

The Leaflet

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

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Pushing the limits and
the range of fruit culti-
vation worldwide!

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The Year of the Heirloom

—by Margaret Lange

The 2012 Festival of Fruit, Year of the Heirloom, began on Monday afternoon at the home of Phil Pieri just outside Sebastopol. He and his family opened their home and orchards to over 100 members of CRFG. During a warm and sunny afternoon, we took a self-guided tour through Phil's apple and pear orchard. Free to taste any fruits we wanted, we had great fun picking ripe apples and trying different varieties. Most of the pears were not quite ready, but the apples were exceptional. I wish I remembered the name of my favorite!

continued on page 4



The Thread of Seed History

—by Rachel Duchak



We recently visited the National Heirloom Exposition in Santa Rosa, California, a fascinating event for lovers of heirloom & heritage varieties of edible plants & animals. The bedrock foundation of the Heirloom Expo: to celebrate the diversity of world heirloom produce and heritage animal breeds as pure food that's not been genetically modified and to honor foods that centuries of farmers have improved through selection into their perfect, pure state, from way before Gregor Mendel's time to today. Organic agriculture continues this process of selecting for positive traits focused on flavor, nutrition, and health.

Jere and Emilee Gettle and the folks at Baker

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EDITOR'S MESSAGE



In this issue we report on the Festival of Fruit and the second annual Heirloom Exposition in Santa Rosa. Both highlight the reason why many of us are here in the CRFG—like so many of the farmers young and old who came to the Expo, we take pleasure in growing and eating our own food. And for most, this includes the desire for flavors that can't be found in more ordinary places.

While most of our vegetable gardens are slowing down or have been extinguished by frost, apple season is still in full swing. Our meeting at SLO Creek Farms was an apple lover's paradise.

Traditionally in our chapter, the December meeting and potluck is where the nomination committee finds next year's volunteers and officers. So if you have some time to volunteer, and will not be attending on December 8, please contact Larry or Patti!

While you read through these pages, you might also think of what you have to share with other readers. Not only are contributions always welcome, we are seeking to increase the "staff" of our newsletter, and the nominating committee will have more on this as well.

Happy Harvesting, Gary Fourer
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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 FLOWER IS AN EDUCATED WEED."

~ LUTHER BURBANK
(7 MARCH 1849 – 11 APRIL 1926)

Thread of Seed History —continued

Creek Heirloom Seeds have planned and produced the National Heirloom Expo for the past two years. Their goal is twofold: to celebrate heirloom/heritage plants and animals as well as defend our human and civil rights to choose to eat GMO-free plant and animal organisms, especially to avoid plants engineered to resist toxic weed killers dispersed on conventionally-grown crops. Whether at their Baker Creek home base near Mansfield, Missouri; the Petaluma Seed Bank in Petaluma, California; or Comstock, Ferre & Co. in Wethersfield, Connecticut, the pure food advocates of Baker Creek wear period clothing from a pre-industrial agriculture era to help reconnect citizen-consumers with an earlier time when families could feed themselves with produce grown from seed saved from decades and centuries of selection. The Baker Creek team believes that pre-industrial agriculture respected farmers, laborers, and the environment far more than today's mechanized, corporatized, subsidized industrial agriculture system: their costumes are designed to remind us of that period in US agriculture history.

Carefully and creatively displayed organic fruit, veg, and herbs covered the many tables that filled the

hall with rarely-seen heirloom specimens. Sonoma County's Russian River was recreated entirely



out of colorful heirloom tomatoes and peppers. Beautiful, unique eggplants, garlies, plums, peppers, melons, and more filled the many tables in the produce expo hall while a squash mountain climbed dozens of feet into the air.

On the third day of the National Heirloom Expo visitors and participants lined up for an array of tastes, from rare plums to exotic melons. The National Heirloom Expo is one of the only places in the world where the general public of citizen-consumers has a chance to taste dozens

and dozens of different, unique varieties at one time. Thanks to all the farms and farmers who donated part of their harvests to this tasting event, especially Andy's Orchard in Morgan Hill who cultivates the plum I now want in our garden: the Broken Heart. Yums plums!



Year of the Heirloom —continued

After our orchard grazing, we gathered around Phil's front yard and patio for official greetings and announcements, and then joined the food queue for delicious stew, chicken, tomato basil mozzarella combo, and chocolate-covered strawberries. The off-the-menu treat was meeting fellow CRFG members from near and far.



Santa Rosa is the home of the Luther Burbank estate and gardens, where he developed many of his famous varieties. Eager CRFG folks from as far away as Texas gathered there on Monday morning to experience the gardens. The afternoon was open for exploring the area; choices included downtown Santa Rosa and nearby towns such as Sebastopol, Petaluma, and Cotati.

