



The Bee Line

NEWSLETTER OF

WESTERN CASCADE FRUIT SOCIETY
A NON-PROFIT EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION

Volume 23 Number 2

October 2002

Apples Pears Figs Grapes Kiwi Cherries Nectarines Peaches Plums Blackberries Raspberries Strawberries Blueberries Currents Huckleberries Gooseberries Nuts

WESTERN CASCADE FRUIT SOCIETY ANNUAL FALL FRUIT SHOW

SATURDAY OCTOBER 26

9:30 A.M. TO 5 P.M.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 27

9:30 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M.

SAND POINT NAVAL STATION

7400 SAND POINT WAY

BUILDING 406 SOUTH POD

LOTS OF FREE PARKING

ADULTS \$5.00

CHILDREN UNDER 16 FREE

DISPLAYING YOUR FRUIT

This event is for members to display the rewards of their harvest and to let visitors see how many home orchardists there are and that they too can do it.

Call Greg Giuliani 425.788.1128 to let him know you will be bringing your fruit to display.

The following procedures were designed to make the displays look compatible:

Prepare a 3" x 5" card for each sample of three to five fruits with the variety name and other information you may wish to share. This could include the harvest date and other pertinent data. If you are submitting more than one kind they can be arranged alphabetically.

Prepare a larger sign with your name and the geographical growing area. Plates, which hold three to five specimens, will be provided.

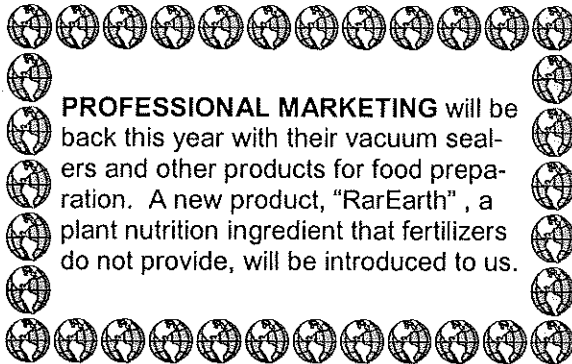
DO YOU HAVE A MYSTERY APPLE? DOES SOMEONE YOU KNOW HAVE ONE?

The apple identification experts will be there to name yours. You should select fruit that is typical in color, size and shape for the tree you are trying to identify. To assist them, bring four to six specimen with stems and free of blemishes. If you don't have that many, bring what you can. **DO NOT WASH OR POLISH.** Refrigerate the fruit in a plastic bag if it as to be stored more than one week. You may be asked the following questions:

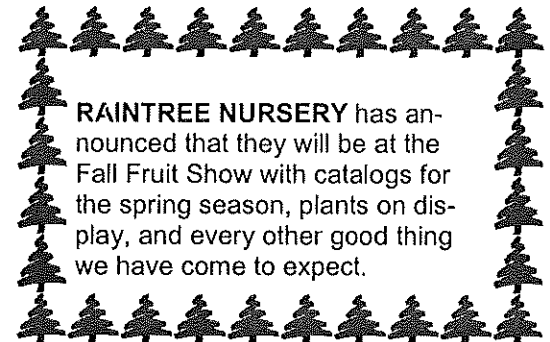
- When was the fruit picked?
- Is it from a single tree or a row of trees?
- Is it from an old orchard or a new planting?
- When is the fruit ripe?
- How long does it keep?
- Is the tree upright, spreading or willowy?
- Does it bear on the shoot tips?
- Is it damaged by scab or mildew?
- Is it good fresh?
- Is it good cooked?



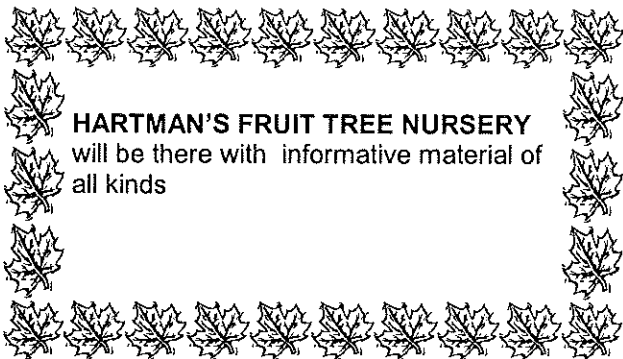
COMMERCIAL DISPLAYS SHARING THEIR EXPERTISE and FOR YOUR INFORMATION



PROFESSIONAL MARKETING will be back this year with their vacuum sealers and other products for food preparation. A new product, "RarEarth", a plant nutrition ingredient that fertilizers do not provide, will be introduced to us.



RAINTREE NURSERY has announced that they will be at the Fall Fruit Show with catalogs for the spring season, plants on display, and every other good thing we have come to expect.



HARTMAN'S FRUIT TREE NURSERY will be there with informative material of all kinds



NORMANDY PARK HONEY COMPANY is joining us with their honey and bee displays. Also wax candles, hand lotion bars and lip balm. Be sure to visit this display

The Fall Fruit Show will be at Sand Point again this year. We have been promised that the traffic pattern entering the site will be clearly identified and you WILL be able to reach our area.

The schedule, printed below, promises interesting and delicious subjects. Show your support for WCFS and attend the Fall Fruit Show.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 26

- 10:00 a.m. **Ron Olson**, IPM Technologies, suppliers of trapping and spraying equipment
Pest control using less pesticide and latest control methodologies
- 1:00 p.m. **Susan & Richard Anderson**, Westcott Bay Orchard
Growing cider apples and making cider; **plus** cider tasting from Westcott Bay Orchard
- 2:30 p.m. **Chris Smith**, retired Extension Agent and PI columnist
Storing and preserving the fruit harvest

SUNDAY OCTOBER 27

- 10:00 a.m. **Larry Davis**, Master Gardener, WCFS member
Jams, jellies and preserves. **And** tasting his fruit juice blends
- 1:00 p.m. **Leonard Jessen**, WCFS member
Subtropicals and unusual fruits grown here by a California Rare Fruit Growers member
- 2:30 p.m. **Gary Moulton**, WSU Mt Vernon Research Station
Open forum—answers for your questions about growing fruit and berries

