



California Rare Fruit Growers – Central Coast Chapter

June 2018 Newsletter

by Lori Bright

June

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Upcoming Events

June 30th we have a workday at the CRFG's orchard. We accomplished a lot last time but there is always more to do. Come for the comradery and fun, and we'll even get some work done in the process.

July CRFG Meeting- - NO, there won't be one! We will all be going up to see the FESTIVAL OF FRUIT, in Campbell, CA. I can't wait, how about you? For more information see <http://festivaloffruit.org>.

August Meeting will be at the PG&E building. We will be having a member of the Xerces Society visit us for a talk about Pollinators.

The Central Coast Grown, City Farm SLO



Alisha welcomes the crowd and announces upcoming events. Photo by Joe Sabol.

CRFG'ers visited a hidden agricultural gem: The Central Coast Grown, City Farm SLO. Who would ever guess that this 19 acre farmland treasure was nestled right under our noses behind the Madonna Plaza ([1221 Calle Joaquin, SLO](#)). From the [farm's brochure](#) we learn that: "City Farm SLO represents a unique collaboration among municipal government, non-profit organizations, business enterprises, educational institutions, and public and private funding agencies committed to the revival of community engagement in sustainable agriculture." Wow, that's a mouthful, and the abundance of food and herbs coming from this area is an impressive mouthful as well. Steven Marx was our gracious host and he was our guide to see what the different farmers were up to.

We met Teresa Lees who heads up The Children's Global Family Garden. She hopes to teach unity-in-food. Her garden is divided into 4 areas that represent the four quarters of the globe. Teresa uses permaculture methods so her area is self-sustaining and all resources are re-



Alisha presents a CRFG "thank you" hat to our host Stephen Marx. Photo by Joe Sabol.

usable. If you would like to help Teresa with her journey, she would love the help, please contact her at Treelees@Charter.net.

We saw a Food Forest that is worked by the High School Students of Pacific Beach School. These "kids" have quite a large garden. What better way for High School Students to learn about responsibility through agriculture? They obviously put their backs into the job. They also grow a "hedgerow" of pollinator friendly flowers, making their garden area not only productive, but beautiful as well. Congratulations PBS, your garden is impressive.

We walked by Josh Carmichael's farm. Josh is a local landscaper, but here on the farm he is creating a Demo Garden featuring ornamental plants as well as experimental food crops.



*Joshua Carmichael tells about his demo garden and experimental food crops.
Photo by Joe Sabol.*

Michael Huggins' area is largely taken up with greenhouses. He utilizes not only solar but also wind power to power his operation. He currently grows exotic crops like Ginger and Tumeric.

Elizabeth Johnson displayed her grain growing experimental area. She is growing heirloom grains and plans on milling the grain herself. What will she do next? Well, "We'll have to see where it goes from here". Old grains are making a big comeback. We wish Elizabeth a fun adventurous future in grains.



Javier Magaña tells us some of his background and his work with his farm before taking us on a tour. farming operation. Photo by Joe Sabol.



Javier cuts lettuce to share with our group. Photo by Joe Sabol.

We spent the majority of our time with Javier Magaña. Here's a guy who knows how to work. He began working on farms in Mexico, he has been a Chef at several High End restaurants and now he works 10 acres of land in the City Farm's lot. Javier and his kids spend endless hours working his farm. Javier supplies his wife's juice bar, "Julia's Juices" (located in Grover Beach on Grand and 9th). Julia is renowned for her healthy, dare-I-say maybe even medicinal, blends of juices. Javier's produce also goes to our Elementary and Jr. High Schools. He is passionate about teaching our children where their food comes from. Javier, you were an inspiration to us all.

If you would like to donate your time or make a tax deductible contribution, you can visit them on line at:

<http://centralcoastgrown.org>.

Orchard Workday: June 30, 2018

We had a very fruitful(!) 3 hour maintenance workday. Deer and humans had created holes and pushed down fences on all sides of the orchard. To make the fence repair job more challenging, one of the sections runs along a stand of very healthy and aggressively growing poison oak. But volunteers deployed their mad fence repair skills! By the time the workday was done, the fence had been repaired. The orchard co-managers are very happy!



*One section of damaged fence adjacent to poison oak.
Photo by Jesse Englert.*



Can you find the culprit? Photo by Jesse Englert.



Mark tackles a repair near the orchard entrance.



Mark W. repairs a stretch of fence.



Keri fills giant squirrel holes, cleans up brush, and pulls weeds.



Dean hoes the weeds underneath the fruit trees.

But wait, there's more: trees along the outside perimeter of the fence were trimmed back, squirrel holes were filled, weeds were pulled and weed-whacked, dead wood was pruned, and the tree height was brought down on several trees (our 2 year goal for the orchard is to reduce the height of all fruit trees to allow fruit to be picked without ladders). A new dripline run was also extended out to several dragonfruit along the Highland perimeter of the orchard and the Allspice tree that was planted at the last maintenance workday.



Jim trims trees encroaching on the orchard fence.



Deb hauls off tree limbs to the brush pile.



Lori removes dead branches from the fruit trees.



Larry reduces the height of several fruit trees.



Manny adds a new dripline out to dragonfruit and the newly planted Allspice tree.



After installing a memorial plaque display post that he built, Joe checked the dragonfruit on the perimeter, and holds up a dragon fruit leaf.