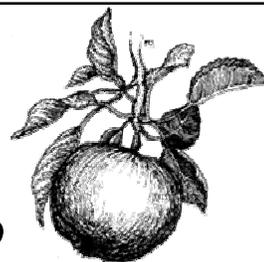




# the *BeeLine*



Volume 28

Summer 2008

*Newsletter of the Western Cascade Fruit Society*

## FRUIT GROWING WITH WATER EFFICIENCY

By Michael Laurie

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[www.wcfs.org](http://www.wcfs.org)



The BeeLine is a quarterly publication of Western Cascade Fruit Society, a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation in the State of Washington.

### Why use water wisely?

In my years of carrying out hundreds of landscape irrigation audits for homeowners I have typically found water waste of \$300/year or more which could have been saved in a cost effective manner. Watering more efficiently means targeting the plant you want watered



instead of watering the weeds. This can be done through drip irrigation. The Partnership for Puget Sound has determined that the largest source of pollution for Puget Sound is stormwater running off carrying fertilizers and pesticides. This harmful runoff can also occur when we overwater our fruit crops. Projections for much of Western Washington are that we will have a shrinking snow pack in the mountains and maybe more peak winter rain storms. This will likely lead to less summer water available and if you add to this an increasing population, our water supplies are likely to be more limited in the future. So learning how to grow with less water can help with adapting to our changing climate.

### The plant water needs vary over the growing season and from year to year

I have found that many people turn on their automatic irrigation system or water manually to provide the same amount of water from May through September. When in fact WSU studies have shown that many fruit crops typically need only half as much water in the early and late summer as they do in the peak of the summer. Bob Norton has observed that if a plant isn't putting on a good amount of new growth it is either getting inadequate water or inadequate nutrition. The following 3 web sites have excellent information on watering needs for a variety of commercial crops in Washington state:

■ **Washington Irrigation Guide: Good information especially on the water needs of plants for our area:** [ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/WA/Tech/Irr\\_Guide\\_Appendix\\_A.pdf](http://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/WA/Tech/Irr_Guide_Appendix_A.pdf)

■ **WSU, Washington Irrigation Extension:** More helpful irrigation information especially their Irrigation Calculator <http://irrigation.wsu.edu/drip.php?calcs=1&drip=1>

■ **AgWeatherNet:** For many areas of Washington state, if you input your site location, the date, and the crop, it gives the water needs: <http://weather.wsu.edu/>

#### **The importance of soil composition**

The composition of your soil will impact how well it absorbs, holds, and makes use of water. If you water very sandy soil too long, much of the water could run right through past the root zone of the plants. Soil with a high percentage of clay will have a lot of runoff if the water is applied more quickly than it can absorb it. The most ideal soil for absorbing, holding on to, and making the best use of water will be soil with a high percentage of organic matter. That type of soil can make the best use of whatever water you apply. Adding compost and organic matter to soil can physically separate clay particles to help the soil retain water. Mulching with organic matter, not too

close to tree trunks can help reduce evaporation of soil moisture.

Soil is alive with many beneficial bacteria and fungi. There is a growing body of research showing the benefits of many soil bacteria and fungi. This is one reason to minimize our use of possibly harmful pesticides. For more good soil information go

to the following web site: [www.BuildingSoil.org](http://www.BuildingSoil.org)

#### **Considerations of differing methods of water delivery.**

In the landscape irrigation audits I carry out, most of the watering systems I see waste over 50% of their water through: inefficient design, water wasteful equipment choices, insufficient maintenance, and improper operation. I encourage people to take a look at each irrigation system zone or system a few times a year to make sure there are no leaks or



unintended problems. I often encourage people to switch to drip irrigation where you can count on 90% or more of the water going where you want it. While with many other watering systems you are lucky if 50% of the water is not wasted.

