



The Fruit Leaf

Santa Clara Valley Chapter
California Rare Fruit Growers, Inc.



March/April
2009

<http://www.crfg.org>

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Next Meeting

April 11, 2009
Emma Prusch Park
Social and set-up 12:30 p.m.
Meeting 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Speaker for Avocados

First Hand Experience Growing Them in the Bay Area

By Jack Kay

For our April meeting, we are fortunate to have Gene Lester speak to our chapter. Many of you are familiar with Gene's tremendous citrus collection that he grows on his property in the hills above Watsonville. Gene also has what may be the most extensive non-commercial collection of avocados trees in the bay area growing on his property. He will present to us information on this collection and what he has learned up to now growing this fruit.

Green Scion Exchange, April Meeting

It is up to each individual member to make the April 11, Green Scion exchange a success! What is a green scion? Well, it is material from plants that do not go dormant in the winter. This includes plants such as citrus, avocado, guava, fejoa, sapote, loquat, Surinam cherry, etc.

Generally you will select cutting wood that is around one year old. On citrus, this would be the twigs that are not angular but round, still young, and vigorous with buds in leaf axis that haven't pushed. Clip off leaves being careful to leave a leaf petiole so there will be a handle on the bud. You must tear off all the leaves due to LBAM quarantine this year. You can T-bud, chip bud, or graft, evergreen scions. Place the scions in a zip lock bag sprinkled with a little water to keep them moist. Label the bag with a permanent marker as to type, variety, and source (your name).

Edible Landscaping: Healthy Spring Fruits

Linda Kincaid, MPH, CIH

Blueberries are loaded with healthful antioxidants. They are also great landscaping shrubs, and easy to grow. The southern highbush varieties, Sunshine Blue and Misty, do well in my Santa Clara County garden. About 3-4 feet tall, they are evergreen and have gorgeous fall foliage. Right now, Misty is covered with hot pink flowers. Berries will start ripening late spring and continue throughout summer.

Give blueberries a spot with morning sun and afternoon shade or full sun. An area near the kitchen door is perfect for strolling outside to collect a handful of berries for breakfast.

Cherries rival blueberries for antioxidants. Anthocyanin, the pigment that gives cherries their red color, is also a powerful antioxidant. Not only are cherries a gorgeous addition to the landscape, they produce fruit with cancer fighting properties. Harvest season is short, just a few weeks in late spring.

Cherry trees grow well in Santa Clara County, provided low chill varieties are selected. The valley no longer provides the winter chill needed to grow Bing cherries. Lapins and Stella, are self-fertile, require less chill, and they rival Bing in flavor and quality. Give cherry trees a prominent place in the landscape. They are gorgeous in blossom, and the tree is attractive year round. However, cherry trees do not like wet feet, so keep them out of the lawn.

Apricots are Andy Mariani's favorite spring fruit. Loaded with vitamin A, beta-carotene, and lycopene, apricots are considered one of the most healthful fruits. They are also one of the most delicious fruits of spring and early summer.

Apricot trees are forgiving and tolerate a wider range of growing conditions than cherry trees. It is best to keep all fruit trees out of the lawn, so a sunny corner near the vegetable garden can work well. My favorite "apricot tree" is actually an aprium. Garden Delight®, an apricot-plum hybrid, has pink blossoms and produces very juicy apricot-like fruits early in the season. My tree is near my office window so I can see the blossoms from my desk.

My favorite spring fruit is a bit aggressive and not for every yard. Pakistan mulberry trees makes 3-inch long fruits beginning in May and continuing through summer. The berries are intense purple, and the flavor is amazingly sweet and complex for an early season fruit. However, the tree is a vigorous grower and has aggressive roots. It is best planted in larger spaces, away from paved areas where dropping fruit could be objectionable. I planted mulberry trees along the sunny side of my house, where their dense canopy provides welcome shade in hot months. I prune my Pakistan down to waist height each spring, keeping the fruit at a height I can easily harvest. By summer, the tree is above the roof and shading the window.

Visit Linda's webpage for more articles: <http://www.examiner.com/x-5101-San-Jose-Environmental-Health-Examiner>



Photo from Wiki Commons

FYI - Folks at the banana forum have put together a banana magazine quarterly. It's only electronic for now since they haven't got enough advertising interest to put it in print. Details can be found at:
<http://www.bananas.org/f2/subscribe-bananas-quarterly-7288.html>.

