

The Leaflet

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

Volume 13 • Issue 6—November-December 2010



Pushing the limits and the range
of fruit cultivation worldwide!

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How to Invite your Plants for a Spot of Tea

—by Jutta Thoerner

In Germany, where I grew up, the practice of using fermented plant material as a crop aid, often using the stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*), was part of every country garden. The farmer might use insecticides on his corn field, but in his home garden and orchard his wife or mother were using the old practices of herbal teas.

Herbal teas can perform a myriad of functions: they are a source of plant nutrients, they can stimulate plant growth, they can aid in disease suppression. Scientists have gained more insight into the beneficial aspects of herbal teas by examining the rhizosphere and phyllosphere, the regions that surrounds the root and leaf surfaces of plants. It's been found that many herbal teas can modify the leaf surface, so that



Stinging Nettle

continued on page 8



The 2010 Great Pumpkin Contest

The fifth annual Great Pumpkin Contest was held in the Mission Plaza during the San Luis Obispo Thursday Night Farmers' Market on October 21. Huge pumpkins lined the mission courtyard waiting to be weighed while attendees entered their best guesses for the Guess the Weight contest. All pumpkin entries were grown from giant pumpkin seeds germinated on the Central Coast. During the spring, CRFG President Joe Sabol, contest sponsor Farm Supply, and volunteers seeded the contest by sprouting and growing over 800 pumpkin plants. Joe proudly pointed out which pumpkins had been grown from his pumpkin seed. The winning pumpkin weighed in at 653 pounds, no threat to the world record for the heaviest pumpkin which stands at 1,725 pounds.



Joe with a colorful pumpkin
grown from one of his sprouts

EDITOR'S MESSAGE



Thank you to the many subscribers who took the time to comment and congratulate Margaret and me on the release of the September/October Leaflet. We are enjoying the opportunity to become more connected to this enthusiastic group of people.

In the last issue, I wrote about summer coming to a close soon.

Then, as usual on our Central Coast, this autumn brought a dose of hot weather. Why, you might ask, is it so hot when summer is over? The answer lies in a phenomenon called Seasonal Lag. This is why the longest day of the year, the Summer Solstice, is the official first day of summer rather than being considered the middle, accounting for a typical lag of one and a half months from the longest day of the year to the hottest days of summer.

Here on the California coast, this lag can often be as long as three months, varying considerably with location and from one year to the next. I have been recording

the weather in my garden here in Nipomo for five years, and I can tell you that here, our hottest month of the year is often September. But in 2008 the seasonal lag was especially long, and the hottest month was October with a mean high temperature of 78 degrees, while June, July, August, and September were all between 72 and 74 degrees! Until the fall season catches up, let's enjoy the warm sunshine of our coastal climate.

Happy Harvesting,
Gary Fourer



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

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Margaret Lange**

**Contributors:
Sheree Brekke
John Crowe
Mehe
Joe Sabol**

CRRFG 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 CRRFG 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.

**UNEMPLOYMENT IS CAPITALISM'S WAY
OF GETTING YOU TO PLANT A GARDEN.
~ ORSON SCOTT CARD**



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LEAFLET REVIEW



Uncommon Fruits for every garden

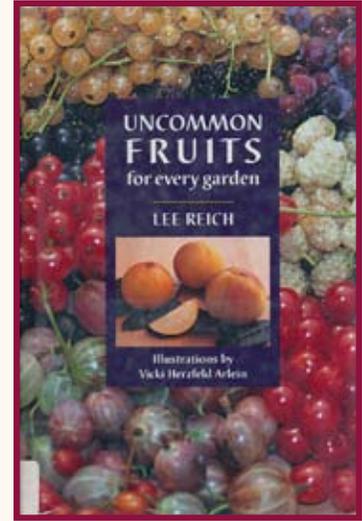
Written by Lee Reich

Illustrated by Vick Herzfeld Arlein

Uncommon Fruits for every garden is a comprehensive gardening resource and an enjoyable read covering 23 overlooked or forgotten fruits. These include: Juneberry, Beach Plum, Alpine and Musk Strawberries, Pawpaw, Raisin Tree, Lingonberry, Actinidia, Mulberry, Kaki and American Persimmons, Elaeagnus, Gooseberry, Maypop, Che, Black Currant, Nanking Cherry, Cornelian Cherry, Red and White Currants, Asian Pear, Jostaberry, Lowbush Blueberry, Jujube, Shipova, and Medlar. A full chapter is devoted to each fruit and includes details of

cultivation, propagation, harvest and use, and cultivars.