#### **Useful references for someone wanting to set up a drip irrigation system.**

To properly set up a drip irrigation system I suggest taking a class offered by the Irrigation Association or working with an expert. I strongly encourage you to make use of adjustable drip emitters, bubblers, or shrubblers as many companies call them. These types of emitters are on a spike you stick into the ground and you can adjust how much water comes out the top. This adjustable feature allows your irrigation system to be adaptable to changing plant water needs as the trees grow, as you add or subtract plants, as you make soil changes, and as the watering needs change throughout the season. The Sunset book, "Sprinklers & Drip Systems" is an excellent guide to designing and installing your own drip system. Horizon Irrigation is a good supplier of drip equipment in Western Washington although many stores now carry the equipment. Be aware that not all drip equipment from different companies is compatible. The best on line resource for drip irrigation is DripWorks. They have a very helpful catalog and a full range of supplies. Their web site is [www.dripworks.com](http://www.dripworks.com).

Michael Laurie, with years of experience in water efficiency, is available to work with businesses or homeowners on assessing their water efficiency and help in designing watering systems to meet their needs. He has designed and installed a variety of water and stormwater conserving equipment in his home and landscape including: a green roof, a rain garden, a compost toilet, efficient irrigation equipment including drip irrigation and soaker hoses and timers for the over 400 species of plants, and over 1,000 gallons of rain water collection equipment

Michael Laurie, Watershed LLC, P.O. Box 2315, Vashon, WA, 98070, 206-567-5492, [mlaurie@mindspring.com](mailto:mlaurie@mindspring.com)



## MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

By Mark Youngs, Seattle Tree Fruit Society

Greetings fellow growers of fine fruit. I'm honored to be your newly elected president and promise to render my best service to this organization. Having the extreme pleasure of touring Northern Italy with many of you, I look forward to working with all members of the WCFS.

Our prior WCFS president has performed in an exemplary manner in this position. Ron Weston deserves our heartfelt thanks for the great job he did during his term. Thank you Ron!

My early agricultural influence came as a neighbor to Walt Lyon, one of the founding members of WCFS. In the 60's I held the job of watering his 5 acres of orchards and gardens during his annual canoe trips to Canada. After graduating from the University of Washington School of Business in Accounting and starting our own business, my wife and I purchased the family farm where we built our new house. Being interested in growing fresh fruit for our new family, I renewed my friendship with Walt and began to plan and build our own orchard. Walt taught me how to graft trees as well as showing me which varieties thrived in our area. Almost all of our scionwood was provided from his orchard which included over 300 varieties of Apples. Eventually we relocated to the Canyon Park area of Bothell. We went from 12 acres to 2.7 and downsized to 84

trees; 23 apple varieties, 6 pears, 7 plums, 3 cherries, a peach, and a fig. Applying information obtained on the Northern Italy tour with Dr. Bob Norton last year along with some additional research, we're currently converting our 3 wire trellis apple and pear orchard to the "tall spindle" method.

Growing up next to one of the founding fathers of the WCFS, I was blessed with a veritable fountain of horticultural information for the asking. Most people lack a resource like this unless they are connected to an organization like ours. It is my desire that the many chapters of the WCFS become the best source of answers for fruit growing questions. Our profile needs to be expanded as well, many people still are not aware of our existence and the resources we have to offer.

Our common interest is growing the best fruit possible and in helping others do likewise. Let's draw together based on this common ground and make WCFS an extraordinary organization, one that multiplies its knowledge and membership.

I hope you and your plants have progressed through this tough spring. May your summer be fun and rewarding with a harvest that is abundant and delicious. Enjoy!

Until the next issue, arrivederci.

## BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS

Joe Zeppa is selling his collection of fruit books. They range in price from *Berry Gardening*, and *Handbook for Fruit Explorers* at \$1.00 each to a first edition of *Apples of New York, 1905, Vols I & II* for \$200. He has over 50 titles available including Sanders' *The Apple Book, 1988* and a 1911 edition of *The American Apple Orchard*.

There are a few titles in Italian. Other titles include: *Fruit, Berry and Nut Inventory, 1989*, *The California Fruits, 1926*, *The California Vegetables, 1897*, *All About Growing Fruits, Nuts and Berries, Your Edible Landscape, Propagation of Plants*, and Logsdon's *Organic Gardening*.

To see Joe's complete list contact him, [joezeppa@comcast.net](mailto:joezeppa@comcast.net).

The Spring 2008 BeeLine was produced by Editors Marilyn Couture and Carlyn Syvanen, with input from membership.

Please contribute your articles for our next issue!

