

The Leaflet

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

Volume 15 • Issue 4—July-August 2012



*Pushing the limits
and the range of fruit
cultivation worldwide!*

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House Guests of the Feathered Kind

—by Monica Cantu

SO WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF CONSTRUCTING NEW RAISED BEDS IN THE GARDEN. Last winter, our friend Larry was kind enough to build us a barn owl nesting box which he helped install. Can you see the little nesting box near the top



Raised bed construction near the
new owl house



Owlets peaking out of their nest

middle of the picture in front of the tree? We hoped to attract an owl family this spring and we DID! A few days prior to working on the beds, we caught little owlets looking out of their box probably getting some air, because it was a hot day.

Knowing the nesting box must get hot during the day, Carie thought to construct a fence on the ground around the owl box to protect the owlets from our animals in case they fall out. Mama (correction: that's Papa) kept a suspicious eye on us the entire time from a nearby tree. Can you see him in the very middle? Later I took a close up through my fancy telephoto (binoculars) lens (see inset).



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EDITOR'S MESSAGE



This has felt like a cold Nipomo summer to me, and to my vegetables. Things are growing so slowly this year, except for the borage which is filling in everywhere that the usual veggies are scarce. Well enough, it feeds the bees, adds a little color to our salads, and makes an excellent pottage herb. With this weather, I'm ready for a pot of soup or a rich stew!

In this issue we feature a story of an owl family written by Monica Cantu and sent in by Carrie Sindt, CRFG members from Paso Robles. Larry responded with some information on responsible pesticide use.

Several people have asked me if I might include a question-and-answer department in these pages. It turns out that the way to get that going is to write in with a question. Myron had some observations about his peach and nectarine trees and the plague of leaf curl, so I've posted it along with an explanation in our latest feature, In and About the Orchard.

This is all very exciting for me as I have a vision of making this *your* newsletter. So I hope for more of this interaction in the coming months. Feel free to send information my way about what each of us in our local chapter is doing. And questions and ideas are always welcome.

Happy Growing, Gary Fourer LeafletEditor@aol.com

The Leaflet

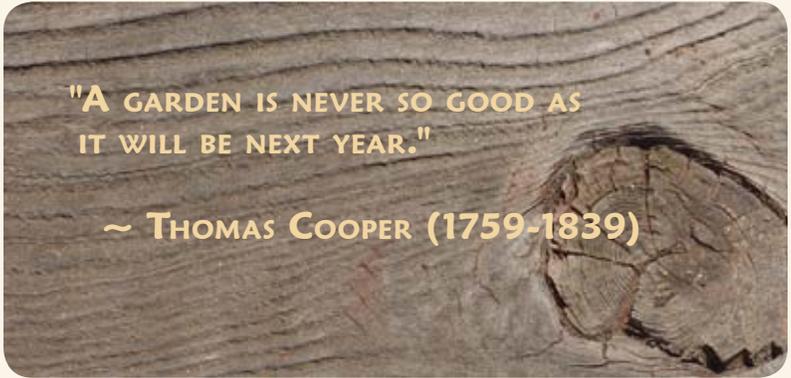
Distributed bimonthly by the Central Coast chapter of the California Rare Fruit Growers, Inc. to share ideas, news, and activities of interest to our local chapter.

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CRFG 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.



"A GARDEN IS NEVER SO GOOD AS IT WILL BE NEXT YEAR."
~ THOMAS COOPER (1759-1839)

Through the Fence

Passing of Clifford Chapman

In August last year we held our chapter meeting at the home of Clifford Chapman. I am saddened to report the news of his passing. He was an exceptional gardener and orchardist, as well as a very generous supporter of the arts in our County. We will be choosing a tree to plant in his honor in our demonstration orchard next winter.

CRFG Scholarships

As you might remember, at our May CRFG Meeting, we voted to continue our scholarship program with Cal Poly SLO and offer two scholarships, each for \$1000. This is our LOCAL chapter conducting and financing this scholarship...

