

## California Rare Fruit Growers – Central Coast Chapter January 2017 Newsletter, Vol. 19

### California Rare Fruit Growers – Central Coast Chapter – Vol. 20, Dec. 2017

#### January 14 – Annual Pruning Workshop

Highlights included:

1. The election of officers and a vote of thanks for those retiring.

Newly elected officers for 2017:

- Co-chairs: Alisha Taff and Tucker Schmidt
- Secretary: Linda Robertson
- Treasurer: Dick Pottratz

Retiring Co-chairs: Sally Requa and Leslie Ferreira

2. Visitors included 8 new attendees and three recognized student groups:



*Cal Poly Fruit Science students sold fruit and vegetables as well as attended the Pruning Workshop.*



*Midland School students received one bag of GroMulch each for the best job of collectively pruning an apple tree.*



*Independence High School students from Bakersfield attended the Pruning Workshop and gained experience pruning an apple tree. Their agriculture teacher is Hector Jimenez.*



*Pruning workshop speaker Les Ferreira*



*Pruning workshop speaker Art DeKleine*



*Pruning workshop speaker Larry Hollis*



*Prune off all the recent season's vegetative growth...*





*...Save all of these cuttings  
and bring to our scion  
exchange!*



*Apples will grow from the fruit spurs of  
apple trees!*

- Cal Poly Fruit Science Students... with Dr. Lauren Garner, Professor Fruit Sci.
- (Los Olivos) Mr. Nick Tranmer, Instructor and Farm Supervisor
- (Bakersfield) H.S. Ag Teacher...Mr. Hector Jimenez

3. Our four pruning speakers did an outstanding job of reviewing the principles of pruning, of sharing their perspective on important pruning issues to consider, and of letting people know that there is more than one way to prune a tree.

To illustrate the variety of topics addressed, an outline of each presentation is provided:

### **Leslie Ferreira: Pruning**

- Why:

- Direct growth
- Improve Health
- Increase Production & Size of Fruit
- When:
  - Winter- Heavy pruning *prior* to bud break..... WET WEATHER
  - Summer- After Fruiting.....Shaping/Cross Branching
- Terms:
  - Buds: Leaf/Flower/Terminal
  - Spurs (Fruit)
  - Crotch >45
  - Wood Old/New
  - Scaffold
  - Waterspout & Sucker
- Equipment:
  1. Hand shears/pruners
  2. Lopping shears
  3. Saw
  4. Clean & Disinfect Equipment: 7 parts water 1 part bleach
  5. Done: Clean with dish soap/dry/WD40
- Making cuts:
  - Cut 45 degree angle ¼ inch from bud
  - Cutting large limbs Bottom 12" top 2-4" bottom flush
- Basic tree Form: Open center (Umbrella upside down)
- Procedure:
  1. Remove Diseased/dying branches
  2. Crossing branches/waterspouts
  3. Top tree
  4. Prune trees variety (Fruiting Spears/last year's growth)

**Art DeKleine: Pruning 1-2 year old trees and dwarf trees.**

Remarks first:

1. Trees are symmetrical and balanced. ???
  2. Sap goes up, sugar comes down.
  3. Trees are like people, they exhibit juvenility and maturity.
  4. Trees are not like people, they are far more adaptive to their environment.
  5. "Crotch pruning" vs "Branch pruning".
  6. Consider the timing of your pruning.
- A. Pruning young trees.  
B. Pruning dwarf trees.

**Larry Hollis:**

Trees in the genus *Prunus*, known as stone fruit, fall into 2 groups for purposes of pruning:

- The First Group is made up of Peaches, Nectarines, and Tart Cherries.
- The Second Group, is made up of Plums, Apricots, Almonds, Sweet Cherries, and the various inter-specific hybrids like plumcots, apriums, and Pluots.

General comments and advice:

- Remove dead, diseased, damaged, and crossing branches.
- Trees in this genus all benefit from being shaped into an open vase form. Remove any branches necessary to keep the center of the tree open.
- When the tree reaches five or six years old, some old wood should be removed each year to stimulate the growth of new fruiting wood
- You will save yourself a lot of future work if you choose your new trees wisely.
- Winter pruning promotes vigorous growth, and the harder the tree is pruned in winter the more vigorously it will grow in spring.
- That said, all trees in the genus Prunus are susceptible to Silver Leaf, a fungal infection, Bacterial Canker, and other diseases that can enter a tree through pruning cuts if pruned in wet weather.
- Conversely, summer pruning retards growth.
- We become better pruners as we learn how trees work.
- Tree growth can also be controlled and fruiting enhanced by training as well as pruning.
- There are lots of variables in pruning techniques and lots of personal opinions

### **Joe Sabol:**

Two major points that I practice while pruning apple trees:

1. Prune off all the recent season's vegetative growth. Save all of these cuttings and bring to our scion exchange. There are usually no flowers and no fruit to form on these nice long shoots so cut them off and save them. See photos... scions headed to the Scion Exchange. (Prune shoots and save scion).
2. Do not remove the shorter spurs that are on the older apple wood. Spurs will grow a very short distance each year and may live from 2 to 10 years!!! If the spurs are too many in one area, it is OK to thin out these spurs. Take out the older, longer ones. Spurs are loaded with flower buds! Remember, each flower bud will produce five flowers... and if all goes well, five apples!!! If there are dozens of buds on a complex cluster of spurs... you must remove some of the spurs to make room for the

apples and to allow apples to grow to full size!! See photo.... apple spur!!

P.S. It takes about 55 leaves to produce enough sugar to make a full sized sweet apple. Too many apples, too few leaves does not produce big sweet apples!!

4. Our Orchard managers, Tucker Schmidt and David Gurney, helped us prune many trees in the orchard.

5. A reminder that next month is the [Annual Scion Exchange](#). Instructions for collecting scion were given.

6. The February Grafting / Scion Exchange is typically our biggest meeting of the year.

Volunteers are needed for:

- The Scion Exchange
- Grafting demonstrations
- Rootstock sales and potting service
- Grafting merchandise sales
- Prep and cleanup