### **Issue Deadlines:**

**Fall August 15; Winter December 15; Spring February 15; Summer May 15;**

Email your articles to:

Carlyn Syvanen, [carlynbee@teleport.com](mailto:carlynbee@teleport.com) or Marilyn Couture, [couture222msn.com](mailto:couture222msn.com)

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**Critical Temperatures for Frost Damage on Fruit Trees**

From Utah Pests' Tree Fruit Advisory,  
Penn State University and Michigan State University

Stage of Development	10% Kill (°F)	90% Kill (°F)
<b>Apple</b>		
Silver tip	15	2
Green tip	18	10
½-inch green	23	15
Tight cluster	27	21
First pink	28	24
First bloom	28	25
Petal fall	28	25
<b>Peaches</b>		
Swollen bud	18	1
½-inch green	25	15
Pink	26	21
Bloom	27	24
Petal fall	28	25
<b>Pears</b>		
Swollen bud	15	0
Bud burst	20	6
Green cluster	24	15
White bud	25	19
Bloom	28	24
Petal fall	28	24
<b>Sweet Cherries</b>		
Swollen bud	17	5
Bud burst	25	14
Tight Cluster	26	17
White bud	27	24
Bloom	28	25
Petal fall	28	25
<b>Tart Cherries</b>		
Swollen bud	15	0
Bud burst	26	22
Tight cluster	26	24
White bud	28	24
Bloom	28	24
Petal fall	28	24
<b>Apricots</b>		
Swollen bud	15	—
Calyx red	20	0
First white	24	14
First bloom	25	19
Full bloom	27	22
Post bloom	27	24

**WCFS NEW MEMBERS**

**Olympic Orchard Society**  
Paul Gleeson

**Peninsula**  
Don & Fran Kiehnlé  
Christine Phalen

**South Sound Fruit Society**  
Peg Amandes  
Rick Arnold  
Ronnie Bezenar  
David Bradley  
Frank Byles  
Debra Jaqua  
Chuck Klawitter  
Ernie Paul  
Tania Wilson

**LAWNMOWER**

By Valerie Worth

The lawnmower  
Grinds its teeth  
Over the grass,  
Spitting out a  
thick  
Green spray;

Its head is too full  
Of iron and oil  
To know  
What it throws  
Away;

The lawn's whole  
Crop of chopped,  
Soft,  
Delicious  
Green hay.





## SOIL AMENDMENTS FOR PLANTING FRUIT TREES

By Eric Simpson, Olympic Orchard Society

When planting fruit trees, we should be trying to achieve a sandy clay loam soil, alive with beneficial microbes and fungi with a ph close to 6.5. What I have is rocky clay glacial till with a few inches of top soil and an impermeable layer of clay hardpan down about 18".

I always recommend that you first test your soil and determine the soil composition, percentage of topsoil, clay, sand, acidity, toxins, deficiencies and any excessive soil components.

Consider adding the following soil amendments\_as needed:

- 20% Topsoil including planting compost or worm compost (if available) for basic organic nutrient base.

- 20% Sand and Perlite light for air and water ventilation.
- 20% Coconut fiber or peat moss for water retention.
- 20% Clay (may already be in your soil) for minerals. I have clay soil
- 20% Native soil so the tree will grow roots out into the existing native soil.

Percentages will vary somewhat depending on what type soil you have.

When planting fruit trees also consider adding these amendments in the proper amounts:

1. Hendrikus Complete certified organic slow release 6-4-4 fertilizer with live beneficial microbes & fungi for fruit trees, and berries, see their website [hendrikusorganics.com](http://hendrikusorganics.com).

2. Glacier dust or rock dust for trace elements.

3. Oyster Flower to reduce ph to acceptable levels. Do not add lime with Magnesium because our soils have too much Mg.

4. Gypsum contains calcium and sulphur to soften the clay and improve drainage. Our soils are also deficient in calcium.

5. Only add Boron in minute quantities if deficient. Too much Boron is extremely toxic and can kill your fruit trees. To be safe add half of what you think you need after doing a soil test.

6. Optional: You can add a handful of shredded paper for the worms.

Note: Hendrikus organic fertilizers can be found on the Olympic Peninsula at Gardens at Four Corners, Port Townsend (Patti Kretzmeier, Owner); at Hartnagel Building Supply Inc., Port Angeles; and in Sequim from McComb Gardens; and, from Wanda Horst, Olympic Orchard Society, email: [lillypad@olyopen.com](mailto:lillypad@olyopen.com).

