



Central Coast Chapter CRFG

May 26 2023 Newsletter
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In This Issue

(Click the link to jump to the section)

[**Next CRFG Meeting**](#)

[**Announcements**](#)

[**Meeting Notes and Presentation**](#)

[**CRFG Demonstration Orchard Workday**](#)

[**CRFG Demonstration Orchard Update**](#)

[**Spring Bloom Photos**](#)

[**What's Growing in the Garden of Eatin'**](#)

[**Good News from our Members and Sponsors**](#)

Next CRFG Meeting (Open to the Public)

When: June 10, 2023

Where: Bay Laurel Garden Center,
2500 El Camino Real, Atascadero

See the map on the next page

Parking: Please park at the end of Madera Place. It's OK to park along the side of Madera Place on the edge of the field across from the nursery. Please don't take customer parking spots.



Schedule for Next Meeting at Bay Laurel Garden Center, June 10th:

12:00: - 1:00 Set up

1:00 -3:30 Socialize, Snacks, Presentation, Tour

3:30 Clean up

Bring: A healthy snack to share, chair, hat, water and money for the generous discount!

Hosts: Nursery owners Marcia Guelff and Nancy Rice.

This is what Nancy Rice, one of the co-owners told us.

"The main building and all others were not originally built for a nursery-a nursery started up in the 70s.

Marcia and I worked at the nursery when Jim Patterson and his wife owned it. Marcia was there before 1993 when I started. Marcia, Carolyn and I bought the nursery in 2001. Carolyn is no longer a partner.

We normally give your CRFG members a 10% discount but will make it 20% on the day of the visit. A tour and general information about our plants and mail order business will be the topic.

There is a rustic restroom for use."

Announcements

From Jenny Weaver

I recently discovered California Bountiful, a great series on KSBY TV that many of you may already know about. Every episode covers interesting agricultural events and production at wineries, farms and manufacturing locations. It covers fruit, nuts, animals, animal fiber, cheese, wine, herbs, cosmetics and much more.

To my delight, on the recent May 20th episode, there was a segment about the Great AGventure that takes place at the Paso Robles Event Center. It's where our gifted grafters, Claudia, Marv, Jim, and Pat volunteer to teach apple grafting in the fall! Kimberly Bradley, the Executive Director, even mentioned that the apple grafting demonstrations were a big hit with the school children!

Local stations		
City	Station	Time
Fresno/Visalia	KVPT/18	Sun 11:30 am
Santa Barbara/San Luis Obispo	KSBY/6	Sun 5:00 pm

Cable/Satellite	
RFD-TV (Dish Ch. 231, DirecTV Ch. 345)	Sun 8:00 am

Go to the link below to find the May 20th episode, then skip ahead to 23:45 on the timeline to hear about the Great AGventure in Paso Robles.

<https://www.californiabountiful.com/tv-features/episode-archive/california-bountiful-dakota-shy1/>

All the episodes are archived so you can watch older episodes at any time.



*Kimberly Bradley, Executive Director for Great AGventure.
Screen shot from the May 20th 2023 California Bountiful TV show*



*Note Paso Robles in upper-right
Screen shot from the May 20th 2023 California Bountiful TV show*

May 13th Meeting Notes

Report by Jenny and Dara

Once again, we were affected by rain or the threat of rain. The original meeting place at Black Diamond Worm Farm in Paso Robles was cancelled because of the prediction of more rain. Our host Cristy Christie was worried the rain would further damage the roads to their place and their driveway, so out of an abundance of caution the meeting was cancelled at that location. Instead, it was switched to the CRFG Demonstration Orchard on Cal Poly campus for the same day and time.

The workday was re-scheduled from May 20th to May 13 from 10:00-1:00. See Dara's report later on.

The meeting was scheduled from 1:00 to 3:00 and Cristy Christie had agreed to drive to the CRFG orchard to give her presentation. Unfortunately, she had car trouble and was not able to make it.

Here is an excerpt from Dara.

It turned out we didn't really have a meeting.

Here's what happened. Sharon, Manny, Larry, Erica, Remy, Raine, and I had finished doing maintenance and were waiting for folks to appear for the meeting.