It's clear that Mr. Reich has used all his senses while experiencing the uncommon fruits, and his vivid descriptions invite the reader to do the same. When describing Lingonberry, he writes, "...Let's start in spring, when the cutest little urn-shaped blossoms dangle near the ends of the thin, semi-woody stems. These urns hang upside down (upside down for an urn, that is) and are white, blushed with pink." When describing the Elaeagnus (gumi, autumn olive, and Russian olive), he writes, "In spring, all three species bear cream-colored flowers that fill the air with a delicious scent. Individual flowers are unremarkable in appearance, but have a wonderful effect en masse as they blanket



the plant in a pale yellow mist."

The history buff will also find plenty of interest here, as Mr. Reich spices his descriptions with intriguing historical detail. When introducing the Kaki and American Persimmons, he includes a quote by Captain John Smith of the Jamestown colony:

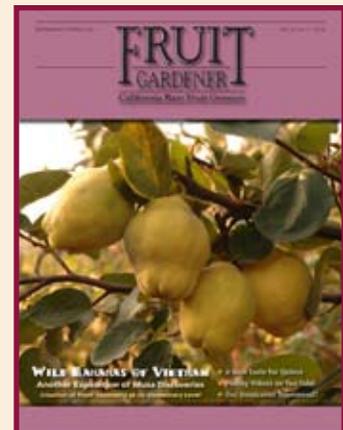
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The Fruit Gardener in Brief

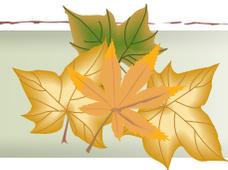
The *Fruit Gardener* is published bimonthly by California Fruit Growers, Inc. (www.crfg.org). Recurring departments include answers to readers question in Ask the Experts, recipes in From Grove to Stove, and details on going organic in Organic Gardening.

Here are highlights of features from the September/October 2010 issue.

- The comeback of the quince. David Karp explains why this paradoxical pome fruit deserves a place on your table.
- To graft or not to graft. Nick Lolonis recalls his experience with attempting to rehydrate dried out scion wood.
- A peach of a pick. Dr. Desmond Layne shares his knowledge about harvesting peaches in words and moving pictures on YouTube.
- Going bananas. Markku Häkkinen tells of his expedition to Vietnam in search of wild bananas.



Through the Fence



The Passion Fruit that Took Over the World, part 2 —from Sheree Brekke

Beginning of October. The passion fruits are ripening and started falling about three weeks ago. The vine is so thick over the gazebo that I have to take a broom handle and shake and lift portions of the vine to loosen it enough to let the fruits fall through. The largest fruit we've gotten to date weighs in at a whopping 3 ¼ ounces! The rest of the fruits weigh between 1 ¾ and 2 ¼ ounces.



Passion fruit ripe and tamed

The Unsinkable Patti Schober

We are happy to report that our Co-Chair Patti is on her way back to health. She had serious pneumonia in her right lung and it knocked her for a loop. This deprived us of her charm at the October meeting so we all signed a giant "get well card". Joe Sabol visited Patti in her home in San Miguel on October 15th, to deliver the card, and also gave her a bag of fresh picked apples. Joe says, "She is looking good!!"

Central Coast Foodie

CRFG local member, Rachel A. Duchak, has launched a website that is a virtual gathering place for growers, cooks, and epicures who want to foster sustainability and deliciousness, from Monterey to Ventura counties. Her site features information on farmers' markets, meal planning, nutrition, winemaking, beer brewing, restaurants, and even bike tours for foodies.

Central Coast Foodie is a work in progress, as the tagline suggests: "Searching for exceptional food and drink." You can sign up and add posts to share your favorite places, and send suggestions to Rachel. Check it out at www.CentralCoastFoodie.com.

Report from Suey Creek Canyon —from John Crowe

Mid October. Asian pears are nearly all gone but there are a few Ya Li left. Most European pears are just finishing up and the Kieffer is just starting the season.