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## GOOD FRUIT GROWER

All WCFS members are eligible to subscribe to the GOOD FRUIT GROWER at the annual group rate of \$20.

This is a reminder to current subscribers to renew their subscription and send a check for \$20.00 by the end of June made out to WCFS. Please include your current mailing address. Send the check to WCFS Treasurer, Hildegard Hendrickson 2559 NE 96th, Seattle, WA.

The GOODFRUIT GROWER is published by the Washington State Apple Commission semi-monthly January through May; and monthly June through December. The magazine is mainly addressing commercial growers. Articles cover all aspects of growing apples. Every issue includes a special section on growing grapes.

**RED FLESHED APPLES**

By Harry Burton

Red-fleshed apples are truly the apple of the future. The excitement of biting into the apples, and the great taste are amazing. Kids love them. Not only that, but the red colour is an indication that the fruit has extra antioxidants, in the form of anthocyanins, that are a great health benefit.

One of the most prolific, and least known apple breeders in North America was Albert Etter, a self-taught genius of horticulture who lived in Ettersberg, Northern California until his death in 1950. His greatest and most lasting horticultural achievement was with apples, to which he shifted focus in the late 1920's. For his grafting, he was fortunate to obtain scionwood for Surprise, a bright rosy pink-fleshed heritage apple variety from the remote wilds of Turkestan. Although not highly rated in *The Fruit and Fruit Trees of North America* (1869), which was an eastern US publication, Surprise grew much better in the California climate, and it became the basis for Albert's red-fleshed apple breeding program.

Fortunately, Etter was not inclined to put much faith in the advice of Eastern experts growing apples in less favorable conditions. He loved to show how well most apple grew in the hills of Ettersberg. His intuition paid off. He was also unique in that he used unlikely breeding parents using localized, wild apple breeds and often including some crab apple breeds.

Etter claimed to have created at least 30 red-fleshed apple varieties, most probably open-pollinated seedlings of Surprise. He had a vision. Etter was delighted with the great taste and beautifully red coloured flesh of his apples and told his neighbors that someday

his red-fleshed varieties would grace the menus of San Francisco's most elegant hotels. I believe that he will be proven correct, exactly the same way as the red-fleshed grapefruit have become so popular today.

However since the mindset of the 1940's was not leaning towards change, it became difficult to introduce new varieties. Albert gave scionwood for 40 of his best apple varieties to California Nursery Company (CNC) with the hope of introducing the best to the public. Unfortunately, only the Pink Pearl (a red-fleshed variety) was really in any way successful, and is still available today, even

though Etter did not claim it to be his best variety. CNC has discontinued or lost the thirty nine other varieties. So most of Etters varieties were neglected after his death and were heading for extinction.

Fortunately, Ram Fishman, of Green Mantle Nursery in Ettersberg, California, has taken on the task of rediscovering as many of Albert Etters apple varieties as possible. He has catalogued at least fifteen red-fleshed

varieties. With his family, Ram would track down any red-fleshed apple trees they could find, attempting to differentiate, catalogue and preserve by propagating, any red fleshed apple trees they found. This was no easy task since the varieties were not only scattered throughout their local area of Ettersberg, but appear to have been growing in parts of Oregon, where Etter had colleagues who probably shared his scionwood. In addition, Ram had the difficult task of trying to match the Albert Etter given variety names such as "Hoover Redflesh", to the currently discovered red-flesh variety. Quite a challenge.



Pink Pearmain apple – one of Albert Etters great apple breeding successes.



(Red Fleshed Apples continued)

To Ram Fishman we owe a great deal of thanks. Not only has he revived these varieties, probably with little financial reward, but in some cases, he has saved these varieties from extinction. Rubiyat (a red-fleshed variety), for instance, was a decrepit fragment of a tree when Ram discovered it and fortunately, his first attempt at grafting succeeded, for by the following year, the original tree had been, in Ram's words "bulldozed over by some pesky

cows".

I predict that red-fleshed apples will become the apples of the future, in the same way that red grapefruit has replaced white grapefruit as the common type. They taste even better than they look. The first reaction to biting into the red flesh is always "WOW".

