change as well. But also know that you, supporting us and purchasing books, worms, Black Diamond Vermicompost and other related items, are an integral part of it. I so appreciate your business and confidence in our product and am always anxious to hear about your experiences using vermicompost and teas, and how it affects your gardens, orchards, farms and houseplants. Thank you SO much!

Jac and I look forward to seeing you all again soon!

Until then,  
~SUPPORT GLOBAL WORMING~

All the best,  
Cristy Christie  
SLO County Worm Farm  
5325 Broken Spur PL  
Paso Robles, CA 93446  
805.237.7752  
[www.slocountyworms.com](http://www.slocountyworms.com)

# Through the Fence —continued

## Brussel Sprout Gleaning

CRFG members Nell Wade, Marv and Pet Daniels, and Gary Fourer answered the call to help glean brussel sprouts from a field near Guadalupe in early December. The gleaning was organized by GleanSLO. Total sprouts harvested: 2,342 pounds in about ONE hour! The sprouts were delivered to

to have the opportunity to help glean fields or orchards, visit the [GleanSLO Facebook page](#), or their website, [www.gleanslo.org](http://www.gleanslo.org), for a volunteer application and to be added to their email list.

As you can see by the pictures, gleaning is a great experience.



the Oceano Food Bank Warehouse and were distributed throughout our county to our neighbors in need.

This was the first time GleanSLO had worked with this farm. The grower was pleased with the group and invited them back to glean broccoli, brussel sprouts, and artichokes.

If you know of other farms or properties where there is excess food, please don't hesitate to contact GleanSLO, to help make a difference feeding people in our community. If you would like



# Through the Fence —continued

## FLORIADE in the Netherlands

CRFG member Henry Mulder sent pictures taken last summer at the FLORIADE in the Netherlands. The FLORIADE is an horticulture show that takes place every 10 years. Henry grew up in Holland and took these pictures during one of his visits to his home country.



# LEAFLET CALENDAR

## CRFG Central Coast Chapter Meetings

Unless otherwise indicated, meetings are held the second Saturday of the month and begin at 1:30 p.m. Bring a friend and, for most meetings, bring a chair for all in your party unless you prefer to stand. Car pool if you can. No pets at any meeting, please.

**Nutrition teams:** Members with last names beginning in H through R are on duty for bringing snacks to the January meeting. Please remember, we have lots of guests at this meeting so bring extra goodies and come early if you can. We have LOTS of early birds to this meeting.

Members with last names beginning in S through Z are on for the February meeting.

Check the website for more details.  
[www.crfg-central.org/calendar.htm](http://www.crfg-central.org/calendar.htm)

### January 12, 2013:

Pruning Clinic Meeting starts at 1:30 but come early, chat, and enjoy a drink and snack!!

Meeting location: Crops Unit, Cal Poly, Corner of Highland and Mt. Bishop Road.

Parking is free but, please be safe and park in a parking space, not on a real road.

Our guest pruner is Mike Cirone, our friend from See Canyon!!

Weather: It will be cool. It will not rain. It is January so dress appropriately for outside. Wear gloves and bright colored hat for a prize. Please bring your clean clippers/loppers. We will dip them before and after. After the pruning lesson, we will walk a block to our CRFG Demonstration Orchard. This orchard is on Highland, back towards Highway one. Mike Cirone will give a demonstration at the orchard... on a mature tree! If you have a favorite tree in the CRFG Orchard or want to start right to work, you may skip the demonstration but most people will want to see and hear his show at one mature tree.

Feel free to invite your neighbors, your garden club, church members, Rotary Club, RAM members, 4-H Club members and relatives who always want you to come over and prune their tree.

### February 16, 2013:

Share our scions and teach grafting on the **third** Saturday.

Location: Crops Unit, Cal Poly, Corner of Highland and Mt. Bishop Road.

Parking is free but, please be safe and park in a parking space, not on a real road.

### March 9, 2013:

Tour Cal Poly vineyards, with emphasis on wine grapes.

### September 2013:

The 2013 Festival of Fruit will be held in Hawaii with the Hawaii Tropical Fruit Growers around the last weekend of the month. Activities will be planned for four of the islands. More details will be posted as they are made available; following is the link to the 2013 Festival of Fruit website.

<http://www.crfg.org/2013FoF/default.html>

## CONTACTS

Larry Hollis, co-chair, [l\\_Hollis@hotmail.com](mailto:l_Hollis@hotmail.com), 704-1513

Patti Schober, co-chair, [iampwolfy@charter.net](mailto:iampwolfy@charter.net), 467-5097

Art DeKleine, program chair, [adeklein@calpoly.edu](mailto:adeklein@calpoly.edu), 543-9455

Joe Sabol, publicity, [jsabol@calpoly.edu](mailto:jsabol@calpoly.edu), 544-1056

Richard K. Pottratz, treasurer, [pottratz@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pottratz@sbcglobal.net)

Gary Fourer, newsletter editor, [LeafletEditor@aol.com](mailto:LeafletEditor@aol.com)

Central Coast chapter website: [www.crfg-central.org](http://www.crfg-central.org)



# LEAFLET ANNOUNCEMENTS



## CONTACTS

Larry Hollis, co-chair,  
[l\\_hollis@hotmail.com](mailto:l_hollis@hotmail.com), 704-1513

Patti Schober, co-chair,  
[iampwolfy@charter.net](mailto:iampwolfy@charter.net), 467-5097

Gary Fourer, newsletter editor,  
[LeafletEditor@aol.com](mailto:LeafletEditor@aol.com)

Central Coast chapter website: [www.crfg-central.org](http://www.crfg-central.org)

**Pruning Meeting Preparation.** Members and guests should bring their pruners to the January pruning meeting.

**Garden/Orchard Calendar.** A garden/orchard calendar is in the works to remind us all of our seasonal garden/orchard chores. Co-chair Patti Schober and Sally Roqua will work together to compile the calendar. To contribute existing orchard/garden calendars or to help with the project, contact Patti Schober.

**Amazon Purchases.** Amazon gives a small percentage of the purchase price of any item when the Amazon website is accessed through the link on the CRFG.org website: <http://www.crfg.org/pubs/books.html>. Please remember to first use the link when purchasing items on Amazon. "Donate to CRFG at no cost to you."

**Contribute to our Newsletter.** The Editor is always happy to receive contributions to the Leaflet. These can range from a tried and true recipe, a note about what's going on in your garden and orchard, to writing an article about garden, orchard, or food related topics. Ideas for articles are always welcome too.