The last peaches were harvested at the beginning of the month and Late Santa Rosa plums were harvested this week finishing up the 2010 plum season. Figs and Prickly pears are now mid season. Some of the fig trees have yet to ripen and the fruit is smaller and later this year.

The pineapple quince is just starting to drop fruit while other quince varieties are holding firm. A few lemon yellow guavas are ripe.

The vegetable garden still has tomatoes, eggplant, summer

squash, peppers, kale, tomatillos, green onions and some winter squash. Most of the winter squash got damaged by the week long 105-plus heat wave.

Report from Creston

—from Mehe

Mid October. As for the "Chamae" (name in Korean) melon ("Early Silver Line" melon in English), I just peel, cut in half, remove seeds and eat. I pick these all summer as they only take 76 days.

The Amish muskmelon is very good. We in Creston still have fairly hot weather so the melons are still growing but it's about finished.

I planted Icebox melons this year and what fun. I planted three different colors in one hill. So the melons had to be split open to tell if it was a red, orange, or yellow flesh melon. They were small but very sweet.

We also planted Crimson Sweet watermelon which weighed in at 23 pounds.



Mehe's daughter, Sarah, lifts the heavy watermelon



RIPE FOR THE PICKING



SUEY CREEK CANYON

NNE of Santa Maria, John Crowe keeps tabs on all kinds of fruit



Pear: Crimson



Pear: Kieffer



Pear: Pineapple on Bartlett rootstock



Late Santa Rosa Plums



Prickly Pear Cactus, five varieties



Prickly Pear Cactus



Fig: Edgar's Golden



Fig: Conadria



Fig: LSU Gold



RIPE FOR THE PICKING



John Crowe's continued



Fig: Italia White



Pineapple Quince



Lemon Yellow Guava

CRESTON

Here's some of the melons that Mehe grew



Amish Muskmellon



Early Silverline Melon



Icebox Watermelon

NIPOMO

Three of Gary's few tomatoes this year, and his favorite watermelon



Moon and Star Watermelon



Golden Sunray Tomato

Your Pictures Here!!!

Share what's ripening at your place in Ripe for the Picking.

Send your pictures (high resolution), a brief description, and the location at which the item was grown to the editor at gary4r@aol.com.



FOOD IN HISTORY



Salads of the European Early Modern Period

The head gardener of King James II (1685 to 1688) was of the opinion that a sallet (salad) should include at least 35 ingredients. In England at that time among the ingredients available were roots such as elecampane, daisy, fennel, angelica, rampion, parsnip, and carrot. These would have been blanched and added cold, or candied, or pickled. For greens there were sowthistle leaves, young spinach, wild succory leaves, tansy, violet leaves, young mallow leaves, purslane, cowslip leaves, borage and bugloss leaves.

Edible flowers adorned the salads of both banquet table and good housewife's table alike: flowers of elder, orange, rosemary, red sage, nasturtium, wild thyme, rose petals, violets, gillyflowers, and marigold. Vinegar, oil, mustard, and salt usually constituted the dressings of these "divers compounds" and receipts, or recipes, of the time include how to make vinegar. In 1699, John Evelyn recorded in *Acetaria*: "To every gallon of Spring water, let there be allowed 3 lbs. of Malaga-Raisins. Put them in an earthen Jarr and place them where they

may have the hottest sun from May till Michaelmas." Vinegars were infused with flowers and shavings of horse-radish. The herbs, greens, and roots that composed the salads of the period were valued for their nutritious properties as well as their visual appeal, as this old proverb attests: "In Health, if Sallet Herbs, you can't endure, Sick, you'll desire them, for Food or Cure." The plants were both raised and gathered, in season and fresh from the earth, a habit that ensured the utmost benefits to the Wise Men and Good Women of yesteryear.



Uncommon Fruits for every garden *continued from page 3*

"The fruit is like a medlar, it is first green, then yellow and red when it is ripe. If it is not ripe it will draw a man's mouth awrie with much torment." And for the harvest and use of alpine and musk strawberries, he writes, "... True, the French King Charles V had twelve hundred wood strawberries planted in the Louvre garden in 1368, but he had no choice, for the modern strawberry had not yet been created."