On Tuesday the activities at the fairgrounds went into full swing. Held in conjunction with the 2012 National Heirloom Exposition, CRFG presented one-hour talks at 9:00 and 10:00 at the fairgrounds before the Expo opened at 11:00. The talks included:

- 🍏 Root Crops Old and New by Grant Brians
- 🍏 Tree Fruit and Berry Pests by Paul Vossen
- 🍏 Heirloom Cider and Eating Apples by Axel Kratel
- 🍏 Felix Gillet: The Father of California and the NW Perennial Agriculture by Amigo Bob Cantisano
- 🍏 The Historic Orchard at Fort Ross State Historic Park by Susan Rudy
- 🍏 Heirloom Crops of the 21 California Missions by Jerry Sortomme
- 🍏 Rehabilitating a Pear Orchard at John Muir's Gravesite by Keith Park
- 🍏 Kiwi and Jujubes by Roger Meyer
- 🍏 Feijoas: Developments in Pineapple Guavas

by Mark Albert

- 🍏 Summer and Fall Propagation of Fruit by Anders Vidstrand
- 🍏 Dragon Fruit Development by Ed Valdivia
- 🍏 Wolfskill USDA Experimental Collection by John Preece
- 🍏 Heirloom Stone Fruit by Todd Kennedy
- 🍏 It's About Taste: Judging heirloom and Modern Stone Fruit Varieties by Andy Mariani

The talks were held concurrently each morning, so unfortunately it wasn't possible to make it to each one. I attended some of the CRFG talks and also talks held at the Heirloom Expo. Following are excerpts from my notes.

Root Crops Old and New.

Clay soil produces the best beets; they will be less pretty but will have better taste. Fodder beets, grown for animal feed, are a good cover crop as they have a deep root system. Turnips are less dense than rutabagas, and rutabagas have higher sugar and less moisture than turnips. They were once considered poor man's food. Poor folk rode on turnip trucks, which is where we get the saying "he/she just fell off the turnip truck." Some unusual or less common root crops include: salsify, scorzonera, chicories, and parsley root.

Tree Fruit and Berry Pests.

The three main categories of pest control are biological, cultural, and chemical. Biological includes genetic resistance, beneficial insects, and other naturally occurring controls. Cultural control

Year of the Heirloom —continued

includes providing diversity, good sanitation, and efficient pruning. Chemical controls include botanical repellents, mineral and soap sprays, and use of pheromones. Specific methods of pest control:

- 🍏 Apple and pear scab— Scab overwinters on fallen leaves, so remove fallen leaves to compost area (won't cross-contaminate). Apple varieties that are resistant to scab include Liberty, Freedom, William's Pride, and Goldrush.
- 🍏 Pear slugs—spray them off with the hose.
- 🍏 Aphids—when the tree is budding, use dormant oil spray
- 🍏 Root rot—improve drainage
- 🍏 Apricots, blueberries, and grapes—don't prune during moist weather.

Growing from Seed. Challenges to starting from seed are creating a favorable environment and consistently watering. A seed that dries out once will die. When watering with a watering can, face the "frog" up which will cause the water stream to mimic a soft rain. Benefits of growing from seed include: it is cheaper and there is a wider selection of plants, the seed casing provides nutrients to the plant; and it allows more control of plant characteristics. Seeds from plants that have adapted to your region's environment will grow plants more likely to be successful producers. Local seed-saving exchanges are good seed sources. Biodynamic seeds, produced from plants grown by biodynamic methods, are selected for favorable properties such as

hardiness, nutrient seeking ability, and viability. Benefits from starting seeds in trays include consistent warmth (cold overnight temperature can deter growth), and prevention of weed interference. Some things to consider when starting in trays: roots develop first so make sure root growth is not spiraling—if it does then transplant to larger pot; before transplanting seedlings to the field they should be "hardened off," that is, the trays should be placed in the area of the field in a shady area for about a week to acclimate them to their new home.

Roots Demystified. A root hair lives for one day and is responsible for taking in all nutrients. An apple tree develops 17 million root hairs in one year.

Cover Crops. The benefits of growing cover crops include prevention of soil erosion, nitrogen increase, less nitrate leaching, weed suppression by competition and shading, increased aeration of soil, and enhancement of soil organic matter.

Chickens. Watching chickens being chickens (in a healthful free-range environment) has been proven to lower blood pressure (of the watcher, not the chicken). The term "egg shed" refers to the number of eggs consumed by a community. An egg comprises the most easily digestible

and highest protein on the planet.

