

Dear Friends of the Fruiting Plants:



At left you see **the very first dragon fruit to grow in the CRFG Orchard!** Orchard co-manager Jesse Englert noticed dragon fruit plants flowering in the orchard, and notified Joe Sabol. Joe grabbed his container of magic dragon fruit pollen from his home flowers and doused two orchard flowers. Lo and behold!

Jesse has learned a lot about dragon fruit thanks to Joe. Joe shared Jesse's thank you letter:

Joe,

What a treat it was yesterday to tour your garden and dragon fruit orchard! I want you to know that I very much appreciate you taking the time to meet with me and share some fruit, cuttings, and most importantly: knowledge. Seeing what you've done with your garden is inspiring...I have so many ideas now.

I repotted two of the rooted cuttings yesterday so they should be much happier.



Today my wife, Meghan, took one of the fruits you gave me to our daughters kindergarten class. She used it to teach the kids about dragon fruit and they spent some time making drawings of it. Attached is a photo of their activity.

*Thank you again,
Jesse Englert*

Articles Needed For The December Newsletter!

Thank you to everyone who contributed articles to the November newsletter!

We need articles for next month's newsletter and are eager to see what you've been up to! Send your story and pictures to crfgccnewsletter@gmail.com. The December newsletter deadline is Sunday, December 20th, 2020.

Please consider contributing your own articles. They can be a few sentences or span several pages. You can send your text and pictures in different emails- whatever is easiest for you.

Request For 5, 10, 15, and 20 Gallon Pots

We are looking for donations of 5, 10, 15 and 20 gallon pots in which to repot the trees and other plants we've started for CRFG members, donations, and fund-raising events. If you have any you can spare, please email crfgccnewsletter@gmail.com. Thank you.

CRFG Donations To Non-Profits

Years ago, Marv Daniels started the tradition of grafting apple trees and donating them to local non-profit agencies. A few years ago Tucker Schmidt joined him in this effort. Buying their own rootstock, using their own pots, soil, and water, Marv and Tucker nurtured dozens of trees. Once they were old enough, Marv coordinated with agencies to get these trees to the annual fundraising events.

This year CRFG donated the apple MMIII rootstock to the cause. Manny and Dara joined the team this year and together Marv, Tucker, Manny and Dara grafted 30 apple trees.

Then the coronavirus pandemic struck, thwarting the fundraising plans of most non-profits. However, two of the nonprofits worked out a way to hold online auctions. **A**

pair of apple trees (a Pink Lady and a Gala) were given each to ECHO Homeless Shelter and Big Brothers Big Sisters of San Luis Obispo County.

The remaining grafted apple trees continue to grow. We look forward to donating older, bigger apple trees to the non-profits next year!



Winner of the October "Guess The Answer" Contest

The winner of October's contest is Jane Hind, who correctly guessed that this ugly fruit was a "lemon!" Congratulations Jane! The 2019 Ugly Fruit Contest was held during the October meeting at Rick Tibben's house. The judges, understandably, first thought it was a Buddha's hand. Myron, who brought the fruit and won the contest, revealed its true nature. Jane won an 8-month-old grafted Gala Apple tree. She reported back that it has already been planted at its new home.

Incidentally, Myron sent an update this month, "I have just successfully grown a second ugly lemon, similar to the first one."



Thank you to everyone who participated in last month's contest!

November's "Guess The Answer" Contest:

This month we're looking for a better name for this contest than "Guess The Answer!" Please enter your submissions via email to crfgcnewsletter@gmail.com. The judges will be whomever I can wrangle in to giving an opinion. Winner gets their choice of a young apple, fig, or kei apple tree; or a couple of dragon fruit plants!

Update
Rick Tibben

Thought I would supply some information on my recent exploits. Most of my organic fruit/veggie crop goes to the Nipomo Food Basket (part of the food bank). I have given nearly 3,000 lbs. this year. Here are pictures of some pluerries and oranges ready to go.



