



California Rare Fruit Growers – Central Coast Chapter

January 2018 Newsletter

by Lori Bright

Meeting January 13, 2018



Dr. Garner, Cal Poly professor, shares tips and answers questions about how to prune fruit trees.

The



Co-chair Tucker Schmidt welcomes the large crowd.



Mark measures bird netting for sale. Over 600 feet were sold today! Bird netting will be on sale again at the CRFG Scion Exchange on February 17th, 2018.

gracious Dr. Lauren Garner, Professor of Fruit Science at Cal Poly, helped us out in a pinch when – due to circumstances beyond his control - Tom Spellman was unable to make the trek up the coast and speak on Backyard Fruit Tree Pruning. We were so very fortunate that Dr. Garner was free. She taught us her [Top Tips for Successful Fruit Tree Pruning](#).

Thank you Dr. Garner!!!

The meeting was held on a beautiful, if not hot January day. Our venue this month was just outside the Crop Sciences building (a large enough area to fit us all).

Thanks to you Cal Poly, for bringing and selling their Marvelous Mandarins. Thanks Elaine, for the wonderful spread of food. Thank you Dara and Manny for setting up our meeting and taking over the care of the Fruit Orchard! Thanks to Ag Ed for the use of the chairs and thanks for the visit from the students at Midland School!





June and Marv placed parking signs to guide attendees to where Cal Poly's Parking Services had approved parking for the event.

EVENTS:

Be sure to take part in our **February Scion Exchange (Feb. 17th)**. This year we will have over 12 varieties of Avocado scion wood! John Valenzuela will be present again this year....maybe he'll bring us some scion wood from the Northern Regions like he did last year. What a plethora of wood to choose from!

Our Meeting in March will be our **Propagation Meeting (March 10th)**. Be sure to bring your plant material for propagation. Guests and members will be taking home their new plants with them after the meeting.

This year the **Festival of Fruit** will be in Saratoga. Save the Date: **July 27-29**.

8 Tips for Successful Backyard Deciduous Fruit Tree Pruning:

1. Start with the right tools. Pruners are for small limbs, loppers for mid-sized limbs, and pruning saw for branches. Keep them sharp!



Dr. Garner answers questions from onlookers about pruning peach and nectarine trees.

2. Make good cuts. Use the right side of the bypass pruner and keep close to the Trunk or initiating branch. Learn the three cut process for cutting large limbs.
3. Bring down the top of the tree. If you don't want to harvest from a ladder, go ahead and bring the height down to a reasonable level.
4. "Hedge" the tree, if you have other trees or paths nearby, bring those sides in to a reasonable distance.
5. "Skirt" the tree, bring it up off the ground.
6. Remove diseased and broken wood. Eliminate unneeded water sprouts.
7. Thin the tree. Remove crossing branches, and generally open the tree as needed.
Know what type of tree you have:
 - Pears and Apples have fruit-bearing spurs...you wouldn't want to remove these.
 - Peaches and Nectarines need hard pruning.
 - Plums and Apricots will bear on spurs and new wood. Be selective.
8. The above are done for maintenance, consider what you will need to do down-the-road to regenerate new wood once the tree has aged. Think ahead for refurbishment.

Of course Dr. Garner went into greater detail, but you get the idea. Once we were duly educated, off we went to practice our newfound techniques at the CRFG Orchard.
Thanks again Dr. Garner!



Pruners practicing their technique in the orchard.



Midland School students and teacher, and Manny, Art, and Joe practiced and taught well, and were among the last to leave the orchard.