



The Fruit Leaf



Santa Clara Valley Chapter

California Rare Fruit Growers, Inc.

May/June 2008

<http://www.crfg.org>

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Meeting Notice

Sunday, June 15

Set-up and Social at 12:30

Program 1pm to 4 pm

For the meeting, we will be holding our annual potluck. In order to try to have a good variety of food, the following alphabetical division is suggested. Food type to bring last name begins with:

A to G	Appetizers, Breads, Salads
H to N	Main Dishes
O to T	Desserts
U to Z	Beverages

Cont. P. 2

Nancy's Blogett

Nancy Garrison

I am excited about our June meeting on Fathers' Day this year as we will have our annual round table sharing after our potluck lunch. The guest speaker is Jesse Cool. Jesse is one of the original trailblazer chefs who grows and uses locally produced, in-season, organic produce as the star players in the dishes she creates for her restaurant called Flea Street Café in Menlo Park. She has introduced and encouraged this healthy way of eating for several decades in the SF Bay Area and has helped shape the genre of California cuisine.

We will have the opportunity to share our discoveries in the garden with each other and learn from our own members who have so much knowledge and experience to share. Think about some little-gardening nugget you can share with all, something that you've learned this year.

What's up in the garden.....

I am having one of the most productive years ever in my garden as we had reasonable winter chill and a dry spring with few disease issues. My trees are loaded and thinning the crop has been my biggest job. Don't forget to thin apples and pears to 1-2 apples per

Cont. P. 2

Meeting Notice

Cont. from p. 1

However, if you have something special you would like to bring instead, that doesn't fit in the suggested category, please feel free to substitute. We would also like to suggest that you bring reusable plates, cups, utensils to use for your meal, rather than using disposables. If you forget, we will have some disposables available.

We will be having a guest speaker, Jesse Cool, at our meeting. Jesse is a well known restaurant owner in the area. Some of you may have enjoyed eating at the Flea St. Café. Jesse has also been featured in Sunset Magazine with an article about her home gardens, and how her gardens influence her cooking and visa versa. She recently published a new cookbook, featuring the usage of organic fruits and vegetables. Jesse will be bringing a limited number of books to sell and hopefully sign.

Please come and enjoy the food we all will bring, and our guest speaker.

And for those of you looking into the future, our August 9th meeting will feature Neil Collins, owner of Trees of Antiquity Nursery, and for our October 11th meeting, we will hear from soil expert Brian Debasitis of Mauby All Natural.

We are still looking for gardeners interested in opening up their yards for a CRFG tour for Santa Clara County members. If interested please contact us at: Jack and Susan Kay 408-735-7376, Kay639@yahoo.com

Nancy's Blogett

Cont. from 1

cluster depending on how close the clusters are to one another. Thin the plums, pluots and apricots to 3-4" apart and peaches and nectarines to about 6" apart. Fruits that normally are not thinned include cherries, persimmons, figs, mulberries, jujubes, avocados and citrus.

If anyone has gotten fireblight on their pears, apples, quince, loquats or related susceptible species, be sure to cut off the blighted blackened branches to at least 6" below the area of visibly infected tissue. To minimize brown rot be sure to keep all overhead water off of stone fruits during

the active growing season.

Since we've had a dry spring this year with the rainfall occurring in early winter, it was important to have started the irrigation in late April or early May this year. If you have not yet started get to it now and be generous. It takes much more water than most people expect to thoroughly wet the top 18" of soil which is where most of the effective feeder roots are located. Check the soil moisture after you have irrigated to see how far the water has percolated into the soil. I am usually perplexed at how shallow the water has penetrated and we need to re-wet to properly moisten behind our meeting hall.