As it turned out, there were three entrants who were so impressive that the committee convinced our chapter leadership to increase the program to three scholarships!! Joe Sabol wrote letters of congratulations to all three of them, told them the checks would be sent to Dr. Garner at Cal Poly... and that they would be welcome at our chapter meetings. They have been added to our distribution list to know when and where our meetings are! Those who attend may be offered a surprise gift!

Compost Donation

The donation of five yards of high quality compost was made by Mark Woelfle. AirVol delivered the stuff to two corners of our Cal Poly/CRFG Orchard. We put it at the "far end" corners, near the lemon orchard. This is super good quality stuff!!! What a nice gesture by Mark... He "won" the five yard load in a contest and had no room in his yard for



Clifford Chapman hosted our August 2011 meeting at his Shell Beach home.

FIVE yards and immediately thought of our CRFG Orchard. A big thanks to Mark for thinking of our orchard when he won this very special prize!

My Cup of Tea —Margaret

On July 20th, Gary and I whiled away an afternoon at a complimentary tea tasting in a San Francisco tea shop. We walked into The Aroma Tea Shop on Clement Street in the Richmond district around 4 o'clock and walked out feeling quite alert at 6 o'clock. This shop is owned by Haymen Da Luz and Ying Wu. On this visit, Haymen entertained us with his quick wit and humor while pouring us a personalized selection of green, white, oolong, and pu-erh teas at his customized marble tea bar. Haymen intertwined facts about tea plants, picking and processing the leaves, and preparing tea while keeping track of all the teas we sampled. They were mostly Oolong and a few green teas. We purchased more of Gary's tea that he has each morning with a bowl of fresh fruit, and a few

Through the Fence

teas new to us: One is a Ginger Oolong. This tea is made with pieces of fresh white ginger mixed with the tea leaves, which are then fermented and dried together. The other, called Supreme Osmanthus Oolong, is a tea from Taiwan (familiar to some as Formosa), also known as Gui Hua Oolong. These



Ying Wu, co-owner of The Aroma Tea Shop, checks out some tea at the source.

will keep us healthily caffeinated until our next San Francisco travels. I'm not a total convert though; there's nothing like a strong cup of "joe" in the morning. Speaking of caffeine, tea also contains theanine, which is said to counterbalance the effects of caffeine. See our review of a book on the chemistry of tea in the "Leaflet Review". Visit the Aroma Tea Shop online at www.aromateashop.com.

Careful Use of Rodenticides

—from Larry Hollis

Ronni Kern's letter in the March-April Fruit Gardner relating the unfortunate secondary kill risks of using rat poisons inspired me to write. Although I personally think that traps, such as the one described in the May & June issue by Jack Swords, are less likely to cause unintended consequences, there are times when rodenticides are going to be used, so using one that has been shown to cause fewer or no secondary kills would logically be the more environmentally friendly.

Several years ago I asked the folks at Farm Supply here in San Luis Obispo if there were rodent poisons that were safe to use around domestic animals and raptors, something that wouldn't kill a cat or hawk that ate a poisoned gopher for instance. They suggested Erazze, manufactured and sold by Matomco, Ltd. and listed as effective against rats, mice and gophers. This product is also effective against ground squirrels and other species. I contacted Motomco to get more information about their product and was directed to their Crop and Rangeland Business Development Manager, Christian Bagocius, who described the way Erazze and other zinc phosphide-based rodenticides work. Unlike anti-coagulant type baits, zinc phosphide kills the rodent that eats it by forming a toxic gas in the animals stomach rapidly kills the animal and then disperses. Poison may remain in the stomach only for several days so that if a raptor picks up the dead animal there is little likelihood that it will be harmed. He also stated that most raptors do not eat the contents of their preys' stomachs; this provides another degree of safety. Mr. Bagocius sent several university studies on this subject, links follow.

Also please understand that zinc phosphide baits are deadly to almost any animal that eats the bait, so caution should be used in choosing where the baits are placed. Martin Berghuis, in the March & April FG, describes a homemade bait station made of PVC pipe that might be useful in reducing access to the bait by unintended species.

I hope this information helps save a few gopher eating raptors and some four legged friends.