Sharon got a phone call: poor Cristy was stuck in Templeton with a dead car battery. Her husband was at home and was going to leave to help her, but then CRFG folks started showing up at their door (despite emails, Facebook and Website saying the meeting was moved)! Sharon and Cristy decided to postpone the meeting to another time, as even if Cristy's husband were to leave immediately, Cristy would not be able to arrive in the orchard until 2:30ish.

Meanwhile back in the orchard, Amelia and Larry G. joined us. We chatted while we waited for others, but it soon became evident that no one else was coming. The group allowed me to give my orchard report, and we shared stories about tree diseases, poison oak resistance, different types of fruit and trees, Peru, etc.

It was a nice gathering and we had a good time chatting.

CRFG Demonstration Orchard Workday

Report and photos by Dara Manker

May 13, 2023

Fourteen people showed up to help at the workday. Larry devised a prize drawing for the first ten people to arrive. These folks drew tickets, and the five winning tickets won their owners a delicious cherimoya from Larry's tree.



Bob was already there when Manny and I arrived. He and Medhi made baskets out of chicken wire and planted our 5 new fruit trees. I'll tell you more about these new trees in next month's newsletter.

Bob planting a new tree:



Medhi creating a gopher basket. Later, he added extra wire to tie the back fences to their posts.



We discovered that the water to the orchard had been turned off sometime since the previous Tuesday. Manny and I filled buckets at the Crops Unit so that the new trees could be watered.



We reported the outage to our Cal Poly contact. Monday we received a reply that they had the water off to make repairs at the end of the week, and that it should be back on now.

Jenny completely cleaned the kiosk and cleaned and reorganized the tool shed. She also pulled the weeds around the tool shed.



Larry thinning fruit and checking the trees for diseases.



Pat (right) and Bebe (below) pulling weeds around trees and risers.



Clark, Raine, Remy, and Erica respectively, pulling weeds around trees and risers.



Manny started disassembling the old picnic bench created in 2012 by Kit and John Long. Long-time Chapter members Pat and Larry remembered them. The table top and some supporting braces were damaged by termites and dry rot.



Sharon painted names on new tree signs.





A huge thank you to all of the workers! We greatly appreciate all the work you did!

Dara, Manny, & Jesse
Orchard Co-Managers

CRFG Demonstration Orchard Update

by Dara Manker

Here's what's been going on between our last orchard workday in October 2022, and the latest one May 13th 2023 as reported on above.

- We set up a new drip system for the 200+ plants propagated at the March meeting (rescheduled to April 1 due to atmospheric river).
- Mark, Manny, and I replaced a rundown section of fence in the back of the orchard with some chainlink I'd bought 5 years ago and never used. We purchased and pounded in additional stakes for support.
- The passion fruit vines along the back fence are old enough that they began having their first flowers, and in one case bearing fruit.
- The deer were merciless this year! They even chewed the low branches on larger trees. We added lots of fencing around the littlest trees.
- We investigated a leak on the other side of the fence from the Japanese Maple, and confirmed it was not originating from the Orchard's lines. We notified Cal Poly.
- We sprayed the sticky gate lock with graphite and now it opens easily.
- Someone pried off the tool shed hasp. As far as we could tell, only the box of trash bags were taken. We installed a new hasp.
- New String Trimmer Mower: We purchased a new string trimmer mower, which uses a string like a weed wacker instead of a blade and is lighter and easier to push and pull around the orchard than the traditional mower.



New String Mower for the Orchard



This mower (and the person behind it) whacked down the entire orchard's 2+ foot high weeds in 2 hours. Compare this to the 5 hours it took last year with a traditional mower. No more stopping to empty a bag, or worrying about hitting hidden stumps or rocks.

- Because Clytia Chambers has a Cherry tree planted in her memory (<https://www.crfg-central.org/in-memoriam>) and because she and her husband Bob had over 40 varieties of Sapotes, we asked Robert and Carol if we could have some scions from their Clytia sapote tree to graft to the orchard's white sapote. They donated the scions, and we grafted four of them to the orchard's white sapote. Unfortunately, none of them took. We're going to try again with different varieties, also donated by Robert and Carol. (*Editor's note: read more about Bob Chambers in a special edition by Tom coming out soon.*)
- Many of the Asian Pears had fire blight last fall. We cut it all off and took the infected branches to the dump. A week later, all the Asian pears as well as the Keiffer pear had been reinfected.
- Gummosis infected several trees in the orchard. We shaved it off the bark of the Royal Lee Cherry and Florida Prince Peach. So far it has not returned.