Excerpts of literary works by Chaucer, Robert Frost, Ovid, and James Whitcomb Riley in which the fruits are mentioned are woven into Mr. Reich's wry and relaxed prose. Ms. Arlein's graceful pen and ink illustrations are augmented by 51

full color photographs of the plants flowering and fruiting.

Mr. Reich's treatment of uncommon fruits compliments the subject. His is a rare work that will appeal to the gardener, the artist, the historian, and those blessed with constant curiosity.

Uncommon Fruits for every garden was published by Timber Press, Inc. in 2004. Mr. Reich's other books include *Growing Fruits in your Backyard*, *A Northeast Gardener's Year*, *The Pruning Book*, and *Weedless Gardening*.

CRFG has arranged with the online retailer, Amazon.com, to receive a percentage of the sale of any product when that product is purchased through the CRFG website. Visit <http://www.crfg.org/pubs/books.html> to purchase Uncommon Fruits in this manner, shop for other good gardening reads you'll find there, or use the Amazon.com search form at the bottom of the page to find just what you are looking for.

HOW FAIR IS A GARDEN AMID THE TRIALS
AND PASSIONS OF EXISTENCE.

~ BENJAMIN DISRAELI

Invite your Plants to Tea continued



pathogen spore germination is reduced or inhibited. And to top it off, many beneficial microbes really like herbal teas and they increase their numbers accordingly. This process is called a systemic whole plant response, also known as induced resistance or enhanced defensive capacity.

Herbal teas consist of the extract of fermented plant material. Measurements vary, as does the length of fermentation. The solution should begin with non-chlorinated water, ideally clean rainwater.

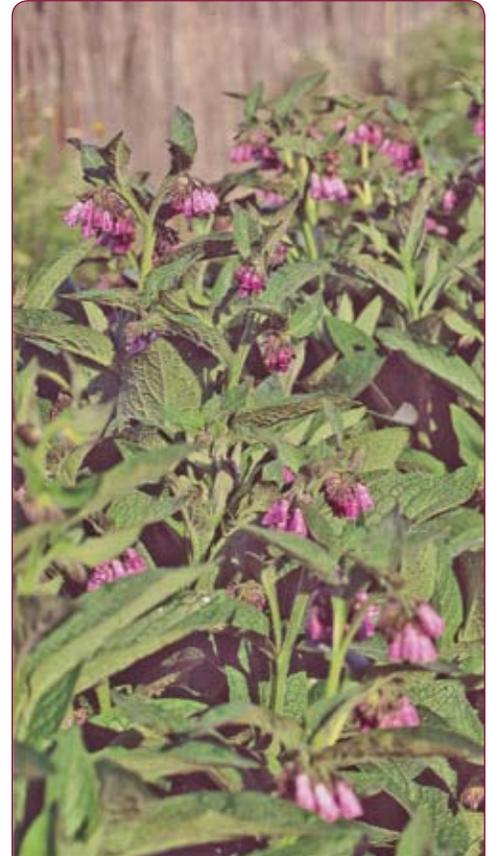
Stinging Nettle Tea

Use nettle plants before bloom sets in; younger plants break down quicker. For one 5-gallon bucket you need 15 pounds of nettle. Set the bucket in a shady area, cover with a sheet or burlap. Check on water level in hot weather. After 7-10 days, filter out the nettle. Dilute this further to a 1/20 solution with water before spraying. I like spraying the tea in the late spring, before the leaves of my trees and plants turn from light green to their darker shade. All the benefits of herbal teas mentioned above apply to stinging nettle tea. (To avoid the "stinging" feature of stinging nettle, use leather gloves with gauntlets while harvesting and wear long pants and boots. Once the nettle is soaked in water, the sting factor is eliminated.)

Comfrey Tea

For one 5-gallon bucket, pack the comfrey leaves (*Symphytum officinale* Lepechin) to three-quarter full, then fill with water. Ferment up to 14 days. Sometimes this combination needs warmer weather before it ferments well. Filter out the plant material, dilute by half with water before spraying. Comfrey tea is an excellent remedy for young, stressed or struggling plants. Fruits, vines, and nut trees love this tea. (Take care when harvesting comfrey, as the leaves and stems are covered in hairs that can irritate the skin.)