Pitaya Festival

Sept. 15, 2007

By Leo Manuel

The Pitaya Festival was held at the U.C. Irvine Field Station on September 15. You will fully grasp these incomplete impressions only if you attended. Ramiro Lobo and Edgar Valdivia spoke to us in the field about the varieties on trial and results so far.

Planting: Use 4"x4" posts 6 ft. apart in rows 10 ft. apart. Each post has one plant at base, planted in 1-gal. wire baskets to protect from gophers. Posts seemed to be about 6 ft. high, with 6" x 6" welded heavy wire for plants to reach and droop over, then to hang down about 2 ft. Support for the 6" x 6" wire is small diam. rebar cut to ~2.5' lengths, through holes drilled through the post, at right angles to each other. They are fertilizing their plants with N-P-K of 20- 20-20. Also for watering, they are using about 14-gal per plant per week. Buyers in Florida believe 3/4 to 1-1/4 lb fruit most marketable for them. "12-18 inch cuttings seemed to be best size for getting plants of maximum size in least time". Arnolando from Mexico says: Concrete posts were best type for the dry tropical region where he grows pitayas. Pitaya plants were at the base of these posts. They utilize used tires; two per post; one at top for pitaya to droop over, the other on the ground at the base to hold compost. He described using a mix of vermicompost (from worms) and 'regular' compost in tests, and found that they got maximum plant growth using a blend of 3500 Kg of vermicompost to 3500 Kg of regular compost. Salinity seems to be tolerated quite well. I don't know what the limits are, but it is good to know, if your water is salty.

Ramiro Lobo says: Wire baskets of only one gallon size are sufficient to use around pitaya plants in the ground, to protect them from gophers. Apparently, the pests are attracted to the fleshy base of the plant, but not to the roots that grow out from it. Wide variation in recommended commercial fertilizer N-P-K: Each of these was recommended by various specialists: 40-20-10; 23-7-23; 15-15-15; 8-24-24; 19-20-25; 13-13-13; 14-14-14; 8-3-9; 8-4-12; 6-6-6.

Eight trials of N-P-K of various mixes were tried with P ranging from 4 to 45. 15-5-15; 15-10-15; 15-20-15; 15-30-15; 15-40-15; and 15-45-15. Best in producing plant mass were those with highest P values of 40 and 45. Trials of various N-P-K formulations were tried with N & P constant and variable K. Highest K was best for producing plant mass: 15-15-30. Fruit from American Beauty and Bien Hoa Red were favored in taste tests. Ramiro Lobo said that they may be the same pitaya with different names. In the taste tests we believed that it's very hard to say one variety is superior to another, from a single fruit. The timing of harvesting, and other factors greatly influence the taste.

This article is from the San Diego CRFG. Visit them and read the entire newsletter at: <http://www.crfgsandiego.org/Newsletters/CRFG%20SD-Newsletter%20-%20Oct%2007.pdf>

For lots of information on Pitaya's visit/join: Home of Leo & Betty Manuel, and – Free Newsletter – Since 1996, Rare Fruit News Online. Send e-mail to rarefruit@san.rr.com

Plant sources: TopTropicals Plant Catalog, http://toptropicals.com/cgi-bin/garden_catalog/cat.cgi?uid=Hylocereus
Offer, A place to buy and sell, <http://www.ioffer.com/i/80226696>



PEPINO DULCE

Solanum muricatum Ait.



Origin: The pepino dulce is native to the temperate Andean regions of Colombia, Peru and Chile. The plant is not known in the wild, and the details of its origin are not known. The fruit is grown commercially in New Zealand, Chile and Western Australia. The pepino dulce was being grown in San Diego before 1889 and was listed by Francisco Franceschi of Santa Barbara in 1897. Improved cultivars were imported into California from New Zealand and elsewhere in more recent times.