CONTINUOUS BOTH DAYS

FRUIT TASTING APPLE IDENTIFICATION MASTER GARDENERS

MEMBERS FRUIT EXHIBITS APPLE MAGGOT DISPLAY

COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS

CORRELL CIDER PRESS RAFFLE TICKET SALES \$1

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS EDUCATIONAL DISPLAY

CUT OUT THIS PAGE AND TAKE IT WITH YOU SO YOU WON'T MISS A SPEAKER

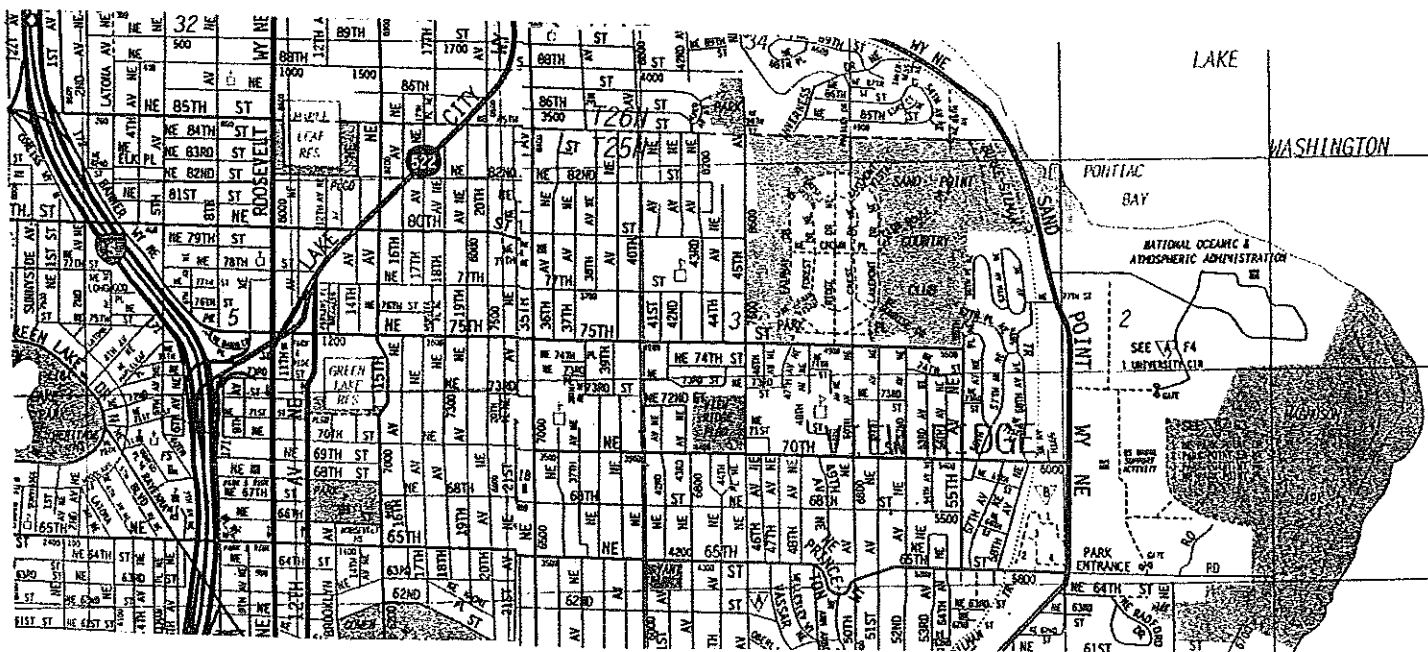
DIRECTIONS TO FALL FRUIT SHOW

In order to avoid going past Husky Stadium, all drivers should take NE 75th Street as follows:

From the South: Proceed north on I-5. Take exit 171, Lake City Way NE/NE 73rd Street. Stay to the right for NE 73rd Street. Go about three blocks, through Roosevelt Ave NE; it will end at 12th Avenue NE, left on 12th Ave NE, go two blocks; *right on NE 75th Street; go a little more than 2 miles; right on 55th Avenue NE; left on NE 70th Street about 5 blocks; left on Sand Point Way NE 4 blocks, turn right into the (old) Navy base at the

sign which reads "NAVAL STATION PUGET SOUND". Follow signs straight ahead to the South Pod; ample parking in front and to the right.

From the North: Proceed south on I-5, take exit 172, N 80th St/NE 80th St, stay left for NE 80th Street and turn left on NE 80th Street; go over I-5, through the stop sign, about five blocks; right on Roosevelt Way NE, go five blocks, left on NE 75th Street and follow the directions given above under "From the South" at the *



CORRELL CIDER PRESS RAFFLE ONLY \$1.00 SUPPORT RESEARCH

Don't forget to buy your raffle tickets for the cider press. Chapters have been sent tickets to sell to members who can't attend, so every on has a chance at winning. Mail the stubs—and the money! To the treasurer. Your ticket stubs will be put iin the drawing.

T

he annual raffle drawing will be held Sunday at 3 p.m. Ticket holders do not need to be present to win. You will be notified by phone, so stay by your phone Sunday afternoon if you can't be at the Show. Make sure your writing is clear on the stub. If you can't pick up your prize it will be taken to Marlene Falkenbury's residence 7547 32nd Ave NE Seattle

There will be other excellent items for the raffle drawing in addition to the traditional Correll cider press.

Professional Marketing, one of our commercial vendors, is donating a vacuum sealer.

Leonard Jessen, a WCFS member, who is speaking Sunday on unusual fruits has offered some fruit trees.

Normandy Park Honey Company is donating wax candles for the raffle.

Growers may smell the sweet smell of successful codling moth control with a new tool

As written in The Grower August 2001

Apple, pear and walnut growers will soon have a new tool to control codling moths, thanks to Agricultural Research Service scientists and a commercial company. ARS entomologist Douglas Light discovered that one of the chemicals responsible for a pear's sweet odor, known as the pear ester, attracts female and male codling moths. Light works at the Plant Protection Research Unit of ARS' Western Regional Research Center in Albany, Calif.

