



California Rare Fruit Growers – Central Coast Chapter

October 2017 Newsletter

by Lori Bright

Meeting: October 14, 2017

Our CRFG group met this time at the SLO Botanical Gardens - assuming we weren't too "Lively" for them - we'll go back and do it again next year! Our meeting was held in a Rosy-colored stucco building supplied by our partners, a large and lovely venue. We hope that our Botanical Garden buddies enjoyed our presentation.

What a spread of fruit was viewed and offered: Yellow Sapote, Macadamia nuts, Feijoa, Fuzzy Kiwi, Figs, Dragon Fruit, Jujubes and more.

Upcoming Events:

November 4: Arbor Day Festival We'll have a booth and sell grafted trees. (Thanks to Marv for all his donated trees.) We'll be putting this money towards more scholarship opportunities.

November 4: Tom Spellman from Dave Wilson Nurseries will give a presentation on Backyard Orchard Management at Farm Supply.

November 11: Ron Ludikins from L.E. Cooke will be speaking on Growing Deciduous Fruit Trees.

AgVenture: The crew, Marv Daniels, Pat Moudakis, and Joe Sabol went to Paso Robles and taught hundreds of 4 th graders to graft fruit trees in October 2017. They will participate again in May at the AgVenture in Arroyo Grande. Sign-up with Pat Moudakis if you can help!!

We Talk About Our Favorite Fruits!

We had 6 speakers tell us about their Favorite Fruits:

Alisha & Jujubes:

(Ziziphus jujube is in the Buckthorn Family)
Originally from Central Asia. With the Jujube you can eat the fruit fresh or let it dry on the tree for a more

intense sweet flavor. They taste great either way. Jujubes are an excellent source of Vitamin C and iron and contain 22 Amino acids as well as many other nutrients. There are many ways to enjoy them but eaten in Oatmeal seems to be a big hit. The tree loves heat and tolerates both poor water quality as well as poor soil. The trees are drought



Alisha helps a young visitor select her free plant. Later during the meeting, Alisha, who grows several varieties of jujubes on her ranch, shared her knowledge with us.

tolerant but fruit best with regular water. The flowers are tiny but smell sweet. The fruit of the Jujube are harvested from the beginning of September, and then finish before Halloween. Don't try to grow them from seed however, that is a most difficult feat. The Winter pleasure of this tree comes in admiring the tree's beautiful silhouette. The tree itself can handle temperatures well below 0 degrees. If you are coastal, you might have to locate that perfect micro- climate for your Jujube (such as up against a south-facing wall) to give it the heat it needs. Alisha's home is in a beautiful open location near New Cuyama. If you are planting your trees in an open aspect, place your Jujube trees on centers of 15'- 25'.

[CRFG Jujube Information](#)

Larry & Cherimoyas:

(Annona cherimola)

"The Most Delicious Fruit Known To Man" --Mark Twain

Cherimoyas come to us from the North-West portion of South America at high elevations. If you can grow Avocado then you should try the Cherimoya. Cherimoya have a long growing season: February thru September. With 9 months of flowering your "Custard Apple" can produce a succession of fruit. Larry says his favorite way to eat the Cherimoya is to harvest it when it is soft, place in the refrigerator and then eat with a spoon the next day. There are named cultivars of Cherimoya but excellent fruit trees can be grown from seed. If you find a fruit that has been on the ground for several days, you might find a seed already sprouting inside that fruit. The trees are similar to Avocado in that you have female flowers opening at one time of the day and male flowers opening at another time. When a tree is small, you might try hand pollination. A larger tree has enough crossover that hand pollination isn't necessary. They tend to hit their stride at about 5 years, and are somewhat drought tolerant. To keep your tree at a manageable height you can prune several times throughout the year. (Trees don't bear fruit on new wood only.)

[CRFG Cherimoya Information](#)

Jack & Macadamia

Nuts:

(Macadamia tetraphylla)

Macadamia trees are in the Protea Family and are from Australia.