With all teas, it is advised to spray in the early morning. Avoid spraying when it is 70 degrees or above. I like to do at least three applications in three days. Besides spraying in the spring, these or other herb teas can be applied any time your plants look stressed.



Comfrey in bloom

Ms. Jutta Thoerner grows certified organic port grapes and walnuts in the North County of California's Central Coast. She has 5 acres in grape and 60 acres in dry-farmed walnuts. She makes organic certified port wine, and sells walnuts mostly wholesale with some local direct marketing. She also has a half acre of certified organic fruit trees: apples, pears, persimmon, plums, and apricot. And there's a sweet spot on her property where two orange trees and one lemon carve out a North County existence. Jutta's big passion is her vegetable garden; she eats all year long from it: fresh, frozen and canned proceeds. Her ideal meal is grown 100 percent on her own soil. Jutta is in the process of earning a Biodynamic Certification. She's been using herbal teas for a very long time.





Marinated Eggplant (Antipasto)

from Mebe

- 2 pounds eggplants, peeled, cut to 3" x 1/4" sticks
- 1/4 cup salt
- 3 cups water
- 1 1/4 cups white-wine vinegar
- 4 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh oregano, finely chopped or 1/3 teaspoon dried
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed black pepper
- 1 1/2 cups olive oil, divided

Toss eggplant with 1/4 cup salt and drain in a colander set over a bowl, covered, at room temperature about 4 hours. (Eggplant will turn brown.) Discard liquid in bowl.

Gently squeeze handfuls of eggplant. Bring water and vinegar to a boil in a medium pot. Add eggplant and boil, stirring occasionally, until tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Drain in colander, then set colander over a bowl and cover eggplant with a plate and a weight (such as a large heavy can). Continue to drain, covered and chilled for 8 to 12 hours. Discard liquid in bowl. Gently squeeze handfuls of eggplant to remove excess liquid, then pat dry.



Stir together eggplant, garlic, oregano, 1/2 teaspoon black pepper and 1 cup olive oil in bowl.

Transfer to a 1-quart jar or other container with a tight-fitting lid and add just enough olive oil to cover eggplant. Marinate eggplant, covered and chilled, at least 4 hours. Bring to room temperature before serving.

Note: Marinated eggplant keeps well: chilled, for 1 month or more.

Serves 12.

Passion Fruit Rice

from Sheree Brekke

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 medium-sized onion, chopped
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 1 cup uncooked long grain rice
- Juice from 3 passion fruits plus water to equal 1 cup
- 1 1/2 cups hot water
- 1/8 teaspoon dried thyme

Melt butter in a saucepan and sauté the onion and celery until tender.

Add rice, passion fruit water, and hot water. Stir in thyme.

Bring to a boil, stir once, reduce heat, and cover.

Simmer until tender, without lifting the lid, for about 15-20 minutes.

Serves 4 to 6.



To share your favorite recipes that use seasonal fruits or vegetables, send the text and a photo of the finished dish to the editor (gary4r@aol.com).



LEAFLET CHRONICLE



Announcements

The birds and the bees. Just as keeping chickens has become very much in vogue, and residents all over the country have petitioned local governments to remove limitations on urban flocks, the keeping of bees for honey and pollination has grown in popularity as well. David Maislen, a bee keeper and orchardist, invited all who are interested to join the movement for change to the county bee keeper regulations. Presently, hives may not be within 200 feet of any public road, effectively prohibiting them in most residential areas. The health commission will be reviewing the subject.

Book exchange. These book exchanges are popular and we may do them more often. Dates to be announced. Do you have any garden and fresh-food related books and periodicals that you no longer want? Bring them to a meeting for someone else to enjoy, and browse the selection for some new-to-you.

Fruit Gardener recycling. Some of us save all our issues of Fruit Gardener, the magazine of CRFG, Inc. If you are a member and do not save your back issues, you could put them in your compost pile, but better yet, please bring them to any of our local chapter meetings. They will be shared with new members and friends.