However, gummosis completely took over the TXW-1194-1 Peach in row 7 and the multi-grafted tree (Santa Rosa Plum, Fantasia Nectarine, Elberta Peach) that had been planted in memory of Art Henzgen. We purchased a new Elberta Peach this winter and planted it on workday on May 13, 2023. Next winter we'll graft to it!

Gummosis indicates that a tree is experiencing stress. The amber sap pools on the outside of the bark. It may be caused by cuts by pruning, mowers; sun damage to the bark, or broken limbs. It may be caused by the *Leucostoma* canker fungus getting into any of these cuts. You can often tell if the fungus is present because of the presence of small black fruiting bodies in the sap.

For more info about *Leucostoma*, see this article:

<https://extension.psu.edu/stone-fruit-disease-cytospora-canker>

- Annual Pruning workshop in January 2023, Dean Harrell presiding. Great talk and attendance. Jenny told you all about this meeting too, and you can relive all the fun in the [January newsletter](#) (starts on page 9).

Here are some pictures of Spring blooms and fruit:

Keiffer Pear mid-March



Lots of mulberry fruit, mid-April



Double Delight Nectarine flowers mid-April



What's Growing in the Garden of Eatin'

We are highlighting some of the plants growing and producing in members' gardens in the following articles.

Citrus and Avocado trees grow in North SLO County!

By Sharon Lovelady May 19, 2023

I live in the northeast area of San Luis Obispo County. Our address is in San Miguel township. We are approximately 12 miles northeast of Paso Robles and about 12 miles east from downtown San Miguel.

Our temperature ranges from as high as 120+ degrees in the summer months to 12 degrees in the winter. We had snow this winter 2023. The snow melted by the evening. We average in most years around 100 degrees from July to October. Winter months are from 22 to 55 degrees. We have several citrus trees on our property. My favorites are the Navel oranges, Calamondin, and the Orangelo (Chironja). Our neighbor has lemons, limes, and a few types of oranges. We both have avocados that produce fruit.



Orangelo (left) and Calamondin (right) Photo by Sharon

We are the only properties that I have seen in Independence Ranch that have citrus and avocado trees. I think we have a unique microclimate suitable for growing citrus and avocado. The majority of our trees are on the west side of our properties. They grow on a hillside. The Orangelo is on the southeast side of my property.

I have never protected the trees from the harsh weather. That includes no fans, heaters or covers.

I do have several other fruit trees planted with the citrus trees. There are figs, olives, cherries, and pomegranates with them. Lots of roses too. So, I'm not sure what protects the trees. Maybe they help to regulate the temperature in the orchard.



*Navel orange currently blooming
Photo by Sharon*



*Avocado trees
Photo by Sharon*

I plant pollinator plants like lavender under and around my fruit trees to encourage the bees and other pollen movers to enjoy.

This year is going to be very fruitful. The trees are loaded with flowers. I don't have any fruit to harvest now.

I use compost and citrus food after the fruit is done.



*View of Sharon's orchard
Photo by Sharon*

No gophers so far. We have baskets. Our cat Blonde is a fantastic hunter. We live-trap ground squirrels. We have raptors like owls and hawks that keep the population off our property.

No disease so far on the trees. No bad bugs so far. We do not have snails or caterpillars or bad worms. We have a lot of birds 😊

I water starting when the temps are 70 degrees. I water one hour every 3 days. I will water more often if the temps stay over 100 for more than 5 days.

I am excited to add more trees to my new orchard that I am planting in the next few weeks.



*Another view of Sharon's orchard
Photo by Sharon*

Some other Fruits Grown in South SLO County, Ripe and Ready to Eat.

By Jenny Weaver May 22, 2023

Cherimoyas in San Luis Obispo

Larry H. hand pollinated his cherimoya flowers and got a great crop. They are huge, delicious and sweet (I know because I was lucky enough to receive one).