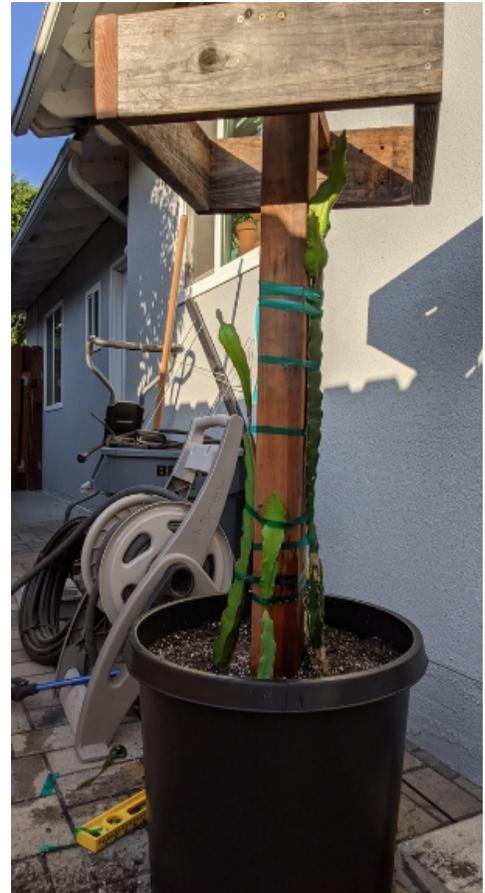
Dragon Fruit Trellis by Jesse Englert

Big thank you to Joe Sabol for giving me a tour of his dragon fruit orchard and getting me started with a few dragon fruit plants and cuttings. Also thanks to Larry Hollis for giving me a few other named cultivars. I'm eager and excited to start growing dragon fruit!

After getting advice from Joe and watching too many YouTube videos, I decided to grow in containers vs planting in ground and to build this simple trellis out of scrap redwood I had lying around.

Materials:

- 4x4 post @ 4 to 5 ft high
- 2x4 or 2x6 (enough to make an 18 inch sq box)
- 2x4 (enough to make a pinwheel base for 4x4 post @ ~9 inch long for each piece)
- 3-1/2" outdoor screws
- 20 gallon "squat" pot (dragon fruit roots are shallow I've been told)



The idea is to train 1 to 4 dragon fruit plants up the 4x4 post until they get to the top and then have them branch over the sides of the top. Fruit development is supposed to occur on the branches that hang down. I ended up putting 3 different varieties ("Condor Purple", "Cal Poly" unknown variety cutting from demonstration orchard, and "Joe Sabol" unnamed variety from his orchard) in my first pot and plan to build several more when my other cuttings root.

Here is a link to the YouTube video I watched with more detailed instructions:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K2XLnrbQ_FI

Saving Tomato Plants When It's 120° Out by Paul Rys

On the day it was 120 in the shade, it was 105 in the shade about 9 AM. I went for a tour of my garden and saw all the tomato plants wilting, and the tips already looking burned.

I knew that if I sprayed the tomato plants they would survive temporarily, but be susceptible to getting infected from various diseases as a result of getting

sprayed. So I gathered about 100 political sign supports (shaped like a large staple) and placed them all over the tomato row, to support various pieces of shade cloth I have used for several years for plant protection.



Paul notes that since these plants were put in the ground in June and July for late tomatoes, they were smaller and easier to cover.

I was running on adrenaline, installing all the staples in the intense heat by myself, and at the same time thinking how I could save all my other plants such as cucumbers, squash, beans, peppers, and berries. I knew that from raising the giant pumpkins it was okay to spray squash plants provided there was enough sunlight to dry the leaves before sunset. That was my plan for everything but the tomato plants. I found all the shade cloth, and placed it on top of the staple supports, and soon all the tomato plants had it made in the shade. It was crazy doing the shade cloth

installation by myself, as I had to keep alternating to each side of the long row to set up the shade cloth correctly.

I kept telling myself that I would go inside soon, and I thought about how good the tomatoes were going to taste. I turned on the drip system for the tomato row after all the plants were protected, then got 150 feet of garden hose and a multiple pattern nozzle sprayer, and sprayed all the other plants. The various varieties of squash plants were wilted, as well as the cucumber plants. I repeatedly sprayed all the plants and myself. It was amazing to see the plants recover within minutes of being sprayed-the leaves were no longer flat on the ground, the plants were happy again.



