

The Leaflett

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



A Grape You Probably Won't Grow—Black Corinth

My first memories of grapes were of those twining over an arbor (seen in photo below) at my grandparent's ranch in Fresno. Of course, at age 2 ½, I didn't know what variety they were. I just liked them because they were little and so was I. I loved sitting beneath the arbor on my aunt's lap, (she was nice and "cushy") while she fed me those sweet little grapes with no seeds. My grandma

dried them on trays in her backyard and used them in her cooking—calling them "currants."



I **now** know that those "little grapes" were actually Black Corinth grapes (sometimes called "Champagne grapes") and, when dried, they are called black currants or Zante currants. As raisins, they are prized for baking, especially in foods like scones, where their tiny size and intense flavor is particularly noticeable. Eaten fresh, they have a unique, very sweet flavor with a crisp

texture. They make beautiful additions to fruit plates, or draped over the side of a wine glass for a special occasion. The cluster can be eaten stem and all.

Commercially, almost all fresh Black Corinth grapes come from the San Joaquin Valley (although Arizona is getting in on the act, too). The climate there is similar to that of the grape's native habitat in Greece and in July and August you, too, can enjoy these unusual grapes, often marketed as "Champagne Grapes". Sunmaid Raisins packages them dried as Zante Currants and you can find them widely available that way.

So why wouldn't you, as an intrepid "rare" fruit grower want to grow this **different** grape? In two words I'll tell you why—powdery mildew! Here on the Central Coast, mildew is a problem with all grapes, but the Black Corinth is especially susceptible to it—as well as all the other *Vitis vinifera* diseases such as downy mildew and black rot! North SLO County residents might have better luck—they enjoy some of those same warm summer days that San Joaquin Valley residents do—but those of us with distinct marine influence will have a serious fight on our hands to control the diseases. These grapes do not like moisture in the air!



But, some of you will insist and persist. After all, no fruit is "rare" in its natural environment! Not only that, you have the perfect arbor for just such a vine and a little child waiting for you to pop a cute grape cluster into his/her mouth.

Meanwhile, try this recipe from the Sunmaid Raisin website. Maybe you will find a "little" person to share it with and create your own memories of this raisin grape!

Sunmaid Breakfast Rollup

Ingredients

1 (8 oz.) container strawberry cream cheese
 1 tablespoon strawberry jam
 1 cup frozen mixed berries thawed
 1-1/2 cups Sun-Maid Zante Currants
 4 fajita size flour tortillas
 2 tablespoons vegetable oil divided
 Powder sugar

Directions:

COMBINE cream cheese, jam, thawed berries and currants in a medium mixing bowl. Stir thoroughly.

SPOON 1/4 of mixture onto the middle of one tortilla, roll the tortilla tightly and lay seam side down.

REPEAT to make four roll-ups.

HEAT 1 tablespoon oil in a frying pan over medium heat, and place roll-ups in it seam side down.

FRY for 1 to 2 minutes on each side until golden brown, turning so all sides brown evenly. Use tongs to remove from pan.

PLACE roll-ups on paper towels to drain.

HEAT remaining oil over medium heat and cook remaining two roll-ups.

SPRINKLE each roll-up with powdered sugar.

SERVE warm.

This makes 4 servings.

May Meeting

If you were one of the 48 people that found your way to the home, orchard, and “secret garden” of Bob Simola in Templeton on May 13, you will probably find yourself in the fabulous photo below-- taken that day by Paul Moyer. Those who made the drive were treated to seeing Bob’s wide variety of fruit trees which include quince, figs, Feijoas, apricots, peaches, plums, pears, apples, oranges, sugarberry and honey berry! He also has a half acre of grapes and several olive trees! After a short lesson on thinning, those in attendance actually got to **do** some thinning of Bob's quince! Besides enjoying the fruit trees and rare fruit, they also got to see his beautiful iris, California Poppies and a spectacular black locust in full bloom! Bob's garden is on the list of official CRFG Tour stops for our Festival of Fruit meeting in September. So, if you didn't get a chance to see his secret garden before the rest of the world—you still won't lose out! Be sure to add it to your “must see” list—you won't be disappointed!