*Larry's Huge Cherimoya weighing in at 1lb. 13.4oz!
Photo by Jenny*



Larry's loaded cherimoya tree
Photos by Larry

Banana Passion Fruit in San Luis Obispo

My friend Edwin (who was our speaker at the November 2022 meeting) gave me some fresh banana passionfruit from his backyard vine. It wasn't as flavorful as the Fredrick's purple passion fruit. But it was good in a smoothie with some sweetened passionfruit drink, banana, and coconut milk.

Since I hadn't heard of or tried this variety, I looked it up. This is what Wikipedia says about banana passionfruit:

"*Passiflora tarminiana* is cultivated for its edible fruit. It is the second most common species in cultivation in South America after *P. tripartita* var. *mollissima* and is considered more disease resistant than that species.[1] The fruit are also eaten in New Zealand but in Hawaii the fruit is considered to be insipid.



*Banana passionfruit. Remnants of the flower can be seen.
Photo by Jenny*

The pink flowers are showy and it is also considered to be an ornamental species.



Photo from Wikipedia

Caution: Invasive species

(text from Wikipedia)

Passiflora tarminiana and *P. tripartita* thrive in the climate of New Zealand. They are an invasive species since they can smother forest margins and forest regrowth. It is illegal to sell, cultivate and distribute the plants.[7]

Banana passionfruit vines are now smothering more than 200 square miles (520 km²) of native forest on the islands of Hawaii and Kauai. Seeds are spread by feral pigs, birds and humans.[8][9] The vine can also be found all across the highlands of New Guinea.

It is considered an environmental weed in South Eastern Australia (Victoria, Tasmania and New South Wales), but not declared or considered noxious by any Australian state government authorities.[10]

Banana passionfruit is used as rootstock for grafting the passionfruit varieties more commonly grown for food, especially in climates too cool for productive passionfruit growing. Regrowth from beneath the graft is one means of its outbreak as a weed, so growers should be vigilant for sprouting low on the main stem or from around the base of the plant, and should pull up and cut back the plant when (typically after 6–9 years) the grafted passionfruit is no longer as productive.

Mamey sapote fruit from Vallarta Market in Santa Maria

Mamey sapote, *Pouteria sapota*, is a species of tree native to Mexico and Central America! If you ever want to try a fruit that looks like a football and tastes like a yam, try it! It is a bit dry and pasty so if you don't like the texture, it's great in a smoothie. The fruit is used commercially for milkshakes and ice cream.



Ripe banana passionfruit, mamey sapote and cherimoya. Photos by Jenny Weaver

Good News

One Cool Earth Award for CRFG!

Miranda Daschian,
Communications and Operations Manager One Cool Earth
May 20th, 2023

"I wanted to let you know that Central Coast Chapter of CRFG has won a One Cool Earth Award at our upcoming Garden Party this Saturday, May 20th, from 4-7pm at the SLO Botanical Garden! Congratulations!

Thank you for all of your support and dedication to our OCE community!

Sharon had previously donated trees from Central Coast Chapter CRFG to One Cool Earth.

Two figs and one pomegranate tree went to Santa Margarita Elementary school. A fig tree also went to each of these elementary schools: Georgia Brown, Glen Speck, Cappy Culver and Creston.



*Sharon Lovelady receiving the award on behalf of CCC CRFG
Photo by Linda Robertson*



*Sharon Lovelady receiving the award on behalf of CCC CRFG
Photo by Linda Robertson*

One Cool Earth would be happy to help deliver more trees into school gardens next year.

Editor's note: If you have a fruit tree you'd like to donate to One Cool Earth, please contact Sharon. Be sure to label the tree with variety (e.g., Hawaii apple) chill hours and pollination requirements so it can be planted in the right microclimate. Hopefully, they will bear lots of fruit for the schoolkids for many years to come.

The Great AGventure held at Arroyo Grande High School

Kimberly Bradley, Executive Director May 4th, 2023

Here are some photos of Marv D., Jim R. and Pat M. from our Great AGventure in Arroyo Grande Thursday, May 4th, 2023. These guys are the best and the kiddos (and teachers) enjoy learning about grafting!



*Marv D. demonstrating a tool to 4th graders
Photo by Kimberly Bradley*



Marv



Jim R.



Jim R.



Pat



*3 grafting amigos. From left: Marv D. Jim R. Pat M.
All photos by Kimberly Bradley*