Macadamia trees are cold sensitive but a mature tree could take temperatures as low as 19 degrees. At maturity they are very drought resistant large tree. These trees are

deep rooted and tough. No need to use mechanical means for harvest, the nuts fall to the ground once they are ripe. A named cultivar is a "Sure thing" but they can be grown from seed as well. Do not put your trees in the ground as they don't like being container grown.

Macadamia trees like an acid soil 5.5 to 6.5 is ideal. The tree is resistant to Armillaria fungus but do have one pesky pest. The "Tree Rat" or "Roof Rat" is the trees worst enemy. Jack has devised a most amazing "Rat-Trap- on-a- Stick" contraption. Baited with a macadamia nut he has great success with his trap. (You might want to speak to Jack yourself to find out just exactly how to construct one of these.)

Macadamia are self-fruitful and can be planted on a 15' center.

[CRFG Macadamia Information](#)



Jack shows examples of grafted and seedling Macadamia varieties, and also explains his technique for fending off sneaky tree rats.

Lori & Citrus:

(Citrus, of multiple species)

If you go to buy a Citrus fruit today, you might think the plants a bit puny. The Growers are moving them so fast that they are barely up-to- size before they are shipped off to retail outlets. The growers are raising the price of Citrus based on the

need to grow them indoors (due to the Asian Citrus Psyllid and concern for Citrus Greening Disease.) Many growers are switching to a 3 gallon container. A smaller container is a better way to deal with a smaller plant. With a small plant in a large container there is more chance for root damage at transplant time. Use a good high-end potting soil if you are going to grow in a container. Use an acid amendment if you are planting in the ground. If you have an old Citrus tree and believe it isn't giving you the fruit that it should. Check to see that you are not



Lori answers questions from the audience about citrus.

growing out the rootstock. If you are, you should (in Spring) cut out the rootstock and see to it that the original scion is healthy and capable of making a tree. Otherwise, consider grafting new scion wood onto your old rootstock. Because of the Citrus Leaf Miner, prune and fertilize your trees early. I always say "Love your trees on Valentine's Day, but if you don't....make sure they get Lucky by St Patty's Day." If you prune or fertilize in June, July or August you will end up with more damage from the Citrus Leaf Miner. These little buggers like new succulent growth. Citrus do like a good fertilizer that is chalk full of micro-nutrients.

Marv & Feijoa:

(Feijoa sellowiana)

(Acca sellowiana)

Pineapple Guava

Great tasting fruit,

(thank you for the

samples.) Pineapple

Guava can be started

from seed in a pie tin

(no holes punched in

the top or bottom.)

Two great varieties are

'Coolidge' and 'Robert

Scott'. The 'Coolidge' is

elongated and the

'Robert Scott' is egg shaped. The 'Coolidge' is self-fruitful but the self-

fruitfulness of the 'Robert Scott', is uncertain. The petals of the Feijoa

flower are especially delicious and are great in salad. The best way to

eat a Feijoa is to bite off the flower end of the fruit and suck out the

yummy pulp.

[CRFG Feijoa Information](#)



Marv holds up a feijoa fruit, and provided samples for the audience to taste.

Joe, Tucker & Dragon Fruit:

(Hylocereus) (Pitaya)

Dragon fruits are easy

to grow, beautiful and

healthy. The Dragon

Fruit comes to us from

Central America where

they grow under trees

that give them a

natural support. You

can grow them in the

ground or in

containers. Young

plants will need some

shade. To start your

own plant from a

cutting: take a 6"-10"

piece and put it into



Tucker explains that by growing dragon fruit people will know you are cool because you know Joe Sabol!

potting soil in a 5" container. (No rooting hormone needed.) Once it puts on some roots, pot-it- up into a one gallon container, stake it and feed some chicken manure. Once a plant weighs about 10 pounds, it may begin to flower.



Joe explains how to grow your own dragon fruit from a single cutting.

Dragon Fruit can be hand pollinated and then in 50 days you'll have fruit. To hand pollinate: Use a brush and feather the pollen onto open flowers. (Do this at night.) Your pollen can be kept in the refrigerator for up to 4 days. The red fruits are most nutritious and the white fruits are sweetest. Growing

them from start to finish is some great fun. The whole process, per Joe Sabol, is a "Kick in the Pants"!!!!