Adaptation: The pepino dulce is a fairly hardy plant that grows at altitudes ranging from near sea level to 10,000 ft. in its native regions. However it does best in a warm, relatively frost-free climate. The plant will survive a low temperature of 27 to 28° F if the freeze is not prolonged, but may lose many of its leaves. It can be grown in many parts of central and southern California, although it does best in locations away from the coast and is not well suited for hot, interior gardens. Pepino dulce has been grown and has fruited in the milder areas of northern California (Sunset Climate Zones 16 and 17) such as the UC Bay Area Research Center which was located in Santa Clara County. The plant is small enough to be grown satisfactorily in a container.

Description: Pepino dulce is a small, unarmed, herbaceous plant or bush with a woody base and fibrous roots. Growth is erect or ascending to about 3 feet high and several feet across. It is similar in these respects to a small tomato vine, and like the tomato may need staking or other support.

Fruit: The fruit also shows considerable diversity in size and shape. In the areas of its origin there are small oblong types with many seeds, while others are pear or heart-shaped with few or many seeds. Still others are round, slightly larger than a baseball and completely seedless. The colors also vary--completely purple, solid green or green with purple stripes, or cream colored with or without purple stripes. The fruit of cultivars grown in this country are usually round to egg-shaped, about 2 to 4 inches long, with some growing up to 6 inches. The skin is typically yellow or purplish green, often with numerous darker streaks or stripes. The flesh is greenish to white and yellowish-orange. Better quality fruit is moderately sweet, refreshing and juicy with a taste and aroma similar to a combination of cantaloupe and honeydew melon. In poor varieties there can be an unpleasant "soapy" aftertaste. The fruit matures 30 to 80 days after pollination.

Culture: The plant likes a sunny or semi-shaded, frost-free location, sheltered from strong winds. It does well planted next to a south-facing wall or in a patio.

Frost Protection: In areas where frost may be a problem, providing the plant with some overhead protection or planting them next to a wall or a building may be sufficient protection. Individual plants are small enough to be fairly easily covered during cold snaps by placing plastic sheeting, etc. over a frame around them. Plastic row covers will also provide some frost protection for larger plantings. Potted specimens can be moved to a frost-secure area.

Cultivars:

Colossal: Very large fruit, mostly cream-colored with light markings of purple. Very juicy and sweet, free of soapiness, of good melon-like flavor, especially when vine ripened. Self-fertile, but yields larger fruit when cross-pollinated.

El Camino: Released in New Zealand in 1982 from material collected in Chile. Medium to large, egg-shaped fruit with regular purple stripes. Sometimes produces off-flavored fruits identifiable by their brownish-green color. One of two leading commercial cultivars in New Zealand.

Miski Originated in San Jose, by Nancy Garrison, as a seedling of the New Zealand cultivar Miski.

Prolific: Fruit creamy white with a faint salmon glow, lightly striped with purple. Flesh deep salmon. Flavor rich, sweet and aromatic, with no soapiness. Seeds few or none. Matures early. Strong growing plant, bears well without pollination.

Seed <http://solanaseeds.netfirms.com/exotic.html>

Sources http://www.packetseeds.com/acatalog/Pepino_Dulce__Solanum_muricatum__-_Melon_Pear.html

Article glean from our CRFG website go there and see Index of CRFG Publications, 1969 - 1989 and annual indexes of Fruit Gardener for this complete article and additional articles on the pepino dulce.

**Good Website for T-budding Citrus
Texas Citrus and Subtropical Fruits**
<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/citrus/budding/budding.htm>

In 2009, the Redwood Chapter will host the "International" Festival of Fruit August 15 at the Santa Rosa Junior College, with the theme Year Of The Olive. Its not JUST about olives, but they will be special lectures on olives. Various tours are going to be set up for the week leading up to the Festival.

Details are posted at <http://www.FestivalOffruit.org/>

Yamagami's Nursery
1361 S. De Anza Blvd. • Cupertino, CA 95014
Telephone 408-252-3347

Summer Fruit Tree Pruning

Saturday, April 25, at 10 a.m.