Festival of Fruit 2006

This event promises to be spectacular! If you have access to a computer, visit our website for the latest updates on events and speakers: http://www.crfg-central.org/2006_Festival/festival_2006_home.htm. As of 3:45 PM on Tuesday, June 1, 637 people had already accessed the Festival information page. Art DeKleine and his assistants, John and Choung Crowe, Evelyn Ruehr, Pet and Marv Daniels, Dick Pottratz, and Bob Tullock have done an incredible job on getting that site up and running. It isn't too late to join in—meetings are held at the **Pismo Prime Outlet** on **Tuesday, June 13, and July 11, from 5 pm to 8 pm.**

For those of you who aren't able to access the internet, here is a teaser to get you excited. It is a list of speakers for the Festival of Fruit. There is something for everyone here!

Friday

Secretary A.G. Kawamura, California Department of Food and Agriculture -- Welcome and Keynote Address

Dr. John DeVincenzo - Orthodontist and Gopher Glen Commercial Fruit Orchard -- "Healthy Fruit and Healthy People"

Phil Forsline - USDA and Cornell University, New York -- "Apple genetics and Disease Resistance"

Markku Hakkinen, Banana Research Scientist, Helsinki University and Botanic Garden, Finland -- "Rare and Wild Banana Species and Varieties"

Dr. O. Robert Noyes - Retired, Food Science Department, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo -- "A Sensory Experience with Wine"

Saturday

Wilbur Shigehara - Retired Meteorologist, San Diego -- "Weather Essentials for the Rare Fruit Grower - Microclimates in your Backyard"

Dan Lassanske - Cal Poly, Environmental Horticulture -- "Propagating the Hard to Propagate"

Tom Spellman - Dave Wilson Nursery -- "Delicious Fruits in your Future"

Steve Veyna - Orange County Nursery, "Persimmons and Pomegranates for your Back Yard Orchard"

Manuel Jimenez - Tulare County Farm Advisor -- "Specialty Crops for California"

Jerry Sortomme - Santa Barbara Community College Horticulture, Retired -- "In Search of the Ancient Parra Grande Grapevine"

Lucienne Grunder - Chestnut grower, La Grange -- "The Joy of Growing Chestnuts"

Steve McShane - McShane Nursery, Salinas -- "Basic Soil Science and Pasaflora Propagation"

Bob Kerwin - Hancock College Instructor -- "Home Wine Making 101"

Dr. Charlie Crabb - Dean, College of Agriculture, Chico State University -- "Pocket Gophers"

Dr. Greg Partita - Cal Poly Pomona -- "Avocado Training and Pruning"

Dr. Lisa Nicholson, Nutritional Science Professor, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo -- "Good Nutrition and Rare Fruits"

Dr. David Ramming, USDA Scientist, Kearney -- "Grape Breeding and Grape Diseases"

Dr. Tom Neuhaus, Food Science Department, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo -- "Chocolate- A Rare Fruit"

Jay Ruskey - Calimoya, Goleta and Former Co-Chair and CRFG Board Member -- "Vermiculture"

Todd Kennedy - San Francisco - CRFG Member -- "Four Grape Species for the Grape Grower"

Julie and Paul Frink - Orange County CRFG - "Avocado Grafting"

Martin Settevendemie - Deputy Ag Commissioner, SLO County - "Glassy Wing Sharp Shooter and a Partnership with CRFG"

Franklin Laemmlen - Retired UC Extension, Santa Barbara County -- "The Fruit Detective speaks on Diseases and Pests"

Mind Your Garden Manners

by Hallie M. Barrow

These are the days of garden pilgrimages and some garden hosts are near nervous wrecks after a group has departed. Here are some suggestions.