The UC Master Gardeners applied for and received a generous grant from the Slossen Foundation with the University of California to renovate the International Rare Fruit Orchard (which is near the picnic area at Prusch. With this, we have been and are continuing to add new rare fruits to the orchard, removing trees that are less than choice or are diseased or poorly adapted to our site. Some of the new additions include: three Hascops (blue fruited honeysuckle), new currants, blueberries, unusual or special fruiting quince, two edible dogwoods (red and yellow *Cornus mas*), Aronia, Seaberries, additional mulberries, and 9 new citrus including: Page mandarin, Shasta Gold mandarin, Cara Cara orange, Bearss lime, variegated calamondin, Melogold grapefruit, Seedless Kishu, Fukutsu kumquat and maybe an Australian finger lime.

We will be adding interpretive signage and redoing all the broken or missing plant labels. I highly recommend that members walk the orchard at each meeting to see what's going on and taste the ripe fruits when available. I am also happy to walk folks around after the meetings when free. I have been volunteering out there most Wednesday mornings for the last year and a half with a group of Master Gardeners and a rare fruit grower Ralph Lowd. If anyone in our chapter would like to join us on Wednesday mornings, please contact me by email at nancyg2@aol.com or phone at 408-761-9507. It is the best way to learn about these 100 or so rare fruits we are growing. I will make the whole list of plants available to anyone interested via email.



Photo from North Carolina State

<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/pp/notes/Fruit/fdin012/fdin012.htm>

Muscadine Grapes

Lee Reed

I had been told that grape vines at Emma Prusch Park were dying. On Saturday, April 12, 2008, I saw this for myself. The grapes I have tried to grow at my place have died after about four years. The exception has been two muscadine grapes, "Ison" and "Tara".

Muscadine grapes are from the deep south where they are exposed to many diseases and are extremely resistant. Unfortunately they are hard to root from cuttings and difficult to graft. My two vines are doing well but do not produce much fruit. Likely, they need more heat and humidity. Muscadine flavor is different than other grapes. I enjoy eating the fruit.

A word I learned recently is *Phylloxera*. *Phylloxera* is an insect that feeds on the roots of grape vines. They also introduce fungus into the plants. Oak root fungus is present in my yard. Dead trees followed by clumps of the oak root mushrooms have proved this. I am told the mushrooms are good to eat. In 1863 *Phylloxera* nearly destroyed the wine and grape industry in Europe. Fortunately it was discovered that some American grape species were resistant and could be used as rootstock. Since then, there has been a great deal of effort to develop resistant varieties and rootstocks.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries V. T. Munson developed over three hundred varieties. More than

seventy-five are still in existence today. I recently purchased cuttings of two of his grapes "America" and "Mrs. Munson" originated by Herman Jaeger and named for Mr. Munson. The varieties "America" and "Munson" are available from Ron J. Lombough, PO Box 365 Aurora, OR 97002-0365. His catalog lists a large number of grapes available as cuttings. His book "The Grape Grower" is highly recommended.

The "Mrs. Munson" cuttings were purchased by request from Hidden Springs Nursery 170, Hidden Springs Lane, Cookeville, TN, 38501.

Their 2001-2002 catalog listed five Munson hybrids, however; there were none in the latest issue. Rootstocks and grafted grape vines are available from Raintree Nursery, 391 Butts Road, Morton, WA, 98365. The rootstock Raintree offers is number 3309. My reference material lists a 3309c.

I hope to have a number of small grape plants to give away next year if the Light Brown Apple Moth is not a problem.

Andy's Orchard
1615 Half Road
Morgan Hill
(408) 782-7600

Special Event Calendar,

Sunday, June 15th, 10am

Father's Day Fruit tasting, Orchard Tour and Harvest Walk: Sweet Cherries.

Saturday, June 21st, 10am

Fruit tasting, Orchard Tour and Harvest Walk: Apricots

Saturday, July 5th, 10am

Fruit tasting, Orchard Tour and Harvest Walk: Apricots, Peaches, Nectarines, Plums, and Pluots.