Blueberries. To rehabilitate blueberries that are challenged, re-acidify the soil, use compost with worm castings. Don't keep plants in black plastic pots because the plants hate the heat. Cut plants back in January and February.

Attracting Beneficials to the Garden. Select nectar and pollen rich plants. Eliminate broad-spectrum insecticides. Provide shelter/habitat and water for bees, wasps, predators, parasites, bats, lizards, owls. The "good guys" include ladybird beetles, bees, syrphid flies, spiders, lacewings, predatory mites, parasitic wasps, and leatherwing beetles. Plants that attract beneficials included sunflower, zinnia, rudbeckia, and buddleia.

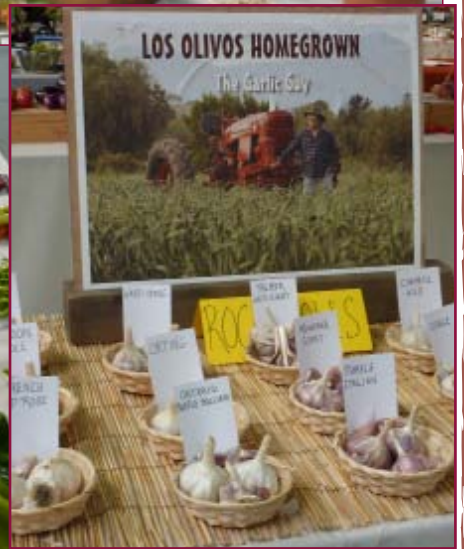


At the 2012 Festival of Fruit and Heirloom Exposition, there were food vendors offering healthful organic meals, musicians playing for listening and dancing, and merchants displaying products for gardening and sustainable

Year of the Heirloom —continued

living. Heirloom animals were showcased as well. In the main pavilion, CRFG had several tables of fruit on display. We showcased over 70 varieties of fruit and organized fruit tastings.

John Valenzuela, president of the CRFG Golden Gate chapter, Idell Weydemeyer, and their many devoted volunteers were instrumental in organizing the 2012 Festival of Fruit. Thank you all for a successful festival this year.



FOOD IN HISTORY

Of Gardens

Excerpted from "Of Gardens" from *The Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral, of Francis Id. Verulam, Viscount St. Albans (Sir Francis Bacon, January 1561 – April 1626)*

DO HOLD IT, IN THE royal ordering of gardens, there ought to be gardens for all the months in the year; in which severally things of beauty may be then in season.

For December, and January, and the latter part of November, you must take such things as are green all winter: holly; ivy; bays; juniper; cypress-trees; yew; pine-apple-trees; fir-trees; rosemary; lavender; periwinkle, the white, the purple, and the blue; germander; flags; orange-trees; lemon-trees; and myrtles, if they be stoved; and sweet marjoram, warm set.

There followeth, for the latter part of January and February, the mezereon-tree, which then blossoms; crocus vernus, both the yellow and the grey; primroses; anemones; the early tulippa; hyacinthus orientalis; chamairis; fritellaria.

For March, there come violets, specially the single blue, which are the earliest; the yellow daffodil; the daisy; the

almond-tree in blossom; the peach-tree in blossom; the cornelian-tree in blossom; sweet-briar.

In April follow the double white violet; the wall-flower; the stock-gilliflower; the cowslip; flower-delices, and lilies of all natures; rosemary-flowers; the tulippa; the double peony; the pale daffodil; the French honeysuckle; the cherry-tree in blossom; the damson and plum-trees in blossom; the white thorn in leaf; the lilac-tree.

In May and June come pinks of all sorts, specially the blush-pink; roses of all kinds, except the musk, which comes later; honeysuckles; strawberries; bugloss; columbine; the French marigold, flos Africanus; cherry-tree in fruit; ribes; figs in fruit; rasp; vine-flowers; lavender in flowers; the sweet satyrian, with the white flower; herba muscaria; lilium convallium; the apple-tree in blossom.

In July come gilliflowers of all varieties; musk-roses; the lime-tree in blossom; early pears and plums in fruit; jennetings, codlins.

In August come plums of all sorts in fruit; pears; apricocks; berberries; filberds; musk-melons; monks-hoods, of all colors.

In September come grapes; apples; poppies of all colors; peaches; melocotones; nectarines; cornelians; wardens; quinces.



Sir Francis at 18 years of age

In October and the beginning of November come services; medlars; bullaces; roses cut or removed to come late; holly-hocks; and such like.

These particulars are for the climate of London; but my meaning is perceived, that you may have *ver perpetuum*, as the place affords.