Codling moths are the most severe and widely distributed pest of apples, pears and walnuts in the world. Uncontrolled, the larvae-the "worm in the apple"-can destroy up to 95 percent of an apple crop and up to 60 percent of a pear crop. In walnuts, the larvae damage the nuts and create holes in the hull and

shell that can allow fungi to enter. Pheromones are widely used in monitoring and mating disruption programs, but they only attract male moths. Researchers estimate that 90 to 95 percent of male codling moths in an orchard must be trapped or prevented from finding a mate to reduce the number of fertile eggs laid by females to an economically manageable level.

Capturing female moths has an even greater potential to reduce offspring without widespread spraying of chemicals.

"IPM programs are based on the relationship between the time when male moths appear in pheromone traps and the time eggs begin to hatch," says ARS entomologist Alan Knight. To predict insect development, scientists use a degree-day

model. For codling moths, eggs are believed to hatch after the accumulation of 250 degree days-which ranges from 15 to 30 calendar days-after the males emerge and are detected in sex-pheromone-baited traps.

In field tests, Knight verified that the pear-derived attractant is more effective than pheromones in monitoring and potentially predicting mating and egg laying.

Through a cooperative research and development agreement, Trécé Inc. of Salinas, California, is developing commercial monitoring tools using the pear ester.

Trécé also plans to include the attractant in a sprayable lure formulation known as an "attracticide," which contains small amounts of insecticides.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Here we are again, trying to get back in the swing of things. It has been a long spell without a Bee Line.

Some of the articles you will be seeing in this issue are from 2000 or 2001. I thought they were still interesting.

I read the Home Orchard Society's newsletter, Pome News, and see that many of the articles are written by the members. Likewise, the members of the British Columbia Fruit Testers Association write articles for their newsletter, "Fresh from the Cider Press";

For the six or so years that I wrote the Bee Line on a regular basis I did all the writing and editing. Chuck Parkman was invaluable sending articles of interest to include. The Tilbury's sent articles of interest,

even wrote some.

Time and again I asked for articles from the membership. You all have experiences you can share with the rest of us.

I am struggling now to make this edition more than the last two.

I too have a life other than WCFS. I too work, not a nine to five job, but I have commitments to these people who expect me to do what they pay me to do.

Members are the life of an organization. Participating members are the heart that keeps the organization alive.

You are invited to be part of the heart of Western Cascade Fruit Society.

I ask you to contribute to the Bee

Line and share your experiences with the membership.

I ask you to attend the two events that WCFS promotes for the members and to educate new would be home orchardists. I ask you to help keep WCFS and the newsletter alive.

I say this: I am experiencing burn-out from the responsibility of doing this newsletter alone. Burn-out usually leads to resigning from the position.

Several members have said they would help, but not followed through.

Please send an article to include in the next issue. I need it by December 1, 2002.

Plums and Pears In Western Washington

By Stephen M. Jackson

Published in Pomona Winter 2001

In my orchard, about one mile from Everett, the year 2000 was notable for many plums and pears coming into fruit production. It was a pleasure to work with these long-awaited fruits on a very small commercial scale. Although the apples began fruiting well in their third leaf (third growing season at my location), I've waited six long years for the pears and plums to really show their stuff. My orchard is at sea level alongside a river, very close to Puget Sound.

When asked if he could wait five years for his tomatoes to crop, Erick Hawkinson, a local farmer friend, replied, "Are you Klazy?!" After tasting our plums, however, he said he just might be willing to try.

Erick, who owns and operates Jubilee Farms, likes plums and also runs a fine Community Supported Agriculture enterprise. Along with the best organically grown vegetables in the Snoqualmie Valley, he also grows about 40 varieties of tasty tomatoes. Jubilee Farms (in Carnation) and his 200 or so subscribing families took a good portion of our fruit this year. I gave them a little tour through a season of fruit as they took home their weekly share of fruit week after week.

Having this somewhat "captive" clientele simplified my job considerably. A small-time fruit farmer must do a fair amount of "selling" his product, and it was nice to have customers who weren't afraid of trying new food. Some of the fruits in our mini-collection were 100% classical, but not 100% beautiful. To be polite, you could say they were cosmetically challenged.

Having customers that didn't fuss if some fruit looked different from those in the stores was very satisfy-

ing. I gave them the best varieties I had to offer each week, confident that a new and pleasurable eating experience would be theirs in the end. They had a fine chance to partake from 50-100 varieties of fruits ripened on the tree to develop maximum flavor and sugar content. None of these fruits were available in the local markets, so most or all of the folks would be eating "new" varieties of fruit for the very first time.

Although the names and shapes were new, a little different, or even strange, I hoped that they might meet a few new fruit favorites on their seasonal fruit adventure with me. Comments on their new fruit experiences ranged from mildly interested to extremely enthusiastic for the wonderful variety and different flavors offered in the fruit.

Erick told me, with the season now over, that he finds a very high percentage of his customers have renewed their subscriptions for next season's share of food, many on the basis of the fruit. I was glad to hear that and appreciated his compliment. I saw us as a horticultural marriage (vegetables and fruit) of two like-minded "craft-farmers" in the quest of producing top quality food, and each one's efforts complemented those of the other.

I set up Homeacres Orchard initially to produce a variety of fruit throughout the season. We started out with scionwood from well-sourced suppliers and grew from a nursery to an orchard containing three acres of plums (40 varieties, all grafted to St. Julian A rootstocks), three acres of pears (100 varieties, grafted to OH x F333, OH x F513, OH x F87, and OH / Betulifolia rootstocks), and

four acres of apples (250 varieties, with two acres trellised on M9 rootstocks, and two acres on a mix of M9/ MM111 interstems and MM111 roots). Most promising varieties are represented initially by just five trees, but I planted as many as fifteen to twenty trees of some of the main croppers.

Now we are cutting back greatly on the number of varieties to eliminate the duds and to get more of our proven producers. Because the testing phase is nearly finished, we are now top working some of the duds. Ripening and picking is reasonably staggered with usually only two to three varieties ripening every week, but there is still the usual glut at the end.