Barbados Cherry

R. L. Phillips

University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Common Names:

Acerola, West Indian Cherry

Scientific Name:

Malpighia glabra L.

Family:

Malpighiaceae

Origin:

West Indies,
Central and South America

Distribution:

West Indies, Central and South America,
southern Florida, Hawaii, and other tropical
and subtropical regions of the world.

IMPORTANCE

Barbados cherry received considerable attention in the 1950's in Florida, Puerto Rico and Hawaii because of its extremely high vitamin C content. Approximately 100 acres were established in the late 1950's in Florida but this has decreased to less than 25 acres. Recent interest in this fruit as a natural source of vitamin C has not stimulated much interest in new commercial plantings but it will continue to be a popular fruit for the home garden.

DESCRIPTION

Tree. The Barbados cherry is a large, densely branched shrub or a small tree if pruned to form a central trunk. It varies in shape from a low and spreading habit to a more upright and open habit. It has slender branches with shiny light to deep green leaves which vary in size from 1 to 3 inches and in shape from ovate to obovate.

Flower. The small, attractive flowers range in color from pale pink to rose. They usually appear in April in southern Florida and flowering continues throughout the summer.

Fruit. The soft, juicy, thin-skinned fruit are light to deep crimson when mature. They average about an inch in diameter but vary from one-half to more than an inch. The three-lobed fruit are borne in leaf axils, singly or in clusters of 2 or 3. The flesh is yellow-orange and very high in vitamin C

(ascorbic acid). Vitamin C content ranges from 1000 to 2000 mg per 100 gm in the edible portion of fully ripe fruit and may be as high as 4500 mg per 100 gm in partially ripe fruit. A single fruit of some selections could supply the daily adult requirement of vitamin C. The fruit from most seedlings is rather tart but from some it is sub-acid to almost sweet. The more acid fruit has the higher vitamin C content. The tree may have 3 to 5 crops per year, May to November, with the largest crops during the summer. However, this can vary with climatic conditions.

CULTIVARS

Barbados cherry seedlings are quite variable and fruit quality is usually not as good as desired. A number of improved selections have been developed. Homeowners should look for improved clones such as 'Florida Sweet' and 'B-17'. The latter is an acid selection with much larger fruit. Commercial producers may prefer to plant a more acid selection, higher in juice and vitamin C.

PROPAGATION

Barbados cherry is usually propagated by air layering (marcottage) or by hardwood cuttings. Air layering is best done during spring and summer while the plants are growing and requires 6 to 8 weeks for rooting. Leafy hardwood cuttings from healthy plants root within 2 months. Indolebutyric acid will help to induce rooting. It can also be propagated by side veneer or cleft grafts on young seedlings or on trees which produce inferior fruit.

CLIMATE AND SOILS

Barbados cherry is fairly tender to cold, especially when young, and is suitable only to south Florida and the warmest areas of central Florida. Mature trees can withstand temperatures down to 28°F for short periods without damage but young trees should be protected from cold below 30°F.

Barbados cherry grows well in a wide variety of soils, provided they are well drained and are not infested with nematodes. Planting sites should be treated for nematodes because of its susceptibility for this pest. This is seldom necessary in limestone soils, however.

PLANTING

The plants may be set out at any time of the year but the best time is spring, just before the rainy season. Choose sites with good water drainage and which are in protected locations if in Central Florida. The proper spacing depends on the particular clone used since some are upright and others are spreading. Specimen trees in home plantings should be allowed at least 15 feet of growing room. Plants in a border hedge may be set out as close as 2 to 4 feet apart. Rows in commercial plantings should be about 15 feet apart and spaced between trees within the row 6 to 8 feet for hedges and 12 to 15 feet if the trees are to be maintained as individual units. Isolated plants or groves of a single variety have usually set poor crops. Mixed plantings with different varieties should alleviate this problem.

