

The Leaflett

California Rare Fruit Growers - Central Coast Chapter Newsletter
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2006 – The Year of the Healthful Grape



Festival of Fruit 2006

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
September 5 – September 9



By the time you read this, the Festival of Fruit will be nearly upon us. If you **haven't** registered for this incredible event yet, you still have time! The list of tours and speakers is outstanding. Our hardworking steering committee (many of them shown in the photo on the left), led by Joe Sabol and Pet Daniels, has done an extraordinary job in putting together a Festival that will long be remembered by the attendees. We have 25 speakers coming from all over the world. Don't miss out!

As Pet Daniels, Steering Committee Co-chair says: "Our once in a

decade Extravaganza will be held September 5-9 with tours of our members' gardens, nurseries and places of extreme interest in our county and Santa Barbara County.

It's not too late to register to attend the Festival of Fruit! For the registration fee you will be able to enjoy all the wonderful things we have planned for the past 12 months plus a FREE lunch on Saturday! We have many great FREE door prizes! We have FREE grape vines grown by our chapter subscribers for each registrant; we have a wonderful selection of speakers and tours, and a rare opportunity to hear and see our Secretary of Agriculture for the State of California! That is really special! He will be our Keynote Speaker on Friday at 1 PM in the Chumash Auditorium, on the Cal Poly Campus! On Saturday we have over 21



Break-out Sessions for you to choose from, including one taught by Markku Hakkinen, a Banana Research Scientist coming here all the way from Helsinki, Finland!

Be there or be square! Fun, fun, fun and we will be learning, too! Visit [CRFG 2006 Festival of Fruit](#) or register with Evelyn Ruehr by contacting her at (805) 528- 0151." (That's Roger Eberhardt, our former chapter co-chair, in the photo showing off the wonderful banner that Larry Hollis designed. You can see what a professional event this is going to be!)

Dave Wilson Fruit Tasting Event

What a lot of work went into the brief afternoon of fruit tasting, but the rewards were great, too! Tom Spellman and his crew from Dave Wilson Nursery arrived Friday afternoon with a trailer loaded with boxes holding 46 different varieties of fruits—all tree ripened and ready to eat! The boxes were unloaded and placed in the Cal Poly Crops Unit waiting for the doors to open for the fruit tasting event the following afternoon at 1 PM. According to their website, fruit tasting events are a Dave Wilson Nursery marketing innovation. Reports of the evaluations are published each year along with a periodic summary of several years' reports. These reports provide a useful aid to nurseries and the home orchardist to help in the selection of the best-tasting fruit varieties.

Joe Sabol had divided the volunteers into three shifts. He'd warned that the first shift would be the busiest—and it was! Sandra Pirghaibi took time to set up the wonderful chapter history books she just finished and our chapter subscribers and visitors alike were able to peruse the books at leisure. (In Joe Sabol's photo on the right, Pet Daniels explains some event to Ed of Dave Wilson Nursery.) Thank you, Sandra!



Everyone ate more fruit than they probably needed to eat, but it was all so good, it was impossible have just one bite! The voting was fun, although it was difficult to choose exactly which fruit was one's favorite! Everyone seemed to have a different idea of "best" and lots of animated discussions went on over the merits of one variety over another. Several guests thought there would be more exotic fruits to taste, like mangos or guavas, because our organization is called "rare" fruit growers, but that didn't seem to stop them from tasting and enjoying the apricots, nectarines, peaches, plums, pluots, and Asian pears.

The best part of the event, in my opinion, was that the third shift cleaned up and got to take home LOTS of wonderful fruit! Dibs on third shift again next year!

COMMUNITY ORCHARD UPDATE



Joe Sabol reports: "We had a list of more than 15 jobs to do in the orchard today (August 8). Fourteen people came and worked hard! We had teams that worked. We had individuals working alone. We did MORE than expected and crossed off nearly every job on the list! People brought food and drink to share! T-shirts were sold! The orchard looks GREAT! Then, at 10 a.m. sharp, we had a "right thumb closure"—a very moving and inspirational ceremony.

Thank you to all those who helped out and for all your great CRFG spirit!

See the team photo above—which is missing a few faces of those who were lost in the orchard! Also note the photo of the wonderful signs that were installed. Marv Daniels carefully painted in the routed letters so everyone can easily read what variety of fruit the tree bears."