Our orchard is conceptually meant to approximate an old-fashioned truck farm with fresh fruit ripening throughout a sixteen week period. The goal is to produce gourmet-quality fruit, properly tree-ripened for as long as possible to fully develop sugars and highest internal quality, to fully simulate the experience of being able to go out and pick fruits off backyard trees when fully and naturally ripe. Here are a few varieties that stand head and shoulders above the others in our location:

Opal Plum: The leading European plum grown commercially in Sweden, Opal is a cross of Early Favorite plum with the Oullins gage. We have nine trees of Opal, seven years old, that produced hundreds of pounds of fruit in 2000. At our location, Opal ripens between 1-14 August. It has big country-fair flavor for such an early plum. The skin has a very attractive red base with a dark, almost blue-black finish topped by a purplish-white bloom. The flesh is semi clingstone, yellow-

ish, with a very nice, somewhat rich flavor. The tree is both precocious and productive; in fact, so productive that the fruit must be thinned for best quality and to grow adequate amounts of new terminal growth. Fruit size is medium to medium-large if thinned, and it ripens over a two-week period. Opal ships well and seems to have a modicum of brown-rot resistance.

Early Transparent Gage ripens two weeks after Opal. This attractive, early gage plum grows well and provided its first good-sized crop in 2000. Size is medium to large if thinned. A gourmet-quality plum, it must be picked when still semi-hard (but not rock-hard as it is when blue-green), and just turning green to greenish yellow from a light blue-green base color. When picked at the right time, a whitish, "transparent" bloom will just be starting to develop, and the fruit will then ripen to a high-sugar plum with a wonderfully rich flavor.

Gage plums are usually dismissed as lacking commercial value because they are very tender when ripe and cannot withstand the normal picking/ packing/ shipping process. But if picked into a cherry bucket and placed in a grocery food tray, 36" x 36", out in the field, no more than three deep, treated like ripening tomatoes, they can survive being transported to your buyers. The buyers should ideally be able to move this fruit in about a 7-10 day window. The excellent, old-fashioned flavor of this plum, so sweet and rich, makes it worth the extra bother. The trick with these gage plums may be to learn how far ahead you can pick and handle them, yet still allow them to fully develop their luscious flavor. If you wait too long and let them ripen too much on the tree, the skin becomes tender as the fruit plumps up, and some split ever so slightly. That gives wasps all the opening they were waiting for.

Plums that are left to become fully tree-ripe are extremely rich and not for sissies. (I only say that so that everyone will dare to try them fully ripe and be able to taste ambrosia.)

Of the other gage plums I have grown, Reine Claude Violette looks promising and crops well, but it splits in the rain. Its flavor is not as good as the classic Green Gage plum, but it's still very sweet. Golden Transparent Gage produces a huge, open tree. Fruit quality is high but thus far, production has been low. Likewise, Cambridge Gage has not proven nearly as productive as Green Gage or Reine Claude Violette.

Two other, later-ripening European plums that do well here are Yakima and Seneca. Yakima ripens one week before Seneca; Seneca, about two to three weeks after Opal. When dead ripe, Seneca is of better quality than Yakima, and when Seneca is thinned, the fruits can attain 2" to even 3" diameter the, size of hen's eggs. Mount Royal is productive, but the plums split badly after an unseasonable 1" rainfall when they were ripe.

By contrast, Italian prune-plums do poorly here.

Most of the Japanese plums that I have tested here are unproductive. They bloom when the weather is cold and rainy and are highly susceptible to brown rot. The one exception is Methley, which ripens about one week before Opal and is productive. Methley ships well, and its flavor is popular with my customers, but the size is small unless thinned.

Of my 500 plum trees, 450 have no suckers coming from the St. Julian-A rootstock and the other 50 have some, but nothing like the suckering from the MM111 base of an M9/MM111 interstem tree. St. Julian 364 is more dwarfing, I find, than St. Julian-A; and the Citation plum root-

stock does well here also. Another observation: although voles and beaver are troublesome pests on my apple trees and their roots, neither bothers the plum trees at all. My pear trees are young. Orcas is precocious and productive, producing pears nearly of Bartlett quality. The skin has a pleasant red blush, and the flavor is good. Beurree Superfin produces quality pears here. Flemish Beauty produces a healthy tree, but not everyone likes the flavor. I can say the same about Dr Jules Guyot, which is also noted for good scab resistance in my location. Rescue produces big fruit and looks promising.

In closing, let me share what I read from an interestingly titled book by Jeffrey Steingarten, "The Man Who Ate Everything". Point One-Ripeness is All-includes a poem described by Steingarten as the best poem about plums. Written by William Carlos Williams, it is entitled, "this is Just to Say", and reads thus:

I have eaten
the plums
that were in
the icebox
and which
you were probably
saving for breakfast.
Forgive me,
they were delicious,
so sweet
and so cold.

For the life of me I couldn't suppress writing this silly response:

"This is Just to Tell You Why"
I wish
I could tell you why
I ate
that last piece of pie.
I knew you wanted it for your lunch.
Forgive me, honeybunch!
Now I'll hafta
Open my belt a notch
And begin a
Daily calorie watch.
But it was worth it-you make such
great pie.

This is just to tell you why.

Fruit Horticulture - 2002

Northwest Washington Research & Extension Unit WSU - Mount Vernon

G. A. Moulton, R.K. Peterson, J. King and L. J. Price

Current projects in fruit horticulture consist of the following:

1. Variety evaluations of cherry, apricot, peach, nectarine, plum, pear, Asian pear, apple, crabapple, and cider apple, to test those which are best adapted to growing conditions of the area (i.e. cool moist maritime climate of western Washington and Oregon.)
2. Wine grape trials including variety evaluation of new early ripening red and white wine grape varieties and a rootstock trial of Pinot Noir on seven different grape rootstocks, to determine the potential for expanded wine grape production in this area.
3. Variety evaluation of disease resistant apple cultivars and selections, evaluating the performance of cultivars and advanced selections, and eliminating selections with insufficient quality or other problems.
4. Trial of several well adapted sweet cherry cultivars on new very dwarfing Gisela rootstocks, to test potential for niche industry in late cherry markets as well as ease of growing for home gardeners
5. Evaluation of varieties and species of unusual fruit (e. g. pawpaw, fig, currant, sea buckthorn, aronia, etc.), to determine those which may be adapted to either home garden or commercial culture in western WA.
6. Cultural trial of Bosc pear, on several different rootstocks, using different training systems, to examine the possibility of commercial pear production in Skagit Valley. This includes evaluation of pollinizer varieties Starkrimson, Comice, Concorde and Conference for commercial market.
7. Variety evaluation of ornamental crabapples for disease resistance and improved quality of appearance year-round.
8. Variety evaluation of blackberry cultivars and selections from WSU, BC, and other breeding programs.
9. Variety evaluation of raspberry cultivars and selections from WSU, BC, and other breeding programs, in cooperation with Dr. Pat Moore, WSU Puyallup.
10. Variety evaluation of blueberry cultivars and selections for potential commercial planting, in cooperation with Dr. Pat Moore, WSU Puyallup.