The best way to connect with red-fleshed apples is to attend The Salt Spring Island Apple Festival on Sunday, Sept 28, 2008.

## The 10th Annual Salt Spring Island Apple Festival

Celebrating Red-Fleshed Apples - THE APPLES OF THE FUTURE

**Sunday, Sept 28, 2008 from 9 to 5**

A chance to visit Apple Heaven while still on earth!

Starting Point: Fulford Hall

Salt Spring Island, BC, Canada

Salt Springers are very proud of their apples and the incredible collections we amass at Fulford Hall for every Apple Festival is a sight that takes your breath away. The task of setting up the collection is performed the night before by a team of about 30 island volunteers, ranging in age from children to senior citizens.

This Apple Festival is farm based, connecting you to the organic farmers on Salt Spring. They are your best guarantee of food quality and good health. We are hoping in 2008 to break the 300 variety barrier for the first time.

Join others like the 92 year old woman, with a walker, who became enthused as a teenager when she discovered we had the old Gravenstein apples she had known as a kid. She climbed up the 2 stairs to our selling area on her own and said, "You have made my day".

### Apple Festival highlights from 2007

- Display of 262 apples all grown organically on Salt Spring Island.
- Tasting of 105 apple varieties at just one farm (Apple Luscious). Most others have tasting of their own varieties.
- At least 12 labeled varieties of apple pies baked by the Pie Ladies.
- 15 farms open to the public.
- Theatrical performances by Johnny Appleseed, Theodore Trage, the Queen and Captain Apple
- A rich history of apples going back to 1860.
- At least 23 varieties of red-fleshed apples.
- An on-site narration by Naidine Sims tracing her black history on Salt Spring back to 1860
- Tours of most farms.
- Educational information on organic apple growing.
- Apple identification services.
- Orchard bee and honey bee experts available.
- Apple art by local artists.



**For more information contact:**

Harry Burton

250-653-2007

[burtonh@saltspring.co](mailto:burtonh@saltspring.co)

<http://www.saltspringmarket.com/apples/>

**SOME THOUGHTS ON PUGET SOUND GRAPE CULTURE**

By David Johnson, Milton, Washington

In some respects, having a world class wine grape industry just on the other side of the Cascade Mountains has not done development in the Puget Sound area much good. In terms of the economic advantages held on the East side, the research and revenues follow the top returns and so we on the coast get pretty much set on the shelf.

For home gardeners, the important thing to learn about grapes is who can you trust? Several sources of common use are:

- A sales clerk at a big box store
- A documentary interview with a wine grower in Walla Walla
- A research paper from UC Davis
- Your neighbor who has a Concord vine on a trellis

While a lot of folks are eager to give advice, it would seem that those most inclined to share their bit of wisdom have often misled and exaggerated their experience. A few questions I would suggest that you ask would include the following:

- Do you grow grapes in our Puget Sound region?
- Can you show me what the fruit looks like?
- Can I see the vines and get a sense of how you do it?
- Do you have any formal education in horticulture?

Like so many other plants, grapes are very fussy about the particular growing region. Wine grapes in particular are extremely fussy. By this I mean that wine grapes produce the very best wines in a limited range of temperatures and soils. For those who grow table grapes, temperatures and soils are not nearly as critical.

**What are your goals with the grape vine?**

Generally there are three major categories

that people consider:

1. Table Grape for Fruit
2. Wine Making
3. Aesthetic/Ornamental value

Of the three, the Aesthetic/ornamental goal is the simplest one to achieve. Just plant a grape that has great looking foliage. The more common vines of choice here would include, *Vitis Purpurea*, *Vitis Coignetiae*, and a few other types that have great fall red leaf colors.

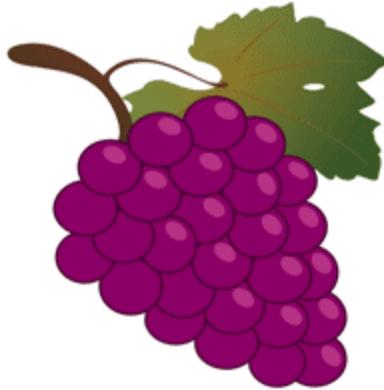


Table Grapes would be a longer list. The key thing to remember for a table grape is 'can it ripen in the Northwest?' Most of the Hybrids developed in Geneva NY, ie Interlaken, Himrod, Canadice, etc. will do quite well here. The California *Vinifera* table grapes, such as Thompson Seedless, Monukka, and Perlette, generally

do not do well because of late maturity and powdery mildew. It is possible to mature Perlette by taking the extra effort of spraying.

