



California Rare Fruit Growers – Central Coast Chapter

November 2018 Newsletter - by Lori

Bright

Meeting at Tucker and Keri's, November 10th, 2018



Tucker and Keri receive black CRFG 'thank you' hats from Alisha.

What Fun We Had. Did you try the Che fruit? It was amazing!

Our hosts this month were our very own Tucker & Keri Schmidt! The Schmidt's are amazing

contributors to our chapter. We are so lucky to have them.

Tucker and Keri have been in their house 4 years and the strides they have made really show through. As often is the case at a new home, Tucker and Keri had to remove a lot of weeds and other uncooperative plants before they could begin planting.

Tucker and Keri practice organic growing. They have just under an acre and have begun to fill it with all their favorite things. They have a greenhouse, some bashful chickens and have begun bee keeping. There were a handful of fruit trees there when they arrived but they now have a multitude of species. With more room to grow.

I hope Tucker and Keri will invite us back in a year or two to see the progress. Nice job guys!



Tucker tells the large audience about the Schmidts' home garden.

Events

Dec. 8th, 2018 is our Potluck meeting at the PG&E Center. Everybody is asked to bring their favorite dish to share. We will also have a plant exchange... and more. (12:00pm, Members only, limited seating.)

Jan. 12th, 2019, 2019 will be our annual Pruning Workshop with Tom Spellman! Woo hoo! Cal Poly Crops Unit at 1:30. The pruning workshop is open to the public.

Feb. 16th, 2019: THE BIG EVENT... Scion Exchange, Grafting Demonstrations & Rootstock Sale. This will be open to the public. We will have supplies for grafting available in our Grafting Store. Store and Scion donators are encouraged to arrive at 1:00. Scion Exchange begins at 1:30.

March 9th, 2019 is our Annual Propagation Meeting at the Seven Sisters Garden. Watch for updates and added info for these meetings.

For our November meeting we were fortunate enough to have



John Salisbury come to the Schmidt's home to talk to us about Starting a Wine Grape Operation. John is a 6th generation farmer and has been growing grapes locally since 1996.

John starts us off by explaining that our cooler areas (South of the Grade) are good areas for growing White Grapes, and our more northerly regions (North of the Grade) are best for Red

Grapes. Who'd known?

John cautions that this adventure could easily become a misadventure if one is unaware of the costs involved. So, some considerations are: Cost of the Property, Is water adequate and appropriate, Cost of Grafted Grapes (Nematode protection), Texture and nutrient amending of the soil (pH of 6.5- 7), cost of stakes, wire, PVC, Drip Irrigation with emitters, Hand equipment, Power equipment and Pest Control. John's estimate for a start-up runs about 30 Thousand dollars per Acre! Geeze. Not to mention that you won't see any returns for 3 to 4 years.

The stages of Grape Growing are:

- 1. Bud Break (Near St Patty's Day)**
 - o Train and remove unnecessary canes
 - o Begin irrigation (generally by April)
 - o Control Shoots
 - o Bloom
 - o Fruit Set Leaf Pull
 - o Berry sizing



John Salisbury augments his presentation with hand-drawn diagrams and notes.

- Control Aphids and Powdery Mildew
- 2. **Veraison (Near 4th of July)**
 - Berries should be "coloring up"
 - Control Birds (Netting & Bird Screech machine)
 - Cluster Thinning
- 3. **Harvest (Near Labor Day)**
 - Requiring approximately 2.5 people per acre
- 4. **Dormancy**
 - Fertilize & water, roots continue to grow



A large, attentive audience listens and learns.



John receives his CRFG 'thank you' hat from Alisha.