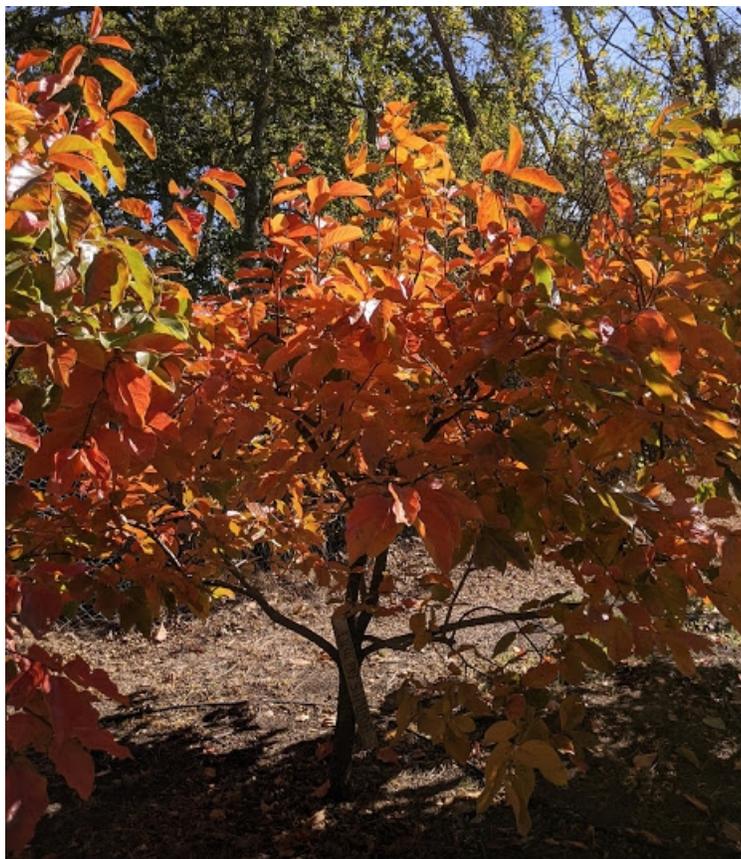
I came back several times that day. I left the shade cloth on the tomato plants for several more days in case the heat wave returned.

I took these photos of the tomatoes I picked on Thanksgiving day, from the tomato row that I saved when it was 120' in the shade. I left the campaign sign "staples" in the row, and they helped support the plants. I count my blessings every day.



In The CRFG Demonstration Orchard

Review of Fruit Production



In May the three **apricot** trees (Gold Kist, Royal Rosa, and an unknown variety) produced a very good crop - everyone who tasted them agrees they were delicious!

In June and July **peaches and nectarines** ripened: there was a good size crop on many trees. We noticed that some of the trees are getting old, not producing well, and need to be removed.

July and August the **plums** produced fruit, but not as much this year as last. The older **Li jujube** also had a light crop of fruit, nowhere near the yield of last year's crop.



Orchard co-manager Jesse Englert contributes the following observations, and all of the pictures on this, the next, and the previous pages:

*"Lots of exciting things happening in the orchard late November. The orchard's **first dragon fruit**, pollinated on October 2nd by Joe Sabol, continues to grow well.*

*"Lots of **Surinam cherries** are ripening to bright orange color. While I do not think the Surinam cherries have a very pleasant taste, my kids would strongly disagree.*

*"The **Dorsett Golden** apple has a bumper 2nd crop of 2020 which required some thinning.*

*"Several **Pakistani mulberries** are getting larger.*

*"A few **Wonderful pomegranates** are cracking. The **persimmons** had barely any fruit this year but they're trying to make up for it by putting on a spectacular fall show with their bright orange leaves."*

While the young **Saijo persimmon** had a decent crop of fruit for its size, the **Hachiya** and the two **Fuyu persimmons** dropped all the fruit they had earlier in the year and brought none to fruition.

Incidentally, we've noticed that other Fuyu persimmons we know of in the area had very light crops this year, and are curious about yours. **Please drop us a note about your fruit crop yields at crfgccnewsletter@gmail.com.** Please include the town in which you live as it would be interesting to compare locales.



Surinam Cherry lovers, stand proud!



Pakistani Mulberries



Dorsett Golden apple 2nd crop of 2020



Saijo Persimmon

We had lots of warm days in October, and noticed this month that several of the trees were blossoming again. We saw flowers on an apple, peach, and nectarine!