With Nancy Garrison, Fruit Tree Expert

**\$20.00 fee per person, which is rebated back as a \$20.00 coupon for merchandise.
and**

Avocados for Our Area

Saturday, May 16, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Aaron Dillion

**Space is limited so pre-paid registration is strongly recommended.
To reserve your spot, come in or call us at (408) 252-3347 and use a credit card.
Walk-ins will be allowed only if space is available.**

Backyard Edible Gardening: All About Fruits, Nuts & Berries

When: Saturday, May 23, 2009

Where: Sensory Theatre and Garden at the Robert Mondavi Institute for Wine and Food Science

Time: 9 AM - 2 PM

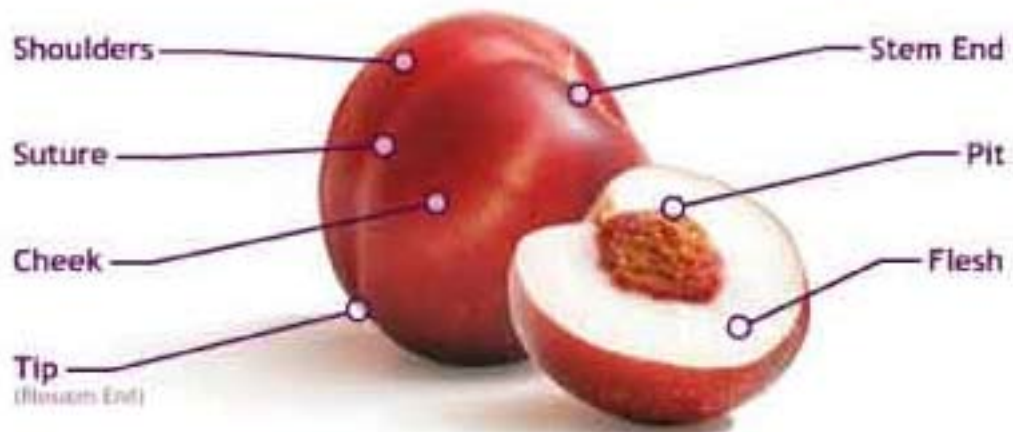
Features: A one-day seminar designed as an overview on how to establish, maintain, and utilize the many benefits of a productive backyard edible garden which includes fruits, nuts and berries. The seminars will be taught by UC Master Gardeners, Ed Laivo, Chuck Ingels, and local gardening experts.

Cost: \$25 per person (w/o box lunch); \$35 per person (with seasonally-inspired box lunch)

For more information, contact Kira O'Donnell, event coordinator, 530.681.6412;

kdodonnell@ucdavis.edu

Anatomy of Stone Fruit



You knew about stems and pits, but did you now that peaches, plums and nectarines have cheeks and shoulders?

Stem End

The end at which fruit was attached to the tree. The depression around the stem is called the stem cavity.

Background Color

The yellow color on the skin of peaches and nectarines; golden yellow in yellow varieties and creamy yellow in white varieties.

Pit or Stone

The pit supports the fruit as it hangs from the stem and provides the pathway for nutrients flowing from the tree as the fruit grows.

Suture

The line running from the stem to the blossom end of the fruit.

Shoulders

The bulge around the stem cavity at the top of the fruit; it becomes full and rounded as the fruit matures.

Blush

The red color on a peach or nectarine caused by exposure to sunlight. Depending on the variety, it may cover from 10% to 100% of the fruit's surface.

Cheek

The sides of the fruit on either side of the suture.

Flesh

The edible portion of a peach or nectarine.

Blossom End or Tip

The end opposite the stem.

From: California Tree Fruit Agreement,

975 I Street, P.O. Box 968

Reedley, CA 93654-0968

Toll Free: (800) 636-8260

8842<http://www.eatcaliforniafruit.com/ourfruit/anatomy.asp>



Prusch Park Work Days

Scott Papenfus

We had a very successful work party at Prusch. I would estimate that we have less than 10% of the stone fruit left to prune plus the figs. We had 16 people out pruning today! That is the largest number of people to turn out in my experience.

I would personally like to thank, in the order their names appear on the sign in sheet (which only reflects when I caught up with them with pen and pad in hand), Walt Crompton, Debbie Mancuso, Milovan Milutin, Sini Falkowski, Joan Halperin, Ming-Wei Shen, Edward Chen, Jesus Valdez, Chris Melville, Kathleen Payne, Rob McElhiney, Karis Shen, Yeffie Vanatta, and last but never least, King Karl Gross.

In addition to those old recognizable standbys on the list, it is exciting to see brand new faces in the orchard - most of whom I think just joined our merry fruit growers as a result of the Scion Exchange.

Use the below badge for our April meeting if you do not have your permanent badge.



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