More for the birds. Actually, less for the birds. Has your home-grown fruit become a bird feeder, leaving precious little for you to

enjoy? Our chapter purchases high quality bird netting by the mile and passes on a very attractive price to you. Talk to Owen at the next meeting if you want to purchase some. Unlike the single-filament netting that tangles quickly and degrades in the weather, Joe says "This stuff is guaranteed to last ten years - as long as you don't take it out of the box and leave it out in the sun." But seriously, it really does last a long time and does not tangle so readily.

September Meeting

Melinda and Glenn Forbes hosted the September meeting at their 1 ½ acre property in Garden Farms just south of Atascadero. The 102 people in attendance enjoyed a sunny day under her front-yard "mystery" walnut tree;

it's a mystery as to when it was planted, what variety it is, and how the immense tree keeps on growing up to six feet per year. It may have been planted by the first owner of her house in 1919. Melinda is an organic gardener and an herbalist, and she uses parts of the walnut for producing herbal medicine. She served a light refreshing herbal tea, an infusion of dried hibiscus, spearmint, lemon balm, stevia, hummingbird sage, and spice bush.

With a father who taught agriculture at Cal Poly, it's no wonder that Melinda "grew up an aggie"; she says she's been a gardener since kindergarten. She spoke of her personal style of gardening: to be true to the native ecosystem, and to experiment with whatever comes her way. Although her property has rich clay loam soil of the Salinas river bottom, originally her garden was not successful in the arid North County climate. Then she began to see the relationship between plant communities, how they protected and supported each other. She has learned to be spare with watering, and has adapted to the heat by using plenty of mulch (she uses her own material that has been cut back, straw and sawdust, manure mulch from



stall cleanings, leaves and grass trimmings) and providing partial shade by planting in proximity of trees. If a volunteer plant comes up, she leaves it and gives it space to grow, like the peach tree that



LEAFLET CHRONICLE continued



September Meeting continued

came up near the house, not in a great place but it gave juicy sweet late peaches. The trees she has planted on her property include nut trees and plum, peach, pear, and apple fruit



Larry presents Melinda with the customary CRFG cap

trees. In anticipation of the meeting, Melinda had planned to have interesting ground fruits available, so she planted seed for hardy kiwi, wonderberry, huckleberry and wild strawberries, but all the plants from the seeds turned out to be wonderberries. Wonderberries are little dark purple berries without much flavor: Melinda said, "It's a wonder they call it a berry." She also planted the Lychee (not really a tomato) tomato, which she said is fun to eat but it's not really good to eat. It's very seedy and the plant is covered with thorns. Her theory is that it must be good for you otherwise why would it have so many thorns, it must be protecting some secret.

Melinda shared her experience studying in Central America where she did research for her Master's degree in International Agriculture and focused on agroforestry and multiple cropping systems. She was the only student from the US and one of only three women in the program. During her second year she studied the productivity of existing farming systems. These were sustainable small family farms which consisted of cash crops, food crops, medicinal herbs, and animals, and were primarily organic.

She concluded her talk with a mention of an article from *Organic Gardener* which claims that gardening might make you smarter due to a soil organism which decreases anxiety and increases serotonin. "It's good to garden," she said, and with that, invited us to tour her meandering garden. Of note were her pest control methods: old CDs set on the ground to keep the flea beetles away from eggplant and to scare birds away, and beer in shallow cans to attract and kill earwigs and roly-poly bugs.

Her cauliflower and cabbage has done very well; she cut them down after eating the first heads, and they sprouted back and grew new heads. A solar cooker that doubles as garden art was employed cooking red lentils next to a Chitalpa tree which



Lychee tomato

blooms with light pink flowers from early spring to late fall.

We saw the thorny Lychee tomato plants, and after tasting a few, most of us agreed that they really were not very good.





October Meeting

Our October meeting was held at La Familia Pumpkin Farm, located on the South side of Los Osos Valley Road, just outside of San Luis Obispo. It was a picture perfect day, and we have the pictures to prove it.

Our hosts were the owners of the farm and ranch, Wendy Spradin and her Portuguese water dog, who took a chair in the front row to hear her speak. Within the hundreds or so acres of the ranch, with varying micro-climates throughout, they grow many varieties of winter squash, avocados, and livestock. We did not see the avocados, which



are tucked away where the frost and wind are kept at bay. We did see lots of pumpkins! Larry Hollis tried to estimate the number of these charmers and finally just said, "There are thousands and thousands."