There are also a number of new hybrids, including my own Richard Walden, a hybrid of Flame Seedless x Elmer Swenson's 5-17, which has the flavor of Flame seedless and is resistant to powdery mildew. This is a very impressive grape, and I grow it in Milton WA.

Wine grapes are the third category. Sadly, when you venture into the wine topic, most leave their sobriety at the front door and pick up the ready made jargon of party spirit and Noble *Vinifera* propaganda. Our region can grow some *Vinifera* wine grapes to maturity, but they are plagued by several serious liabilities, including:

- Susceptibility to disease—Botrytis and Powdery Mildew
- Roots are susceptible to root weevil and Botrytis feeding—generally weak resistance



to root parasites

- Risk of virus is greater in the older Noble Vinifera grapes
- Many of the well known Vinifera will not mature in our cool summers.

So, if you are not fond of a hefty spray schedule, I would caution against planting Vinifera grapes. This leaves a large category of not so well known hybrid grapes, commonly lumped in under the generic name of 'French hybrids'.

I have been breeding grapes for over 20 years and have to date about 5-6 decent hybrids of the 'muscat' type. Muscat wines are usually white wines and can produce a very decent semi sweet table wine. In general, it is easier to produce white wines in our cool region than reds, but if you're determined to grow red wine grapes, there are a few very promising selections.

- Foch
- GR-7
- Saperavi
- Landot 4511
- Agria

I also have a red hybrid that tastes a lot like Watermelon, but it is a strange tasting wine.

The list of good white wine grapes is a lot longer counting my own:

- St. Pepin x RW Munson #1
- St. Pepin x Castel 19.637
- ES 5-17 x Orange Muscat
- Jovan
- ES 5-3-89 x N74 / Muscat Alexandria E

Without going into too much detail these are hybrids that I grew out from seed.

**How many vines does it take to make a 5 gallon carboy of wine?**

I would suggest a row of at least 6 vines to be sure. At 6 foot spacing that is a 36 foot row.

**What is the most impressive grape you can grow in the Puget Sound?**



No doubt it is the 'Richard Walden'.

**What is the ideal soil for grapes?**

Here is a surprise! Grapes do best in fairly sandy gravelly soils, since they warm early and drain well. Heat means sweeter and earlier fruit maturity. Do not plant near the lawn or vegetable garden. Soil fertile enough for a lawn or vegetable garden is too rich for good grape culture.

**What is the best text book on viticulture that can be found?**

Probably the best available, is *General Viticulture*, by Winkler, Cook, Kliewer and Lider, a California College Text. The material is a bit dated, but it gives an exhaustive look

at all aspects of table and wine grape culture with a decided Californian bias.

David Johnson may be contacted at: [Charchemish2000@yahoo.com](mailto:Charchemish2000@yahoo.com)

## AN INVITATION

This should be a very interesting year in the Milton Garden. I have a lot of hybrid grapes showing their first real crop. A few of them look pretty good. The Richard Walden is, by far, the most impressive for a table grape.

I would welcome a small group up to about 6 people to visit the wine/table grape garden. I just need to know if and when they're coming. Milton is really easy to get to from the I-5 freeway. Parking is not a problem

I do have a few extra table and wine grape plants still on hand.

To arrange a visit call or email: David Johnson 253 922 7224 or [Charchemish2000@yahoo.com](mailto:Charchemish2000@yahoo.com)

**Time flies like an arrow.  
Fruit flies like a banana.**

## WCFS 2008 SALT SPRING ISLAND APPLE FESTIVAL EXCURSION

### September 28

Our excursion to the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Salt Spring Island Apple Festival in B.C. will be here before you realize it. If you're coming from out of the area, why not spend Saturday evening in Port Townsend and wake up refreshed and ready for an early Sunday morning departure from Point Hudson marina. Port Townsend's inn-keepers are very helpful and the area's local eateries will fit anyone's budget. Accommodation information can be found here: <http://ptguide.com/accommodations/index.html>

An apple tasting extravaganza is waiting for us at our destination. Choose to visit the orchards that interest you from a list showing locations and descriptions of each. Your private driver will be your guide.