1. Never wear high heels when you visit a garden.
2. Unless the garden has been opened to the public, phone or write for an appointment. If it is for a group, state how many and their particular interests. If you are taking box lunches, ask if there is a place to eat and be sure to leave it spotless.
3. Avoid pulling blossoms or touching plants. I will remember the dismay of one garden host when some know-it-all broke off iris seed pods, saying, "I never let an iris go to seed." Those pods meant years of patient work for the gardener who was carrying on a hybridizing program.
4. Permission to visit the garden does not include a ramble through the house.
5. Do not ask for seeds, slips, or plants, especially if there is a group. The host almost has to ask if others want them, and nearly always, they all do.
6. Do not leave a trail of peanut hulls, gum or candy wrappers, discarded cigarettes or other litter.
7. If there are paths, stay on them to avoid trampling plants, basins, and grass plots. Close gates you found shut and do not break overhanging branches.
8. Take your own notebook and pencil, so you need not bother your host for them. The same goes for drinking cups, matches, and Kleenex.
9. Ask permission before taking pictures and don't delay the pilgrimage with your photography. Consider your host's time.
10. Never take a dog. Be prepared with an umbrella if it looks like rain. You will need rubbers possibly, if only the ground is damp, for your own protection and for your host's garden.
11. Use tact, and be kind. Do not declare loudly "I wouldn't give that stuff space in MY garden." Do not correct your host on the names on the plants. You are there as a guest.

(Reprinted from "Flower and Garden magazine for May 1972 and later the August 1974 CRFG Newsletter. Contributed by Frank Raco)



As you can see by the photo above, taken by Joe Sabol in November 2005 at the Flax Farm, OUR well-behaved group already knows all these rules!

Community Orchard News

Joe Sabol spent some time in our CRFG/Cal Poly orchard over the Memorial Day weekend. He watered all the new trees, chopped a few tall weeds, cut poison oak, surveyed the deer damage and he thinks we have some wild pigs going through the mulch looking for mushrooms!

He will ask the Cal Poly Crops Unit Crew Boss to get us some help in the orchard very soon to:

1. Tighten up fences.
2. Fix all busted drip lines.
3. Extend drip to the new trees.
4. Weed control.
5. Chip the prunings.

You can help in the orchard any time—but there are no parking fees on the campus on the weekend. Weeds are always available for your pulling/chopping pleasure!

Potting Party

We need a strong propagation team! Please meet on **Sunday, June 4, at 1 PM**, at the Crops Unit. Bob said, "If 20 people show to pot up the new grape plants we can get it all done in one day and nobody will need to work too hard! The Cal Poly Compost Project has donated the potting mix in return for a small complimentary ad in our Festival Program.

Announcements

Welcome to Our New Chapter Colleagues: Sally Reynolds, Priscilla Mikesell, and Florence Jones.

Join the Parent Organization: Many of our chapter colleagues 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.

Home Gardening Symposium: Saturday, June 17 from 8:30 AM to 4 PM at the SLO Vet's Hall. Registration fee is only \$35 and includes a continental breakfast, lunch, many workshops, and a gift plant! WOW! There will be speakers, workshops, displays, food, surprises and fun for all. Call the SLO Helpline for more information and a registration form at (805) 781-5939.

Seminar on Asian Citrus Psyllid and Huanglongbing (Citrus Greening Disease): "This seminar will discuss the basic biology, damage potential, and detection methods for the Asian citrus Psyllid, *Diaphorina citri* and the bacterium that the Psyllid vectors that causes Huanglongbing (citrus greening disease), a devastating disease of citrus. The seminar will be held in three locations in June (see below). The Psyllid is established throughout citrus growing regions of Florida. Greening disease was discovered in Florida in 2005 and so the risk of the vector and the disease arriving in California has greatly increased. Guest speaker Dr. Michael Rogers from the University of Florida will present information on both the Psyllid and the disease. To learn more about this pest and help prevent its establishment in California, please attend one of the seminar sessions: **Sacramento - Monday, June 26, 2006, 1:00 p.m.–3 p.m.**; **Tulare - Wednesday, June 28, 2006, 10:00 a.m.–noon**; **Ventura - Thursday, June 29, 2006, 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.**" For more information, contact Beth Grafton-Cardwell at 559-646-6591.

Free SPREADING Bamboo: Jenny Weaver says: "I have approximately 40' long x 2' wide x 8' tall of spreading bamboo in my yard that I want removed. You will LOVE it if you plant it in a restricting container. I have a love-hate relationship with it! I love its color and the screen that it provides. I hate that it pops up 20' away in paths and other garden beds. It can't be put in the green waste because it is "uncompostable". It's YOURS for FREE! You just have to dig it up and haul it away! Call Jenny Weaver, cell (805) 440-0366 for arrangements."