Support

The Fruit Horticulture program has received grants from various agencies for specific projects. The Washington State Nursery and Landscape Association (through WSDA) has supported the stone fruit variety trials and ornamental crabapple trials. Interest in wine grape growing has spurred a varietal trial, funded by grants from the American Vineyard Foundation and the Washington Wine Advisory Board, with the support of the Puget Sound Wine Growers. The Bosc pear trial received support from the Northwest Agricultural Research Foundation. Support for specific research projects has also come from commercial apple growers in Skagit and Whatcom counties. The Western Washington Tree Fruit Research Foundation funded grants for evaluating tree fruit varie-

ties and unusual fruits, including a trial of apple varieties for hard (fermented) cider in cooperation with the Northwest Cider Society and the Washington Wine Advisory Board.

Area Interest

The interest in alternative fruit crops is rising among growers in Skagit, Whatcom, and Snohomish counties. Different cultural needs, dictated by the different climate and conditions in western Washington, have required specific research targeted to local area problems. We anticipate that this will continue and increase as growers search for high return alternative crops with good value-added potential. In a recent feasibility study on research prospects, local growers put alternative crops as one of their top priority areas.

At the same time, hobbyists and home gardeners have shown broad support for research aimed at backyard fruit production. The urban growth area of the I-5 corridor continues to expand into new suburbs. People responding to the stresses of urban life are finding that garden and tree fruit culture not only supplements their food budget with healthful, tasty fruit, but also provides an element of relaxing therapy and contact with nature in an urban environment. These individuals, and the hobby groups associated with them, support the research that helps answer their problems and questions about fruit varieties and culture.

Outreach

To present information to the public, the Fruit Horticulture program sponsors annual public field days in February/March and in October, with about 3-400 participants at each. Harvest Days in July, August and September are also well attended by members of the Western Washington Fruit Research Foundation. Information has been published via the Internet on the Fruit Horticulture web pages <http://mtvernon.wsu.edu/frt_hort/fruit_horticulture.htm>. Since July 10, 2000 this site has registered over 7500 hits, and the number has increased since the addition of the Alternative Fruit Crops page <http://mtvernon.wsu.edu/frt_hort/altcrop.htm>. Over 600 visits were registered the first month after this page was posted, and visits continue to average about 360 per month.

The opportunities are there for properly directed fruit and grape research to fill a crucial role in both the commercial and home garden/nursery sectors. People are looking for information and knowledgeable help with their agricultural efforts. They support the areas of fruit research that are relevant to their practical needs. The challenge is to be responsive, to remain aware of the range of potential clients, and to reach out to the general public with services that they will recognize as important to them.

Gary Moulton is the program manager with current staff of Jacky King and Les Price. 8/12/02

On powdery mildew by Evelyn Troughton

Have you experienced powdery mildew this past growing season? I have and so have some of my neighbors. There has not been any on my deck plantings since I have lived on Queen Anne (six and a half years now).

This year my McIntosh Wijcik apple has it, as do my petunias, roses and verbena.

A call for help to Larry Barello, the donor of my apple tree, was encouraging-pick off the affected leaves, that he had not had much success with any sprays. But it soon became apparent that the tree would be nude if I continued, would perhaps die, and I would be not only apple-less, but tree-less.

This tree had a very nice start last year, the first spring I had it on my deck. It had lots of blooms at the appropriate time. Many of those blooms developed into teeny little apples. Many of those teeny little apples dropped off, and five remained to grow to about 1/2 inch in diameter.

I knew this three foot tall, although ten year old, tree could not support all those apples so I was not concerned when I saw them in the soil around the trunk.

When I e-mailed Larry to brag about the 5 apple crop I was going to have, he e-mailed back that he was thinning his Wijciks. My tree had two growing close together in two locations, and one in another. Through the e-mails I learned I needed to take two off as there wouldn't be room for the two together to mature. So I did, then what happened! The other two fell off and I was left with one apple-the largest one of the four, about 1 inch in diameter.

The next time I went out on the deck to look at my "crop" there wasn't any. Under the tree was my lone apple with a bite out of it. A squirrel!

This squirrel, whom the neighbors feed and I knew got on my deck-I would find peanuts in the soil each spring when preparing the

pots for replanting-was the culprit.

Well, I was not going to let that happen again, so I petitioned the Home Owners Association Board to have the tree removed. Although it was a lovely vine maple, that colored beautifully in the fall, it had outgrown its space.

The Board agreed, our resident handy man was in favor of it also, so down it went.

No peanuts in the pots when I was planting this spring. And the apple tree was a gorgeous thing, covered with blooms. Another e-mail to Larry to tell him of its beauty, and the advise to get my brush out and do a little hand pollinating. I did, and eleven apples developed. Over time six dropped off, and the powdery mildew appeared.

When I feared I would not have any leaves left I called Marilyn Tilbury. She said there was nothing I could do at this time that would work, but did give me a recipe for a spray and directions on how and when to use it next spring. So I am ready for next season and will try to eliminate the powdery mildew. The petunias and verbena are gone, but I am going to try to save the little miniature roses-they are such lovely colors.

I do have five nice red McIntosh apples. Well, really four, I ate one this morning.

Larry said they ripen in late September and I will know they are ripe if the seed is brown, so I picked the smallest one and cut it open-the seed was brown.

It is a good apple, crisp, not too sweet, not tart. I'm leaving the others on the tree, in a few days I'll pick two others. I'll eat one to see if time sweetens it, and leave the other on the counter to see if it is sweeter if left a few days after picking.