As you wend your way along the narrow roadways, remember to stop at the Salt Spring Island Vineyard for a treat. A warm greeting along with a wine tasting makes for an interesting stop. Ask for a taste of their Port made from blackberries which grow abundantly on the island.

Not to be missed is a stop at the famous cheese shop. They offer free tastings of their handmade cheeses which include a few from sheep's milk. Their chevre is subtle in flavor, but smooth, light and creamy. See if you can decide which variation is best...truffle, lemon, basil, garlic, chili or peppercorn. A must is a stop at Fulford Hall to admire the apples on display and enjoy a piece of homemade apple pie. Continue touring the orchards and the island. Lunch will be an island treat. Return home relaxed and inspired.



The price is \$130 per person and includes the round trip boat excursion, morning coffee and cake, admission to the Festival, snacks, escorted island transportation and a full and delicious lunch.

Complete the form below and return it with your payment in full. This will guarantee your place as seating is limited. Don't wait to make your reservation. Reservations will be confirmed.

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### WCFS 2008 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Salt Spring Island Apple Festival - Excursion Form

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

---

Please make your check for \$130 per person payable to NOFC (North Olympic Fruit Club).  
Mail it with this form to:

NOFC (North Olympic Fruit Club)  
c/o Judi Stewart  
3396 Hastings Ave. W.  
Port Townsend, WA 98368



## MYTH BUSTED

By Jean Williams, Peninsula Fruit Club

This is a story about an unintentional test of long-held views about storing scionwood. I have two refrigerators and had all my scionwood stored in one because the temperature control in the other occasionally malfunctions. I was all set to go out and start grafting on my pear and plum trees one day in March but couldn't at the last minute. I put the pear and plum scionwood in the questionable refrigerator since it was closer at the time. I knew it had been behaving itself for months, so I figured one night would be fine. HA! The very next morning when my husband got up, he informed me that the milk was frozen. We checked the thermometer we always keep in there, and it read 20 degrees! Of all the nights for the refrigerator to malfunction, it would pick the night I put the scionwood inside. I knew my apple scionwood was safe in the other refrigerator, but I was devastated about the pears and plums. Without thinking about it too much, I put the pears and plums in the other refrigerator. At least another week or two went by while I tried to decide if I wanted to waste the time trying to graft the wood that had been frozen. Then it came to me that I should graft it and write

about the results.

On April 9, 2008, I grafted onto my Damson plum the following: 2 Shiro, 2 Green Gage, 2 Mirabelle de Nancy, Hollywood, Burbank, Obilnaja, Imperial Epineuse, and Stanley plums and as an experiment Frost peach for a total of 12 grafts.

On April 12, I grafted onto my 2 Bartlett trees the following: 3 Winter Nellis, 2 Orcas, 2 Seckel, 2 Conference, 2 Flemish Beauty, Michurins Winter Beurre, Beurre Superfin, Abate Fetel, 2 Yakumo, 2 Kosui, and Ichiban for a total of 19 grafts.

To date (May 15), every single graft is pushing growth.

Every graft may not actually take, but the scionwood is alive enough to begin growth. It appears that at least some pear, plum, and peach cut scionwood is still viable after being exposed to freezing temperatures, even down to 20 degrees. It may have helped that it warmed slowly rather than abruptly, but that was not separately tested. I realize not everyone has a refrigerator that goes on the blink, but scionwood does seem to be a lot more forgiving than we have assumed.

Conclusion: Myth busted!

## BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

By Harry Burton

Michael Pollan's *Omnivores' Dilemma* is a great book with lots of insight into modern food systems. I highly recommend it, especially with the costs of food skyrocketing and with government regulations which make it difficult for small farms to succeed.

One of the farms he visits in the small organic section is Polyface Farm run by Joe Salatin.

Joe also wrote some great books which I believe will inspire you. One of his latest is *Everything I Want to do is Illegal*.