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!

June 10—Wildwood in Arroyo Grande—Jane and George Roach will host. **This meeting starts early!** We will begin promptly at **NOON**, with a **FREE BBQ** lunch. Our hosts will provide the hot dogs and all the "fixin's" but you must bring your own cold drink. If you prefer not to eat hot dogs, please bring a sandwich. Bob Tullock will begin the business meeting promptly at 1:15 p.m. and then Pet Daniels and Joe Sabol will give a major update on Festival Planning! Evelyn Ruehr will have Festival Registration Forms for you to complete at the meeting and we suggest you **NOT** use the internet website to register! Please bring a check and register for the Festival at this meeting and we will answer all questions! We hope to have all of our members and many guests register for this big event in September! It is already on your calendar and we are expecting a crowd!

After the business meeting, we will enjoy a practical and memorable "Orchard Development" planning session for a community orchard on a north facing hillside! We will also do some "June Pruning" so bring your pruners. Other things to bring: sunscreen, a hat, a notebook, and pen or pencil. If you have a picnic blanket, please bring that along, too.

Larry Hollis has donated 53 assorted plants that will be raffled for this meeting consisting of citrus, macadamia, Pasaflora, chestnuts, chili manzana, poha, white sapotes, grapes, dates, apples, pears, etc. Marv Daniels promises that this raffle will be different than any we have had before. Bring a few dollars and take home a plant or two!

Finally, parking will be different from our normal meetings. We will park in a parking lot and then car pool to the meeting/BBQ location inside the Wildwood Community. **See directions to the parking lot below.** Special note: If you arrive after 12:20 p.m. the car pool process will be ending, so, please go to the main gate of the Wildwood Gated Community and go to the gatehouse kiosk. Call the Clubhouse using the keypad (three numbers) and we will answer, and help you to find a parking spot so you can walk to the BBQ gathering area at the Clubhouse. Parking is limited inside the community. **Bring these directions with you on Saturday, June 10th.** Stay calm--look for our CRFG signs and happy faces!!

Directions to the June Meeting: From the north or south on 101, go to Arroyo Grande and exit Grand Ave. Go east through the Village of Arroyo Grande, through three (3) traffic lights, passing under a pedestrian bridge, heading towards Lopez Lake (approximately ¾ mile). At the stop sign where Grand Ave. (Hwy 227) bears left, and Lopez Lake turns right, make a sharp right, (almost a U-Turn) onto the street beside the Bus Barn. Look for the shopping bag sign with CRFG and balloons at the corner on your right. This small street will take you to the parking lot adjacent to the soccer field (look for another CRFG sign). You will park here and carpool to the meeting. Car pooling from this point is essential. If your vehicle will carry others, you can help by loading up others in your vehicle. Your vehicle will be OK parked here if you ride with someone else. Directions to the meeting location

(Wildwood Clubhouse) will be given at this parking lot. **If you are late**, see notes above to help you find us. The main gate to the Wildwood Gated Community is on 227, on the right hand side, as you are heading back to SLO from the Grand Ave. intersection with Lopez Lake road. What fun to be flexible! Remember, some Chapters have their meetings in the same place every month of the year--not our Chapter! What fun it is to be a member of CRFG!! *Joe Sabol (805) 544-1056*

July 8—The Nurses’ Pistachio Orchard—Creston/Paso Robles: Three nurses own and operate this fascinating orchard with 2,200 organically farmed pistachio trees! Bring chairs and wear a hat. Details and a map will be provided in the July Newsletter. **Refreshments will be provided by the A through G team.**

August 12—Dave Wilson Fruit Tasting—Cal Poly: This has been a **wildly** popular event that we weren’t able to host in 2005. (Yes, I **do** mean “wildly”. Have you ever seen fruit enthusiasts high on fructose?) Note that this is less than one month before we host the Festival of Fruit. **Your** assistance is not only requested, it is **NEEDED!** No business meeting and no refreshments necessary—we’ll be slicing and serving lots of delicious fruit. This event is open to the public.

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.