And I think it is a beauty whether on the tree or on the kitchen counter!

I read in an article in Good Fruit Grower (April 2001) that Dr Gary Grove, WSU pathologist, has fo-

cused the last few years on methods to help growers decide whether they to protect their fruit from mildew. By collecting air samples from orchards and using spore traps to determine if powdery mildew is "in the air". This is a very time consuming and inefficient method, although it does work, but with a very low detection threshold.

I also read that there are six types of powdery mildew affecting crops like apples, cherries, grapes, stone fruits, roses and such.

Dr Grove said that he sees a potential to use indicator plants like rose bushes to provide an early warning bell to growers. He calls it "my canary in a coal mine" research. In 2000 he planted several species of the most susceptible rose variety around the periphery of a nectarine orchard. The nectarines showed mildew symptoms seven days before symptoms were detected in the orchard.

So, plant a token rose for advance warning!

Marilyn's powdery mildew formula:
1 tsp cream of tartar (or baking soda)
2-3 drops liquid dish detergent
1 qt water.

Spray terminal shoots in spring before buds open-called tight clusters, then every 10 days to 2 weeks thru bloom and petal fall.

The fungus overwinters under the terminal bud scales so you have to start spraying before the buds start to open to protect them from infection.

Black velvet bliss—and major thorn We gobble them and we curse them!

By Linda V. Mapes

You can call them ouchberries, curse them, or wave the white flag, open your mouth and savor them. Blackberries are good for all of that.

Our love-hate relationship with *Rubis discolor* is never more plain than now, when the fragrance of a thicket of ripening blackberries is the very essence of this bittersweet, golden time—the end of summer.

Just when the light is turning gold, starting to slant lower and evening comes quicker, just as the sun seems to penetrate and bake the bones with that lovely, almost-September heat: it's blackberry time.

Those same bushes we curse the rest of the year are the ones that rip our skin open with a passing swipe, the ones that team up with morning glory and nettle to intimidate us clear out of the yard, pitching the clippers into the bushes without a backward glance. Now's the time blackberries put on their sweet -as-pie faces.

We snug in close to their velvety black trusses of juicy bounty, with our bags and our baskets and cups and outstretched hands. We smile purple, knowing smiles to our fellow pickers.

Blackberries are as Northwest as salmon, as rain, as rot. They are our signature fruit. Might as well welcome them, in any case, as this is not a plant to knock or ask for an appointment.

Nature could not have designed a better invader than the Himalayan blackberry, a native of Eurasia.

In a sunny site with some water, a patch will expand 10 feet in girth in a year. Consider the blackberry's abilities, truly without parallel, when it comes to reproduction:

Its flowers need no pollination. Unlike other plants that need their pollen transferred in some fashion to the ovary, the blackberry sets seed on its own. Bees need not apply.

Not only does this ensure reproduction no matter what the weather -bees dally in their

nests on cool, wet days -it saves the blackberry energy for even more growth.

Blackberry also spreads voraciously by tip rooting. Fountains of canes spring from the mother bush and arc to the ground, rooting every place they touch. This technique makes the blackberry the snake-head of the plant world: The blackberry can leapfrog across the landscape, smothering everything in its path.

Wherever the blackberry doesn't swagger on its own, animals sow it, gobbling its fruits with their devilish deal: Eat me, and spread my seeds.

Blackberry is also semi-evergreen, continuing to photosynthesize in winter. While other plants kick back for the winter, the blackberry never stops growing.

Then there is the blackberry's defense system: Its large, stiff, hooked thorns are out for blood. Even its leaves are saw-toothed.

Put it all together and the plant's five-sided canes begin to make some sense.

"Demonic, no doubt," surmises Thomas Hinckley, director of the University of Washington's Center for Urban Horticulture, barely kidding.

Sarah E. Reichard, also of the center; notes that Australian scientists have found the blackberry's root crown can be 8 inches in diameter, and its main root 5 feet deep, with numerous secondary roots spreading in all directions. Disturb them, and suckers sprout, Hydra-like, creating more trouble.

Blackberries can generate more than 12 tons of living biomass per acre. More than half of it is thorny canes; 41 percent of it roots. They can produce another 11 tons per acre of dead canes and leaf litter.

Another study found a single bush can generate from 7,000 to 13,000 seeds per square yard. If only 1 percent of the seeds germinate in the first year, that's still 70 to 130 seedlings per square yard. No wonder the state and county won't even list Himalayan blackberry as a noxious weed.

"To put it on the noxious-weed list and make people control it would be just insane," said Dana Coggan, education specialist for the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board. "It's out of control."

Indeed, we humans are a laughingstock before the mighty blackberry. Who hasn't tried it all: Flame weeders? Weed whackers? Brush hogs? Chemical warfare? Try a backhoe, or bulldozer. It will work, but only for a while. The blackberry always comes back.

Just ask Nancy Hooper, owner of the Beall Greenhouses on Vashon Island, a King County historic landmark dating to 1888.

Hooper and her husband, Chuck, grubbed the blackberry out of four of the historic greenhouses by hand seven years ago.

Today blackberries wave once again through the broken glass of the rooftops. Blackberry packs the interiors, leaks out the doors and reaches through walls, greedy for passing flesh. A former neighbor complained the couple had put up new buildings on the site. In fact they had dug the 15-foot-tall outbuildings out of the blackberries smothering them.

Outfitted in hard hat, goggle, gloves and boots, Hooper has been clearing blackberry from the property for more than 10 years.

"It's like a Desert Storm offensive. At first, it was an anger thing. Then it was very therapeutic, I'd think about people I didn't like in my past," Hooper said. By now, she believes the blackberries have a mind of their own. "They will just kind of reach out and grab you."

As for the property, it's for sale.

Linda V. Mapes is a staff reporter for The Seattle Times. This article appeared in the Natural Wonders section of the August 26, 2002 edition.