Rare Fruit of the Month—Sweet Cherry

Do you think of sweet cherries as rare fruit? Most people don't—but that is because they haven't tried growing them south of Cuesta Grade! Back in April, Joe Seals of Santa Maria asked Joe Sabol if he knew of a low-chill sweet cherry variety. (A chill hour is considered those hours in the late fall or early winter below 45 degrees Fahrenheit. In our area, trees needing 500 chill hours or less are more likely to set fruit than those needing more.) Joe Seals had "heard" that someone in Southern California was

growing a sweet cherry in their backyard with success, but he couldn't verify that and wondered if Joe Sabol could.

That set off a series of e-mails between Joe Sabol and several other "folks who should know" including Tom Spellman of Dave Wilson Nursery and Philip Yoshida of Cal Poly. Philip replied, "I am sorry to say that we grow cherry trees but have yet to get a crop. We will get a few sour cherries, but we either need to change varieties or give up. We grow them for teaching purposes and that's about it." That didn't sound too promising! Joe Seals certainly didn't want sour cherries growing in his backyard!



Tom Spellman wasn't too enthusiastic, either. He said, in his first note to Joe Sabol, "Joe, You know the story on sweet cherries. Most of the commodity varieties are worthless in So. Cal. A few stand out are Lapins, Craigs Crimsons, Stellas and Royal Rainers. Lapin is by far the most reliable in low chill conditions (see photo on right) and it's self fruitful. I'm working with a couple of experimental varieties from Zaiger that look promising. They are early bloomers and both have substantial crops set at this time. Both are in their third year. There is a chance we will be able to release some for the 2008

season." Later, he reported, "Lennette, My test trees of Mini Royal and Royal Lee both set fruit this year and finished decent crops. They are early bloomers and don't cross pollinate with any other varieties. Can't tell you at this time how low chill they are but they look to be lower than anything else on the market. Fruit was ripe in May."

One home gardener advice columnist said that growing cherries in the home garden is like growing corn in the home garden—not a very efficient way to get a crop—but everyone loves the taste and they think it is worth the effort. So, Joe Seals, and any of the rest of you who want to give that **rare** fruit, the sweet cherry, a try, go with one or several of Tom's suggestions to see which one works best for you.

Of course, you will never have a crop around here to compare with that our co-chair, Art DeKleine, grows on this family farm in Michigan where he spends about half his "retirement" year taking care of the cherries and chestnuts in the orchard he and his brother have. His cherries are big and sweet and anything but rare there. However, the DeKleine family still loves them. (Photo on left is Art showing his year-and-a-half-old granddaughter, Anneke, how to "spit pits." Now that, like whistling, is a skill every girl needs!)



Homework

Joe Sabol gave a “homework” assignment the first part of August. He said, “Dear Festival Steering Committee Members: Please go to the website (<http://www.ediblearrangements.com/Default.aspx>) and pick out any two of the arrangements. Practice making them for the next three weeks... Then, please make up 10 or 15 of them for the reception on Thursday afternoon, September 7, at the Sands.”



I think he was kidding (right, Joe?), but George and Jane Roach took Professor Sabol’s assignment seriously. They came up with a great centerpiece—although they only made one type, not two. Still, they got an A+ for their effort—which was even more amazing in view of the fact that George had suffered a mild heart attack on August 9 and had an angioplasty and stints inserted. We’re so thankful you are back on your feet, George! We’ll be looking for 15 of your and Jane’s creations at the reception!

THANK YOU!

Steering Committee

This Volunteer Steering Committee met for over a year! They dreamed first, then set goals, worked hard and provided the leadership for the Central Coast Chapter to host the Festival of Fruit 2006, The Year of the Healthful Grape!

Sandy Ahearn
Ron Blakey
Marv Daniels
Mary Giambalvo
Larry Hollis
Kristin Pochigian
Jane Roach
Robert Scott
Wally Seelos
Morris Tracy
Philip Yoshida

Owen Baynham
John Crowe
Art DeKleine
Art Henzgen
Don Jeung
Jim Ritterbush
Evelyn Ruehr
Carol Scott
Jack Swords
Bob Tullock

Norman Beard
Choung Crowe
Pete Giambalvo
Doris Henzgen
Nancy Lehman
George Roach
Patti Schober
Dorothy Seelos
Irene Tracy
Helen Whigham

Joe Sabol and Pet Daniels, Co-chairs

In addition, the above committee was assisted in this endeavor by the following Chapter Subscribers:

Allen, Susie; Asbell, Bob; Asbell, Dan; Atlee, Chuck; Atlee, Susan; Baker, Jane; Brynn, Jaleah; Blakely, David; Blakely, Naomi; Block, Ernie; Carl, Gene; Carter, Lark; Flores, Robert; Francis, Hunter; DeKleine, Gloria; Eberhardt, Roger; Garner, Lauren; Garbutt, Jerie; Gurney, David; Horton, Bernie; Horton, Lennette; Janetski, Paul; Johnson, Steve; Keil, Kathy; Kerwin, Bob; Kerwin, Carol; King, Al; King, Dawn; Knudsen, Steve; Kolba, Kathy; Long, Kit; Longacre, Kathy; Lopez, Art; Maislen, David; Maislen, Joan; Mathews, Lloyd; Mathews, Barbara; McShane, Steve; Middlecamp, Betty; Mounts, Billy; Mounts, Ruth; Moyer, Paul; Moyer, Marie; Nguyen, Long; Ogren, Paul; Ogren, Sandra; Overley, Lyle; Parvin, Russee; Pilj, Susan; Pirghaibi, John; Pirghaibi, Sandra; Pottratz, Dick; Pottratz, Jeanie; Rego, Liesa; Ritter, Matt; Rosenthal, Rachel; Sabol, Jill; Sherman, Steve; Swift, John; Swords, Mary Kay; Teufel, Richard; Tompkins, John; Toy, Harry; Tullock, Janet; Ulmer, David; Walton, Emory; Weaver, Jenny; Weidemeyer, Idell; Welch, Mark; Wheeler, Noel; Wilcox, David; Wilcox, Sharon; Woelfle, Mark; and Vignocci, Carmela.

Announcements

Welcome to Our New Chapter Subscribers: Cara Crye, Vic Silvera, Lauren Garner, David and Sharon Wilcox, Phillip Bennie, and Gus Sundberry.

Join the Parent Organization: Many of our chapter subscribers are members of the Parent association and, for those of you who aren't, perhaps you **should** consider joining. With parent organization membership you receive a wonderful **color** magazine, *The Fruit Gardener*, filled with great articles on fruit growing, news, many chapter activities and contacts. Dues are **\$30 annually** or **3 years for \$87**. Membership applications are available from **Joe Sabol**. Call him at **544-1056** if you can't find him at a meeting.

Fruit Display Day: A date has been set for the 2006 Fruit Display Day at UC Lindcove. The Grower's Day will be December 15 and the Homeowner's Day will be December 16. Mark your calendar now and watch this space for further information.

Calendar of Meetings – 2006

Meetings are held the **second Saturday** of the month and begin at **1:30 PM** unless otherwise indicated. Bring a friend, car pool, and, for most meetings, **bring a chair** for all in your party. Pet Daniels suggests we bring our own bottled water to drink, too. What fun it is to be a member of CRFG!

September 5-9—Festival of Fruit—All CRFG Chapters in the state are coming! Save the dates. Official meeting starts at 1 PM on Friday, September 8 in the Chumash Auditorium on the Cal Poly Campus. We host a BBQ that evening, then workshops and speakers all day Saturday, September 9. Be there and join the fun! We will not have a "local meeting" this month—we'll be too busy with Festival planning, conducting, and cleaning up! **We need your help Thursday, Friday and Saturday, please!**

October 14—The Tiber Canyon Ranch — 280 W. Ormonde Rd., San Luis Obispo—This is an olive ranch with olive tasting and an opportunity to learn of exciting ways to use olive oil

in entrees, desserts, salads, and more! Our hosts: Will Carlton and Chris Anderson.
Refreshments: The H through R team please!

November 11 — Tentative—Master Gardeners, IPM and Water Quality for the Backyard Fruit Grower—Location TBA—Mary Bianchi and Alice Hamrick to help. Watch this spot. Details to follow!

December 9—Annual Holiday Potluck and Plant Raffle—PG&E Community Center—Details to follow.

Central Coast Chapter CRFG Contact Information: Art DeKleine, co-chair, adeklein@calpoly.edu or 543-9455; Bob Tullock, co-chair, tullock@tcsn.net or 238-2868; Joe Sabol, program chair, jsabol@calpoly.edu or 544-1056; Dick Pottratz, treasurer, pottratz@sbcglobal.net; or Lennette Horton, newsletter editor, handynana@gmail.com or 474-6501.