LEAFLET RECIPES

Persimmon Cookies

—from the kitchen of Christie Cutter

Christie brought these cookies to the last CRFG meeting, and they were so yummy we requested the recipe. Thank you, Christie, for sending it in!



Ingredients

1 cup persimmon pulp
1 teaspoon soda
3/4 cup butter
1 1/2 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 1/2 cup quick-cook oatmeal
1/2 cup dried cranberries
1 1/2 cup flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon each: salt, ground nutmeg and ground cloves
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 cup chopped nuts (optional)

Variations

When persimmons are not available, you can make pumpkin cookies using this same recipe and canned or fresh pumpkin.

Directions

Combine persimmon pulp and soda. Set aside.

Cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and then pulp mixture, combining thoroughly after each addition.

Combine flour, baking powder, salt, nutmeg, cloves and cinnamon, and add to wet mixture. Fold in nuts and cranberries.

You may want to grease cookie sheets if not well seasoned. Use



two spoons to drop walnut-size mounds on the cookie sheets. Bake at 375 degrees F for 10 to 12 minutes.

Remove immediately from cookie sheets to cooling rack. When cool, place in covered container, using waxed paper to separate layers.

LEAFLET CHRONICLE

October 14, 2012

A Pressing Engagement at SLO Creek Farms



Robyn Gable welcomes us to SLO Creek Farms

On Sunday, October 14, we met at SLO Creek Farms. If you've been with us for a while, you may remember an article back in January 2011 about an organization called GleanSLO and the very generous donation and collection of fruit for the local food bank. The Gable family and SLO creek farms continue to give to our community as they operate their business here. This day was two weeks before Halloween and a very busy day at their pumpkin patch, yet they still opened their apple orchards for us to hold our meeting.

I have a vivid childhood memory of riding in the station wagon to an apple orchard where unfiltered apple juice flowed from faucets. I walked among the trees with cup in hand, often returning for more of this rich appley nectar.

When I heard that this CRFG meeting was to take place in an apple orchard, and that we would get to taste some freshly

made cider, I began counting the days until October 14. Then Joe Sabol sent out a call for volunteers to help wash the apples to make the cider—I was the first to say Yes! As we arrived, Robyn Gable, owner and operator of SLO Creek Farms, greeted us and provided some crates

for apple picking. We were encouraged to go pick apples anywhere the orchard, taking care to gather several different varieties. These crates were then stacked up near a large flat-bed truck, and we proceeded to our usual pre-meeting snacks, greetings, and the business meeting. Two winners of our Cal Poly Scholarship, Juan and Randall, had been away on summer break

and were not able to meet us yet. They came to this meeting, along with Dr. Garner, to help out and discuss how they enriched their education, also known as “What I did on my summer vacation.”

After the business meeting, our special guest was See Canyon apple grower and perennial CRFG supporter Mr. Michael Cirone, who has donated thousands of apple scions for our high school



See Canyon apple grower, Mike Cirone, October's speaker

grafting classes. This day he discussed the horrible apple

disease that is so common—Apple Scab. Good stuff to know for those of us who grow apples and work to keep our trees healthy. We learned that this disease is most prevalent where the trees can get wet.



Joe introduces Juan, Dr. Garner, and Randall

LEAFLET CHRONICLE—continued

The scab is persistent and can render the fruit less appealing to the eye. It can be controlled organically by removing all leaf litter, spraying with lime sulfur, and ensuring that irrigation does not wet the trees. Some of our members have lamented that they cannot find lime sulfur in small quantities for home orchards, and volunteered to see if our friends at Farm Supply can work out a way to make it available to our chapter.



Apples are washed prior to shredding and pressing

Now for the part I was waiting for: We learned how to wash the apples we picked, in a large barrel of vinegar-water, rinse them twice, run them through the shredder into canvas-lined buckets, transfer the canvas bags of grated apple mush into the press, turn the crank, and collect as much apple juice as each of us wanted. And then we drank the nectar of these apples which were hanging on trees just an hour ago! Now I know that the best, unfiltered, un-anything apple juice in the



Fresh pressed gold



The shredder in operation



The shredding pressing process

world is more than just a romantic memory of my childhood. It still can be found at SLO Creek Farms during apple season.