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How about making some real cider? Cider apples give the product a distinctive character and flavor

For more than 20 years, I have had a dream: the development of a real cider industry here in the Pacific Northwest. By "real" cider, I mean the kind of cider they make in the Normandy area of France, or in southwestern Britain. It is cider made from particular cider apples, such as Kingston Black or Dabinette or Muscadet de Dieppe, mixed with our own apples to make a low-alcohol (3 to 7 percent), slightly spritzy drink as a complement to food or to drink by itself as we do beer.

At this point, we need to distinguish between cider and apple juice. It's kind of a prune/plum thing. (A prune is a plum, but a plum is not a prune until it is dried.) Cider is apple juice, but apple juice is not cider. In Europe, cider is the fermented product from apple (or pear) juice. Here, we use the term "hard" for fermented apple juice, and the unfermented product may be called "sweet" cider. I wish we could adopt the European denomination.

Back in the early 1980s, while on the staff at Washington State University (WSU), Mount Vernon, I collected about 30 cider apple varieties from various sources, including England, France, and our own U.S. Department of Agriculture germplasm collection at Cornell University in Geneva, New York. They had such strange names as Bulmer's Norman, Cow Jersey, Sweet Coppin, Fox whelp, and Yarlinton Mill. Few were what we would call edible. They were more like crab apples than dessert apples. Their primary function in real cider was to provide acid, tannin, and a distinctive character. Some varieties are classified as bittersweet (high tannin/high sugar) or bittersharp (high tannin/high acid). By blending the juice of these apples with the juice of normal dessert apples, such as Golden Delicious or Jonagold, and fermenting the mixture, one can make a product with distinctive character and flavor, either dry or sweet, bubbly or still, with a varying degree of tannin (bitterness).

Scrumpy

People's taste for cider varies tremendously. In southwestern England, they make a product called "scrumpy," or farm cider, that will open your eyes several diopters. In the Normandy area of France, I've had some ciders that are almost like a fine champagne, with a smooth apple flavor and slight effervescence.

I've yet to taste an American cider that matches the best in Europe. Why? Because until recently, we've tried to make the cider with cull American apples, such as McIntosh, Golden Delicious, or even Red Delicious.

Why haven't we made some real cider in this country, since we have had the proper varieties here for more than 20 years? The answer is something of a chicken-and-egg thing, at least from the commercial standpoint. The cider maker needs a supply of real cider apples to blend with traditional types, but a fruit grower is hesitant to grow them unless assured of a market for the fruit; and there is only one market outlet-cider. Juice apples can vary in value from \$20 to more than \$200 per ton. Twenty dollars a ton is one cent a pound-well below a break-even price, even for unsprayed, mechanically harvested fruit.

Having mentioned unsprayed fruit, let me talk about the potential merits of growing cider apples organically, both in western and eastern Washington. In western Washington, it would have been rather easy to grow some of the more scab-resistant cider apples organically, because codling moth pressure was very low, and we didn't have the apple maggot to contend with. This no longer is the case, except, perhaps, in Whatcom County. This is just a temporary situation even there, as the apple maggot is bound to continue its spread north. properly timed, organically acceptable control methods are possible but perhaps not cheap and easy. An area-wide codling moth control program using mating disruption is

showing great success in eastern Washington; it could be the key to a successful organic program western Washington.

Blending

On the subject of disease, we don't know how important it would be to control mildew and scab on cider varieties. The British and French should know, and we should find out. Western Washington has a climate similar to England's and Normandy's, so we should be able to grow superior quality cider varieties. There also is a substantial quantity of Jonagold apples in northwestern Washington. They would be excellent for blending.

How about doing the whole thing east of the Cascades? We don't know how these English and French cider varieties will perform in our hot summers. They have not yet been grown here. In terms of the bulk of the juice (the 70 to 80 percent that can come from noncider varieties), we should not experience any problems with fruit that has been either traditionally or organically grown. There is an increasing supply of organically produced fruit in this region; a certain percentage of it goes for juice. Organic Granny Smith, Golden Delicious, and Jonagold would provide an excellent balance if we could only find the cider apples-the bittersweets and bittersharps (the Bulmer's Norman, Dabinett, Harry Master's Jersey, Kingston Black, Sweet Coppin, and Muscadet de Dieppe).

What can we do to make it happen? In western Washington, the effort has been under way for more than ten years. There is a group called the Northwest Cider Society, composed of both hobby and commercial growers and cider makers. The group meets regularly to share their ciders and to discuss commercialization as well as hobby apple production and cider making. In addition, research

Zestar-a new variety that offers early, tasty alternative

By Jill MacKenzie

University of Minnesota Extension

In 1998, the University of Minnesota's fruit breeding program released Zestar, a trademarked variety, which is a flavorful, high-quality summer apple. Fruit breeders Jim Luby and David Bedford selected this seedling of a State Fair x MN1691 cross, made in 1972. Budwood was distributed to a few growers and researchers in the early 1990s, so information about the variety's performance in a number of locations is already available.

Early reports indicate that the apple has a great eating quality. Duane Greene of University of Massachusetts (Umass) points out, this summer variety has fall apple quality. It's a wonderful tasting apple, "he says. The flavor is complex, with balanced sweetness and tartness, and aromatics that Greene characterizes as "perfumy, distinctive, (and) floral." "It's an apple that grows on you" he wrote in a critique of the variety, "almost addictive."

Consumers at orchards and on taste panels in Minnesota have commented on the fruits' appealing crispness.

Chuck Nystrom, a third-generation orchardist in southwestern Minnesota, top worked some trees with the new wood in 1992, and since then has planted 350 trees. His company, Ocheda Orchards, sells directly to consumers.

Nystrom says he has been looking for a superior early apple, in an attempt to break , people's "bad habit of not eating apples in August. " This variety may be the one he's been seeking, he said. He said, he doesn't grow Paulared or State Fair any more, and he finds Gingergold "a little bland." But whenever he has slices of the variety for customers to try, "Everybody who samples says, 'I'll take some of those'," he said.

Gary McDougall's orchard, Apple Junction, is in east-central Minnesota. Gary had a large enough crop

from his trees to sell last year. He said, "We bagged up 175 three-pound bags. We sampled the apple and sold all the bags in one day. People were buying two and three bags to take home," he said. For an early apple "it's just excellent," he said.