For more information, refer to these websites:

- <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1080&context=gpwdcwp>
- http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-10370_12150_12220-26326--,00.html
- <http://animalscience.ucdavis.edu/avian/pfs23.htm>

LEAFLET RECIPES

Fresh Apple Cake from the kitchen of Priscilla Fourer

Apple season will be here before we know it. As this recipe calls for four apples, it provides a delicious method for putting the harvest to use.

1 1/2 cups sugar
3/4 cup oil
3 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
4 cups diced apples
(peeled and cored first)
1 cup chopped walnuts
1 1/2 cups raisins, optional

1. Beat together sugar and oil.
2. Add eggs and beat till well mixed.
3. Add vanilla.
4. Sift together dry ingredients and beat in slowly on mixer, or by hand but beat in well.
5. Add apple, nuts, and raisins, and mix.
6. Pour into lightly greased and floured Bundt pan (or a 9 x 13 pan).



7. Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for about an hour, or until cake tests done.



A harvest of Beverly Hills apples

House Guests —continued

So back to working on the garden beds... like I said, it was hot, so I thought I could help cool down the owlets by watering the adjacent apple tree and the ground around them. I started to shoot water up into the tree, then on the ground and to my surprise...I saw this little guy with another behind him.



So ugly so cute, right?! I hollered for Carie...



...and she got him out safely. We put them in a box on the ground until we figured out what we should do. Thinking the nesting box was too hot, we devised a shade for the side, and put a screened hole on two sides for ventilation.

We picked up the two owlets and put them back in the nest with their other sibling as quick as we could.



Papa was asleep until we started messing with the nest and then I saw his eyes go wide.

All seemed good until night fall. We often watch for them, and made a point to do so this night after messing with the nesting box. Papa owl tried to land on the box, as one or both parents usually do at that time. After a few attempts, he wouldn't land with the shade screen there! The owlets eat 2-5 rodents (mainly mice) a night – so the adults have to get to them to feed them. We ran out with ladder and drill, and Carie kindly helped ME up the ladder to remove the shade screen. Papa owl did not like that and hovered over my head. Carie helped by telling me, “watch out.” ☺ We got out of there and waited for some time. Knowing the adults can abandon or even cannibalize their young if their nest is messed with, we were worried. But finally, papa owl came back and landed on the box, and then he flew off on his hunting spree. A parent owl was there again at 5 this morning so we assume all is well for now.



House Guests —continued

After putting the owlets back in their nesting box on the 1st of June and seeing mama and papa owl land on the box, all was well except it was still hot. So we built a new roof attachment for the box to allow air to flow between the box and the roof with a 6" awning on the west side.



It didn't fit as we had planned since apparently our contractor expanded the box a bit...



but it passed the landing test, so success!

So with the after-market sun-shade installed, all was well... until June 11, the night we didn't see either parent fly to the box. The owlets "psssssch psssssch" loudly all night until dawn. The information we found advises not to put the owl box near your bedroom, and now we know why.

That morning, we didn't see mama or papa in the tree, and had good reason to believe there was no feeding that previous night. So at 6 a.m., we searched the internet and found a wide range

of advice. We didn't want to interfere with them and we didn't want them to starve – they weren't that far from fledging. We decided to feed them a little raw organic chicken, and buy some frozen mice at the local pet food store if needed later. Opening the box's side panel, we found 2 owlets alive but not looking so good, and 2 owlets that had long been deceased which we removed.



The photo of mama sitting on top of the box is the last time we saw her land on the box waiting for her mate, and to-date, we have not seen him. Sadly, on June 11th we found a dead male barn owl on the highway, and June 12th we found a dead female barn owl, both within half a mile of home.



So at night we continued to feed 2 small thawed frozen mice to each owlet using forceps and wearing a headlamp. Hopefully all they see is a scary bright light and we still had hope that one

House Guests —continued

parent was feeding in the night, but we had read the likelihood of a parent returning after leaving was not good. After a day of feeding, they were beginning to look better, psssssching louder, and ripping the food off the forceps faster.