MULCHING

The use of mulch is desirable, especially in sandy soils where nematodes are frequently a problem. Mulching helps to conserve soil moisture, control weeds and lessen nematode damage. The mulch may be straw, grass clippings, leaves, wood chips, sawdust or similar material.

FERTILIZATION

A complete fertilizer such as those used on citrus and other fruit trees should be used. Start with no more than ¼ pound of 6-6-6-3 or similar fertilizer at monthly or bi-monthly intervals, increasing the rates to commensurate with growth. Avoid over-fertilizing since this can result in excessive vegetative growth and few fruit. Apply nutritional sprays annually or as needed.

IRRIGATION

An adequate supply of water is beneficial in promoting good growth and maximum yields of large fruit. It is especially important during the blooming and fruit development period. Irrigation is usually needed during the dry spring months while rainfall is usually sufficient during the summer and fall months.

PRUNING

Pruning can be useful in shaping trees and thinning growth. Some clones, such

as 'Florida Sweet,' tend to grow more upright and open. The upright branches can be headed back to encourage more side branches for developing a less leggy, fuller tree. More bushy selections, producing numerous branches and forming thick growth, can be thinned to promote heavier yields. Early fall, after the plants have finished fruiting, is a satisfactory time to prune. Pruning should not extend into late fall since tender regrowth may suffer cold injury nor should it be done just previous to the new spring growth since this will reduce yields.

PESTS AND DISEASES

The most serious pest of the Barbados cherry is the root-knot nematode which weakens the plant, causing it to drop leaves and display symptoms of malnutrition. Severe infestations inhibit growth and fruit production. This nematode is a more serious problem in sandy soils than in the alkaline, rockland soils of Dade County. It is not a problem in marl or clay soils. Preventive measures include use of sterilized soil in propagation, fumigation of the planting site and heavy mulching around the tree.

Frequently, the fruit is attacked by plant bugs which sting the fruit, giving it a dimpled appearance. This may result in off flavors and reduced fruit size. There is no practical control for this pest. Other insects which attack the tree include various scale insects, whiteflies, aphids and caterpillars.

Cercospora leaf spot is the only disease problem on Barbados cherry of much concern in Florida where its occurrence is associated with high humidity. The spots are roughly circular, slightly sunken, dark brown lesions with gray centers and are surrounded by a yellow halo. The lesions occur on both leaf surfaces and are typically larger on young leaves than on mature ones.

YIELDS AND HARVESTING

Barbados cherry will flower and fruit the second year after planting and will be in good production in the third or fourth. The fruiting season normally extends from April to November. The fruit should be picked frequently since it does not store on the tree. Ripe fruit must be carefully handled to avoid

bruising and should be utilized as soon as possible or be frozen for future use. Half-ripe fruit usually will hold up well for several days under refrigeration.

USES

Barbados cherry can be used in many ways. It can be eaten fresh and is excellent for juice, by itself or in a mixture. It can also be made into jelly, jam, preserves, puree, pie, sherbet and wine. The fruit is also widely used in the health food industry as a natural source of vitamin C. In addition to the value of its fruit, Barbados cherry is an attractive shrub or tree which can be used for its ornamental value in landscaping.

Footnotes

1. This document is FC28, one of a series of the Horticultural Sciences Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Original publication date April 1994. Reviewed November 2005. Visit the EDIS Web Site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

2. R.L. Phillips, Former Extension Horticulturist, Horticultural Sciences Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611. Reviewed by Dr. Jonathan H. Crane, Professor and Tropical Fruit Crop Specialist, Department of Horticultural Sciences, Tropical Research and Education Center, Homestead, FL

Story can be found on the internet at:
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/MG041>
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Homemade Pyrethrum

Jack Conner

I keep *Chrysanthemum cinerariaefolium* (called "pyrethrum" or "painted daisy") in pots. If well fed and well watered this plant makes a neat dome about eighteen inches high and three feet across, covered with white daisy-like blossoms with yellow centers. This is the source of the pyrethrum of commerce.