In central Minnesota, Dave Macgregor of Fairhaven Farms was one of a few growers and researchers in the early 1990s who took on the trees. Eight years later, he likes eating this variety himself. "Customers prefer it to every other apple in its season, and they continue to ask for it even when fall and winter varieties are available," he said.

Tests have indicated that the variety has a long storage life, but the early popularity of the variety has kept the commercially produced fruit out of storage. University of Minnesota tests indicate that the variety has a storage life about twice that of Paulared. As breeder Bedford points out, an apple that maintains quality over seven weeks in his cooler is likely to hold up well under actual use - hours in a lunch bag, days in a fruit bowl or in a low humidity refrigerator.

Jim Ballard of the Pacific Northwest Fruit Testers Association was surprised to see the Zestar apple picked on July 15 was still firm, crisp, sweet and pleasant eating on Dec. 3." He noted in his critique that the fruit had been picked too early, and quality wasn't particularly good at harvest, but that it appeared to have matured in storage.

Bedford agrees with Ballard that harvest timing is critical for best quality in this variety. "Picked at the right time," he says, "It's an outstanding apple, and it can benefit from being allowed to hang on the tree". The apples are bi-colored.

Where the sun touches the fruit, a bright rosy-red blush develops; shaded areas are a pale cream, The blushed area may cover as much as 85% of the fruit, but typically is only 60%; Green finds the apples grown at the UMass site only about 50% red, "It's not such an attractive apple for us. We've seen some large, corky lenticels - appearance is just not its strong suit," Green said.

Dave Rosenberger of Cornell's Hudson Valley Research Station says that fruit on his Zestar trees "colored up well" in the cool season of 2000, "but in a typical year they might not," The Hudson Valley Research Station is in the warmest apple-growing region of New York State, and summer heat can easily affect coloration of early apples at this site.

In central Minnesota, Macgregor's fruit has had what he considers "adequate" color, "We color-pick three times," he notes, "Two would work, but mid-August is not an especially busy harvest period, " Chuck Nystrom, in southern Minnesota, consistently sees nice red color on at least half of each fruit. He considers the apple attractive, and said "My customers don't care what it looks like, once it passes their lips!"

When growing the variety, the tree is vigorous and upright at first, then settles down and even, said Nystrom, It may start to weep a bit when it bears fruit, He now has the trees on Bud9 and M26, and is satisfied with their growth, Macgregor's experience with the trees on Bud9 has been that he's had to prune hard and thin carefully, to keep them from runting out.,

Greene notes that the fruit hangs well, and that fruit left on the tree until Aug, 29, about two weeks after optimal harvest, "looked over-mature, but didn't taste over-mature." Macgregor said the apple "doesn't turn mealy if left on the

tree -it only gets sweeter."

Trial plantings in Washington's Yakima Valley are too young to make any judgements about the tree's suitability for growing in the West, with young trees producing their first fruit in 2000.

Direct marketers like Nystrom, Macgregor, and McDougall may be best able to take advantage of Zestar apples' superior eating qualities. When samples are available, they say, it's easy for consumers to recognize an excellent fruit for out-of-hand eating, for lunch and snacks.

The variety's potential for wholesalers is unknown. Rosenberger has considered recommending the variety to larger-scale orchardists. "Growers should probably start putting a few trees in," he says. He figures if a grower were planting 30 or 40 acres of Honeycrisp, probably one or two acres of Zestar trees would be sufficient, to fill a niche for early apples.

Macgregor, who markets his fruit both wholesale and directly to consumers, is confident that new variety will have a major place in his apple sales. "It's already an important variety for us, and we have

made a wholesale-sized planting. The apples will largely replace State Fair and Paulared, and will cut into immature McIntosh sales," he said. "Because it stores well, it will be an excellent draw, dominating local apple sales from late August until Honeycrisp becomes available in mid-September."

This variety is patented and trademarked. Nurseries licensed to propagate Zestar trees include: Adams County, Bailey, Baker West, Cameron, Hilltop, Willow Drive, Cummins, Columbia Basin, Green Tree, Treeco, Starks, and Edible Forest.

Linden Orchard A call for help from WCFS members

Just west of Green Lake, at N 67th St and Linden Ave N, sits an undeveloped property called Linden Orchard. Thanks to the Pro-Parks levy, Linden Orchard will soon become a park and a P-patch. A neighborhood group, Friends of Linden Orchard, is working with Landscape architect, Scott Woodcock (the Berger Partnership) to design the park.

A few gnarled apple trees, including

a Winter Banana, have long provided neighbors with the makings of sauce and pies. There is a strong wish to continue the orchard theme in the park's landscaping. Due to the declining health of the trees, it is expected that they will be replaced with new, antique varieties.

FOLO would like to invite the participation of the Western Cascade Fruit Society in developing and maintaining a new orchard. Site preparation

will not occur until spring, 2003, so cuttings can be taken from the old trees this fall.

We would greatly welcome your expertise and enthusiasm.

Please contact me at 206.783.3924 or hagen.dole@att.net

Claire Hagen Dole

A thank you letter to the members of Western Cascade Fruit Society From Western Washington Fruit Research Foundation

On behalf of the WESTERN WASHINGTON FRUIT RESEARCH FOUNDATION I would like to thank you for your very generous donation in the amount of \$3,100. This includes \$2,923 from the Western Cascade Fruit Society and \$177 from individual donations of the Society's members.

Gary Moulton and his staff in the Fruit Horticulture Department at the WSU, Mt Vernon Research and Extension Unit will be very pleased to continue to do Research and Extension with the help of your donation.

Signed: Larry Mowrer
Corresponding Secretary

The following WCFS members were individual donors to this fund in 2001.

- Edwin Bentley
- Valerie Chapin
- Philip Gleb
- Richard & Louise Guthrie
- Barbara Hager
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Many members of Seattle Tree Fruit Society made contributions to research at Mt Vernon, which were forwarded by their treasurer to WWFRF, in addition to a contribution from their treasury.

Member contributions given in this calendar year will be forwarded to WWFRF in the spring of 2003 with WCFS proceeds from the Spring Sale and the Fall Fruit Show of 2002.

Many thanks to all of you who make this possible.

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 It is published quarterly; January, April, July and October and is included with membership.

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