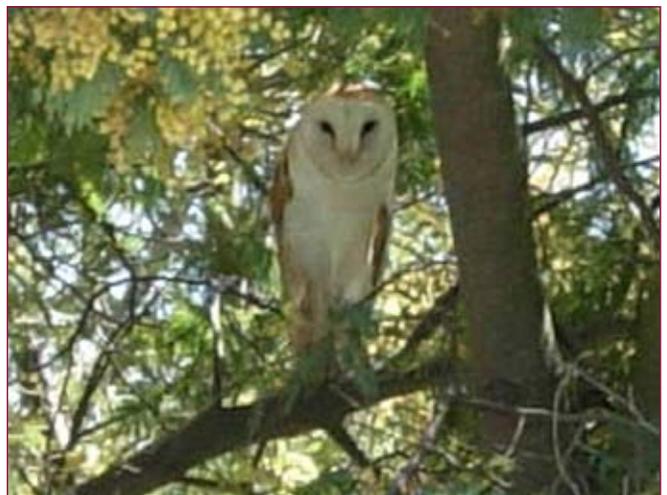


Then on June 13th...



who do we see but the mama in the tree!?

We were elated and decided to leave her in peace (I got out of having to mow the lawn that day). She seems to be doing just fine: we hear the owlets being fed in the night, and she lands on the box now and then, but not at the beginning of her night like she used to waiting for her mate. It seems sad, being a single mom and all the feeding she must do. Carie thinks she should apply for some government assistance. I don't know, but we gotta get rid of these dead mice in my freezer! ■



IN LOVING MEMORY OF PAPA OWL

Did you know?

- An adult owl can consume 1 to 3 rodents per day.
- There are at least 19 species of owl that live in the United States year round.
- Owls natural predators are eagles and wild cats. Small owls are hunted by hawks, falcons, foxes, snakes, and even larger owls.
- Threats from human activities include chemical contamination, habitat alteration, power lines, and automobiles.

The Leaflet Review

Chemistry and Applications of Green Tea

Takehiko Yamamoto, Taiyo Kagaku Co., Ltd., Japan; Lekh Raj Juneja, Taiyo Kagaku Co., Ltd., Mie, Japan; sDjong-Chi Chu, Taiyo Kagaku Co., Ltd., Japan; Mujo Kim, Taiyo Kagaku Co., Ltd., Japan

CRC Press LLC. Boca Raton, FL. 1997. 176 pages

Review by Jose Gallego

Many books describe the therapeutic properties of herbs. Most of them present testimonials empirically rather than using a scientific approach. *Chemistry and Applications of Green Tea* is the result of 10 years of scientific approach to many of the testimonials regarding the properties of the Green Tea.

For more than 1,000 years green tea has been used in Japan as a medicinal herb and as a refreshing after-meals drink. Over time, many therapeutic properties have been ascribed to it. This book focuses on the following:

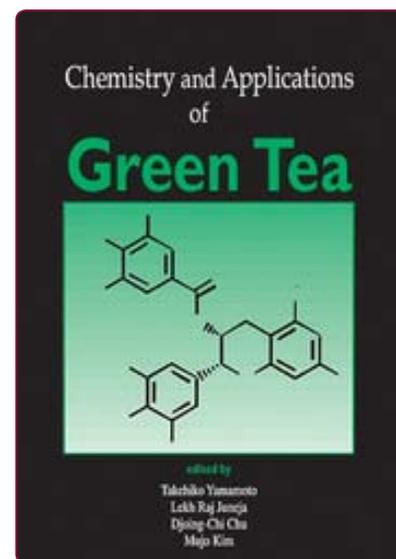
- Significant effects on chemo-prevention of colon cancer and adenine-induced renal failure.
- The relaxing effects of theanine-amino acid in green tea.
- Improvement of intestinal microflora.
- Use of green tea as an antioxidant that neutralizes harmful free radicals.
- The deodorant effects of tea flavonoids and polyphenols.
- Inhibition of Streptococcus mutans, a major cause of tooth decay.

At the beginning is an introduction to tea cultivation and the tea plant, a kind of evergreen laurel tree, *Camellia sinensis*, of the Theaceae family.

Then follows a description of processing leaves for green tea. In tea production, teas are classified according to their degree of fermentation. Green tea is unfermented, oolong tea is semi-fermented and black tea is fully fermented.