Wendy talked of the history of the ranch and of farming in the valley. Originally subdivided in the 1800s, the property has been farmed for a very long time and there has always been a happy

relationship between the owners and farmers who have lived there together. The Luis family has operated the pumpkin farm for over 30 years, and boy do they know their business! After Wendy told us tales of settlers and farmers, Mary, Manuel and Leonard Reis listened to our questions—how do they manage to grow pumpkins, which are heat loving plants, in such a cool and windy climate? And how do they get so many of these squash on each plant? Unfortunately, these seemingly simple questions do not have simple answers. I think it takes a lifetime to learn.

A fantastic display of pumpkins in all sizes and colors are grown at La Familia Pumpkin Farm and offered for sale with such festive display that Halloween Day could hardly compete with a visit to this pumpkin farm. They were open for business while we were there, and hosted us while not missing a beat with their steady stream of customers, which ended up including most of us as well. I asked if they had any kabocha squash, one of my favorites for a good winter soup, and learned that they were not ripe yet, would be available at the farmers' markets in San Luis Obispo, but not until after Halloween.



Joe introduces Wendy while her mascot stands watch

I bought some butternut squash to eat this month.

Larry brought a prized plum tree for the first new member to pay their CRFG dues at our meeting. The lucky winner was Myron Heavin. Welcome Myron!!

—Gary Fourer



Mary, Manuel, & Leonard receive CRFG mugs from Gary & Larry



Myron gets the prized plum tree



LEAFLET CALENDAR

CRFG Central Coast Chapter Meetings

November 13, 2010.
Templeton High School
with Erin Thompson.

December 11, 2010.
Annual Potluck and
Plant Exchange.

January 8, 2011. Our
annual Pruning
Meeting. Learn by
doing. This is a very
popular meeting
so plan to join the
crowd. Don't forget
to bring your pruning
shears, clippers,
loppers, handsaws,
and gloves. More
information to come.

February 19, 2011. Mark
your calendars—this
meeting will be on the
third Saturday—for our
annual Grafting Event
and Scion Exchange.
This has been the
most heavily attended
meeting of past years!
Plan on coming early
for grafting lessons
and the scion exchange.
There will be grafting
supplies for sale.

Check the website
for more details.
www.crfg-central.org

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

November 13: Our
hosts will be Erin
Thompson and some
of her students in the
Youth Program at the
Templeton High School
Ag Department. Lassen
Canyon Nursery has
donated 100 dormant
Mojave strawberry plants
for this meeting. The
first 100 people to come
in the door (students,
CRFG members, guests)
will take home one
dormant strawberry
plant after the two-part
lesson on planting and
care. Refreshments to be
provided by the S through
Z group. (This means
that if your last name
begins with one of these
letters, it's your chance
to bring refreshments!)

Lassen Canyon Nursery

grows strawberry plants
for both the commercial
grower and the home
gardener. They have
been in business for over
50 years, committed to
growing the finest quality
strawberry plants in the
world. The plants they are
donating will be the new
Mojave variety—so new
they don't even list it on
their catalog yet. These
were specifically designed
for the California
short-day (June-bearing)
growing season, and are
adapted to planting in
the early fall for winter
production. Each Mojave
strawberry plant can
produce between 3 and
4 pounds of strawberries
during the fruiting period
(December to June)
under optimal conditions.
Mojave strawberry plants
have moderate to high
plant vigor, especially
in the early parts of the
season, withstand winter
rains very well, and
produce consistently
bright, shiny red berries.
Their major drawback
for commercial growers

is that they are less firm
than other varieties, a
trait that some garden
growers may even favor.

December 11: Annual
Potluck and Plant
Exchange at the PG&E
Community Center.
This meeting begins
at 12 noon and is a full
meal, not just snacks.
Bring food to share
and wear colors of the
Season! Bring plants
for the exchange, if you
can. All plants are to
be labeled before they
arrive with the following
information: Name
of plant (edible or not
edible?), origin if known,
and contact information
on donor—either email
or a phone number.

Directions: From
Highway 101, take the
San Luis Bay Drive
exit and go west. Turn
left onto the frontage
road, which is Ontario
Road. The Community
Center is located about
half a block from there
at 6588 Ontario Road.

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