I collect the blossoms when two or three of the outermost rows of flowerets in the disk have opened. Younger blossoms already have the oleoresins available, but it is apparently most abundant at this two-or-three-row stage. If all of the disk flowerets have opened, the toxic substance is still there, but not so abundantly.

I let these blossoms dry in air, preferably not in sunlight, and when they are dry I grind them to powder in an old coffee-grinder. (A man who uses his wife's new coffee-grinder to do this is asking for trouble.) The dried blossoms keep indefinitely if they stay dry in the dark; if left where sunlight can get to them they lose viability more rapidly. The same is true of the ground powder. Keep it in the dark, and dry, and it will still be usable years later.

To extract the insecticide I buy a gallon can or jug of alcohol (methyl, ethyl, propyl), and into this can or jug I pour about 2.5 ounces of the dried powder. It makes a pretty good-sized mound, but it all goes into the liquid readily. I give the can or jug a shake now and then for two or three days, and then filter the liquid through an ordinary paper coffee-filter, collecting the clear amber liquid in another gallon container.

The liquid can be applied to insects in any suitable way. If sprayed, the alcohol will soon evaporate, leaving a residue of the pyrethrum on the surface. Weak-sister insects like aphids will drop



dead even if the liquid is diluted half-and-half with water, but a yellow-jacket needs the full strength. Ants are about as tough as yellow-jackets, but they can't stand being sprayed with pyrethrum in alcohol.

The residue is not permanent. After a few hours it loses its potency, especially in sunlight. A little horticultural oil or any of the other preparations that help sprays to "stick", will help it last somewhat longer--even as much as a day or so, in shade.

Ants and other such critters that walk across it while it is still potent do not survive. As the potency fades away, they may merely be knocked sort of unconscious.

Incidentally, this insecticide is useful against a mild infestation of scale insects. I cut the bristles of a toothbrush so that they are pretty stiff. I dip this brush in the liquid, and use it to scrape the scale insects off from the wigs and leaves. If little crawlers are knocked loose, they have to crawl through the insecticide, and they do not spread on the plant. This would work with a heavy infestation, but you would have to spend your life at it.

The spent powder that stays in the coffee filter is useful as long as the remains of the pyrethrum stay in it. You can spread it over a track where ants run, and for a day or so it will inhibit them. Then it will become mere mulch, good for the soil. 

It's Cherry Time! Buckley Orchards

U-Pick

2950 Leavesley Road

Gilroy Since 1941

842-4697

Beginning June 5, daily,
until end

of season

10am to 4pm

Notes In Passing - Leo

I just got a call from Paul Thomson's Nurse at Silvergate. He had just died a few minutes ago. I was writing to tell you of my visit with him yesterday. He was in very poor health, depressed, and really wanting it to end. Now it has.

A note from Nancy Garrison on the well written Homemade Pyrethrum article...

Pyrethrum is a broad spectrum insecticide and, as such, may also kill beneficial insects that are sprayed or touch the potent residue.



Common Ground Organic Garden Supply & Education Center

559 College Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94306, 650.493.6072 www.commongroundinpaloalto.org

GOPHER AND MOLE CONTROL

Thomas Wittman, Saturday, June 28, 2008
10:30 - 12:30 \$27

Gardeners, farmers and landscapers will learn humane tools for control of gophers and moles. Barriers ranging from gopher baskets to underground fence designs will be discussed. (1 CEU)

HEALTHY PEST & DISEASE CONTROLS

Annie Joseph, Saturday, July 12, 2008
10:30 - Noon \$25

Join us for an informative workshop on healthier ways to manage pests and diseases in your summer garden. Find out about some of the lesser known beneficial insects that are an integral part in keeping a balance in your yard and how to invite them to stay. Free samples of organic products will be given to each participant. Annie Joseph is a bright and talented 30-year California Certified Nursery Professional. (1 CEU)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2008

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