Green tea is classified into eight different products, depending on how the plant has been cultivated (more than 90 percent shading, 40-50 percent shading or non-shading), how it is harvested, if enzyme activation was used and the type of processing (drying, grinding and/or roasting). Of these, the Gyokuro is considered the highest quality and Bancha the lowest. Sencha is produced in larger quantity than any of the others, followed by Bancha and then by Matcha. Gyokuro represents only 0.4 percent of green tea production--the process is considered more art than manufacturing.

In listing the chemical composition of green tea, the book shows that reported concentrations are dependent mainly on the season the leaves are harvested, the condition of the soil and the process used for the final tea product. Compounds listed include polyphenols, caffeine, amino acids (including theanine),



vitamins, inorganic elements, carbohydrates and lipids. This is organic chemistry at its best, showing how the polyphenols are separated and purified. Also described in detail is the analytical equipment used to detect and quantify tea's main components.

In the remaining chapters, empirical descriptions are brought into the laboratory and confirmed or denied. Here, scientists use modern analytical equipment (such as gas chromatography), experimental design and chemometrics (statistical methods for analysis of laboratory data). Unlike many other herb books, anecdotal statements are taken to the laboratory and tested under strict controls.

This book is an excellent source of information on using high technology and strict laboratory procedures to test empirical

continued on page 10

FOOD IN HISTORY



Kimch'i

Kimch'i, a fermented cabbage dish made with a blend of radish, garlic, salt, vinegar, chili peppers, and spices, is a traditional food of Korea. Its origins date back to at least 2,600 years ago, when it was mentioned in a collection of Chinese poetry titled *Book of Si-Kyong*. The poem contains a stanza which says, "a cucumber has grown on the bank of the field, and pickle it for worshipping ancestor." At the time of Si-Kyong, many Koreans lived in the Manchurian region, and it may be that they made kimch'i to preserve the vitamins and minerals in vegetables to help get them through the long cold Manchurian winters.

During the Three Kingdoms period (57 B.C. - 668 A.D.) there is record of pickling as follows: "The Kogureou People are good at making brewing dreg, malt, bran, and pickling."

By the latter part of the Koryo period (918 - 1392), regional differences in kimch'i recipes had developed. Different spices were used according to local tastes. The most common spices

and garnishes were salt, garlic, and fermented fish paste.

Traditionally, the cabbage used in kimch'i is of the Pekinensis group, also known as Celery and Napa Cabbage. Cabbage, of the species Brassicaceae, is descended from a wild mustard plant also known as sea cabbage or wild cabbage, which was common along the coastal regions of the Mediterranean. Red chili peppers, a New World vegetable, were introduced to Korea from Japan in the 1600s and ground chili peppers were added to Kimch'i, quickly gaining in popularity.

Kimch'i can be eaten both fresh and fermented. It is a high-fiber, low-fat food that is rich in vitamins A, B, and C, and in calcium, and iron. It also contains a number of lactic acid bacteria, such as *Lactobacillus kimchii*. The benefits of this healthy bacteria include better digestion, preventing infections, and even possibly reducing cancer growth.

In her historical novel, *The Living Reed*, set from the late 1800s to the end of the Second World War in Korea, Pearl S. Buck wrote an account of the process of making of kimch'i. A portion of the account is excerpted here:



"Il-han...smelled the sharp autumn fragrance of cabbage freshly cut. Could it be already time again to make kimchee for the winter? He rose and looked out of the window. Yes, there in the courtyard were piles of celery cabbages, brought in from the farm, doubtless, the day before. Two serving women were washing the cabbages in tubs of salted water and two more were brushing long white radishes clean of earth while still two others were chopping both cabbages and radishes into fine pieces. At a table set outdoors on this fine clear morning Sunia, wrapped in a blue apron, was mixing the spices. Hot red peppers, ground fresh ginger, onions, garlic, and ground cooked beef she was mixing together, exactly to his taste and according to the Kim family recipe."

Chemistry and Applications of Green Tea

continued from page 9

testimonials. It is gratifying to read a book that is neither selling you anything nor promising the miracle properties of an elixir; instead, this book presents facts.