—Gary Fourer

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

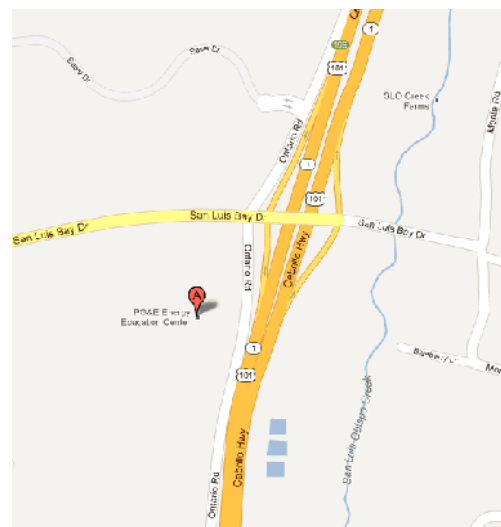
December 8:

Annual Christmas Potluck and Plant Exchange (**Meeting starts at Noon!!**)
Location: PG&E Educational Center, 6588 Ontario Road, San Luis Obispo (see map this page)

Bring a dish to share. Bring plants to exchange.

January 12, 2013:

Prune our CRFG/Cal Poly Orchard
Location: Crops Unit, Cal Poly.



February 16, 2013:

Share our scions and teach grafting on the **third** Saturday.
Location: Cal Poly Crops Unit

March 9, 2013:

Tour Cal Poly vineyards, with emphasis on wine grapes.

September 2013:

The 2013 Festival of Fruit will be held in Hawaii with the Hawaii Tropical Fruit Growers around the last weekend of the month. Activities will be planned for four of the islands. More details will be posted as they are made available; following is the link to the 2013 Festival of Fruit website.

<http://www.crfg.org/2013FoF/default.html>

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LEAFLET ANNOUNCEMENTS



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Plant Exchange Preparation. December's Holiday potluck meeting will include a plant exchange. Now is the time to start getting plants ready for the exchange.

Peach Leaf Curl. It will soon be time to spray our peach and nectarine trees with fungicide to prevent peach leaf curl. The following is excerpted from University of California Statewide, Integrated Pest Management Program, Pest Notes, Peach Leaf Curl. The first spraying should be done right after leaf fall, a second spraying should be done just prior to bud-break but before green leaf tips are visible. Some folks do an additional spraying mid-winter. The most commonly used fungicide available to home gardeners are fixed copper products. Spray when the trees are dry and rain is not in the forecast. Trees need to be completely wetted. Factors such as coverage, use of additives such as stickers and spreaders and the copper content in the product all impact product effectiveness. Members may find Kop R Spray Concentrate from Lilly Miller or Liqui-Cop from Monterey Lawn and Garden available locally; the latter may be OMRI certified for the organic growers. These copper ammonium complex products can be made more effective by adding 1% horticultural oil spray to the mix. The oil also aids in controlling some aphids, scale insects, and mites. If copper sulfate is mixed with hydrated lime to make a Bordeaux mixture, the copper sulfate and calcium in the lime will react together to form a fixed copper product that is effective against peach leaf curl. For information on preparing Bordeaux mixture, see [Pest Notes: Bordeaux mixture](#). Pest notes are available at the [UC IPM website](#) or may be picked up from the Master Gardeners of San Luis Obispo at the University of California Cooperative Extension, located at 2156 Sierra Way, Suite C, in SLO.

Asian Citrus Psyllid. Huanglongbing, or HLB, is a disease that is threatening California citrus crops. This disease is spread by an insect, the [Asian Citrus Psyllid](#), and produces yellow, splotchy leaves, inedible fruit and kills trees. The psyllid was first detected in California in 2008, and quarantines are now in place in Ventura, San Diego, Imperial, Orange, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino and Riverside counties. In order to limit the spread of this disease, please do not move any citrus fruit or plants into San Luis Obispo county. If you want to plant citrus trees, purchase your plants from certified growers.

Garden/Orchard Calendar. A garden/orchard calendar is in the works to remind us all of our seasonal garden/orchard chores. Co-chair Patti Schober and Sally Roqua will work together to compile the calendar. To contribute existing orchard/garden calendars or to help with the project, contact Patti Schober.

Olive Picking. Olive Picking. Tiber Canyon Olive Ranch will be harvesting their largest crop ever and are recruiting volunteers to help pick. The date is December 8, the same day as our meeting and potluck, but some of us will find time for both. There are 2 sessions, 8:00 to Noon, and 1:00 to 5:00, with training at the beginning of each. Arrive at 7:30 or 12:30 for a welcome meal first. Contact Tiber Canyon at (805) 781-0827 for details.

Amazon Purchases. Amazon gives a small percentage of the purchase price of any item when the Amazon website is accessed through the link on the CRFG.org website: <http://www.crfg.org/pubs/books.html>. Please remember to first use the link when purchasing items on Amazon.