New Trees Planted This Year

1. Conadria Fig (Row 14)
2. Red Guava (Row 13)
3. Lemon Guava (Row 13)
4. PawPaw (Row 11)
5. Russian Quince (Row 10)
6. Guava (unknown variety) (Row 8)

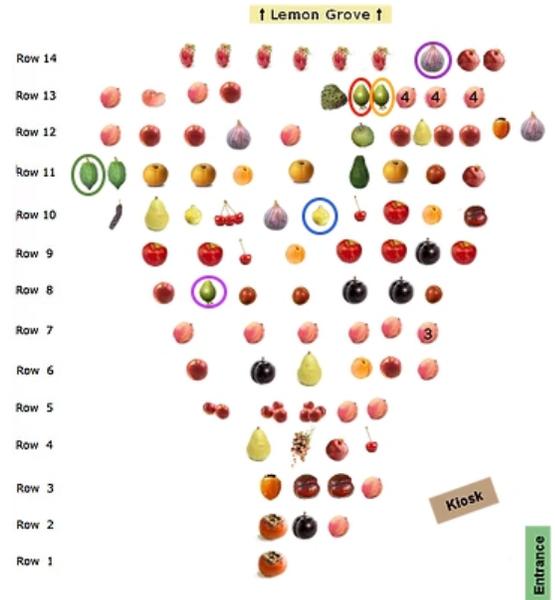
Donators:

- Larry
- Manny
- Larry
- Larry
- Larry
- Tucker

These generous donations will also be planted this December:

- Cherimoya donated by Jenny Weaver
- 2 Sprite/Delight Cherry Plums donated by Richard Schmidt

Orchard Map



Red Guava



Lemon Guava



Guava



Russian Quince



Conadria Fig

Review of Orchard Maintenance

1. Mark Woefle replaced fence post on front gate 5/6/2020
2. Back gate post by lemon grove rotted out. Gate fell down. Dara/Manny/Adela stretched wire fencing to cover the exposed entrance.
3. New airless wheel installed on wheelbarrow.
4. Cal Poly's Facilities department reattached a valve to an upright that had blown off. 7/9/2020. Manny and Dara replaced that valve with a new one.
5. Mark, James, Will, & Dara mowed and weed whacked the orchard at various times during the year.
6. Manny cut the large overhanging limbs of the trees outside the fence on the east side of the orchard to allow the orchard to have more light.
7. Jesse, Maggie, and Henry thinned fruit and cleaned up fallen fruit almost weekly and pruned trees to control growth.
8. Ongoing replacement and repair of drip lines and emitters
9. Brush pile in the back of the orchard was dragged out to the lemon grove by Manny and Dara for Cal Poly staff to turn in to mulch. 11/2/2020.



10. Dixon Smith came up with the great idea of planting passion fruit vines by the orchard fence. He is busy propagating new vines. If you have passion fruit vines to contribute, please let us know.

Future Plans For The Orchard

For the past year we've been taking notes on which trees bear fruit, which are our favorites, and which are less than inspiring. This information will help us decide which trees to remove to make room others, or use for grafting better-tasting varieties.

We have some conflicting notes about certain trees due to the fruit being sampled before it was completely ripe, or all the fruit being sampled before we could note it, giving the impression that the tree was not bearing or not bearing well. Next year we'll watch these trees and continue to take notes.

If you visit the orchard next year be sure to grab the orchard log book (you'll find it in the kiosk) and note your opinions about the fruit!

Here's the consensus thus far:

Favorites

- All 3 Apricots: Gold Kist, Royal Rosa, and an unknown variety
- Desert Delight Nectarine
- Peaches: Desert Golden, Donut, Giant Tasty, Red Baron, Santa Barbara, Tropic Snow
- Flavor King Pluot
- Apples: Golden Dorsett, Red Fuji
- Li Jujube
- Minnie Royal Cherry
- Pineapple Pear
- Saijo Persimmon
- Wonderful Pomegranate

Little/No Fruit

- Cherries (little fruit, though more than in past years. May be due to their young age.)
- PawPaws (still young)
- Mulberry (still young)
- Cherimoya (still young)
- Avocado (young, traumatized from snacking deer)
- Fuju Persimmons
- Hachiya Persimmons

Trees To Be Removed

These trees are scheduled for removal in 2021 either for low to no crop yields, sickness, or to make room for more variety within the orchard.

Row 13: 3 grafted peach trees. Grafts include Eva's Pride, Desert Gold, May Pride, Florida Prince, Mid Pride: These trees bear little to no fruit. And unfortunately, we don't know the specific variety of each branch any more because the signs have fallen over time.

Row 12: Desert Dawn Nectarine, Arctic Star White Nectarine: These trees bear little to no fruit.

Row 9: Anna Apple: sick

Row 8: Dapple Dandy Pluot: sick

Row 2: Plum of unknown variety: never fruits



Sick Anna Apple



Dapple Dandy sick with Gummosis. Big thanks to Jenny for researching and identifying this disease. Other trees in the orchard will be inspected for this disease and removed.