As a side note, right after reading Chemistry and

Applications of Green Tea I started drinking green tea on a regular basis. Okay, it is not the best tasting tea; polyphenols don't really taste good, you know; that is why I have been purchasing the tea with Jasmine flowers.

This review appears on the website of CRFG, Inc. and is used here by permission. If you choose to purchase a copy of this book, remember that a percentage of your purchase will be donated to CRFG when you access <http://www.crfg.org/pubs/books.html> and use the search tool at the bottom of that page to begin shopping on Amazon.com.

In and About the Orchard

Peach Leaf Curl

Question

From Myron Heavin—

It is now July, and what do we do about peach leaf curl in July. (We know we spray them in December, but what about July)?

One of our nectarine trees was so infected in May with peach leaf curl, with every single leaf simply totally distorted and dying, I thought we would lose the tree for sure. And I did not take off very many leaves at all for fear there would be nothing left alive at all.

Our peach tree had a bad case, and I systematically took off all the infected leaves.

Today the peach tree has an occasional leaf with peach leaf curl, all the leaves on the nectarine tree died, and new ones sprang up that were not infected at all, and today everything seems fine. So today the tree I did nothing about has no signs of peach leaf curl, but the one I systematically took off the leaves still has a few infected areas.

I scratch my head and say, I simply do not understand at all.



A tree with some leaf curl remaining.

Answer

New leaves that grow out in the summer will not be infected. So your nectarine tree that dropped all of its leaves due to peach leaf curl grew out all new leaves with no sign of the disease. Don't let this fool you, the spores will still be present and the same thing will happen next year unless you spray next winter to gain control.

Your peach tree did not drop all of its leaves, and the remaining infected leaves are most likely ones that budded out in the spring, not the new summer leaves.

Infected leaves that fell should be removed from the orchard to reduce the spores in the area. -Editor

More Information

From the Department of Botany, Plant Pathology, Purdue University, Paul C. Pecknold, Extension Plant Pathologist:

Control is impossible once symptoms are visible. If a dormant spray has been neglected, and disease develops, the fruit on affected trees should be thinned to compensate for the loss of leaves. In addition, fertilize and water trees to help maintain tree vigor—and be sure to get a leaf curl spray on next year!

From ProIPM, Integrated Pest Management for the Landscaping Professional:

If growing peaches, remove affected leaves as soon as possible to avoid spread of spores. Carefully place in sealed bags and discard in garbage. Pruning affected shoots will also provide some control by reducing the total spore load.



Peach leaf curl distorts the leaves.

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.

Check the website for more details.

www.crfg-central.org/calendar.htm

August 11:
Black Diamond Vermicompost. Location: Just east of Paso Robles. Vermicompost will be for sale. This is a worm farm with worms for sale! See this site for more information: <http://www.slocountyworms.com>

Our host: Cristy Christie (805) 237-7752

Call Joe Sabol for additional details. (805) 544-1056

It is a short distance off the main paved road (Linne) that is dirt to your destination. And there are two places where signage is either very bad or non-existent. Some folks have luck with GPS others do not. I think the map is fairly clear though.

September: No Local Chapter Meeting - go to CRFG Festival of Fruit in Santa Rosa!! (more information below.)

THE CRFG FESTIVAL OF FRUIT 2012 – THE YEAR OF HEIRLOOM FRUIT, WILL BE HELD THIS YEAR ON MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 11, 12, AND 13 IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE 2ND ANNUAL HEIRLOOM EXPO IN SANTA ROSA, CA. HISTORICAL, HERITAGE, HEIRLOOM AND EXOTIC FRUITS OF ALL KINDS WILL BE CELEBRATED, WITH SPEAKERS, DISPLAYS, AND TASTINGS AT THE NATIONAL HEIRLOOM EXPO. THE SCHEDULE IS STILL BEING FORMED, AND IS ALREADY FILLING UP.

THE NATIONAL HEIRLOOM EXPOSITION ADMISSION PRICE: ADULTS \$10.00 OR 3 DAYS FOR \$25, ANYONE 17 AND UNDER GETS IN FREE. HOURS: 11 AM TO 9 PM DAILY
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- SONOMA WINE COUNTRY 3555 ROUND BARN BOULEVARD

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