[www.acresusa.com/toolbox/reprints/Salatin\\_Sept03.pdf](http://www.acresusa.com/toolbox/reprints/Salatin_Sept03.pdf)

In this book he explains ways to get around government bureaucracies. A farmer who is not al-

lowed to sell cheese from his farm, gives it away and takes donations from his customers. One cheese maker discovered that in her state there were no requirements on fish food, so she sells Swiss fish food, cheddar fish food and Colby fish food. Another farm based dairy products seller got his farm up and running by registering and labelling his product as pet food. A beef farmer rents square meter parcels of land to her customers and then kills, slaughters and cuts up the animals on each of the customers' rented land.

For more information you can Google Joe Salatin.

Harry Burton can be reached at [www.appleluscious.com](http://www.appleluscious.com)

**MAD SCIENTIST**

By Roger Eichmann, North Olympic Fruit Society

Today's column is a report of ongoing and new experiments. You can follow along or even try to do some with me.

Peach leaf curl: three trees have been treated with dolomite lime, ground and foliar dusting. Two trees have been treated with a very small amount of oil of oregano patted on leaves and a cotton pellet is tied in one of the trees with a drop of oil on it.

A Montrose apricot graft on the loquat is surviving. The loquat graft on the Montrose looks poorly.

The apple graft on the hawthorns of two years ago is leafing out though the union looks weak. Most of the pears on the hawthorns have wintered over, but I have lost one or two grafts. None of the flowering quince on the hawthorns seem to have survived; the other quince are doing okay and may produce this year.

The Red Sensation pear on the mountain ash is doing well but may not bloom this year, unlike last year. The cherry treated as a seedling seven years ago to double its chromosome count is large enough to bloom but still hasn't. Maybe next year.

I just sprayed "Dynogen Super Plant Spray" (gibberelic acid) on the Black pear seedlings and hope to get more growth this year. Will dig up the cherry seedlings and some apples to treat and try doubling their chromosome counts. I may try using gibberelic acid on them before treating and hope to improve the success rate.

The hundreds of apple, plum and pear seedlings are doing well but need weeding. There are some interesting variations in the beds but I won't know their significance until much later when they get into production. Lots of fertilizer and grafting may speed up the process. My Montrose seedlings are down to around 80 and most are doing well.

There is quite a variety of vigor. I am looking for only one out of 32 or 64 so may not have the desired plant, but until they can be evaluated, I won't be able to know much about the genetics being worked with.

I have gotten several new cultivars of peach, apricot and plum to try. With the new city water supply in, maybe they will have a better chance of surviving.

I cross pollinated hose-in-hose primroses with jack-in-the-green. This should produce 100 percent of the rare jackanapes, in three different colors.

It frosted after spraying fruit blossoms with "Miracle-Gro", but the fruit for the most part still seems to be setting. I may have saved the fruit crop but may not get many viable seed this year as the spraying may set fruit without pollination.

The potatoes are coming up in pots so I will soon be able to graft tomatoes onto them. I hope to show that a potato root stock will allow the tomatoes to

be planted in cooler, outside ground and still produce. Besides it is a graft that I need more experience doing.

I have treated 5 collarette dahlias and hope to get some seedlings that produce a dinner-plate collarette dahlia. If the plants should be of little merit, the tubers can always be eaten like potatoes.

I should get some infected bees and start working on them with the Rife machine, may try it first on peach leaf curl, anthracnose or powdery mildew. I need to try some "natural" formulas for the grafting wax. In the meantime, I'm off to test some ideas of new equipment systems in the gold fields.

I was going to do this article as a chart of chromosome counts from the *Yearbook of Agriculture*, 1937 and other sources, but it is more complex than the time I had allotted. Look for more in the future.





## GLEANNING

By Don Ricks, Seattle Tree Fruit Society.

I have been working with volunteer organizations, including the Community Fruit Tree Harvest program, a [program of Lettuce Link at Solid Ground](#), and with Seattle Tilth. We match volunteers with willing donors in the Seattle area to harvest backyard fruit that would [otherwise](#) go to waste.

In 2005, at the initiation of this program, 300 pounds of backyard fruit was harvested to go to food banks and needy people. In 2006 a total of 3,000 pounds was collected. Last year 10,000 pounds of fruit were collected and distributed to dozens of reputable charities. This organization is building and succeeding.

Due to the commitment and philosophy of the volunteer organizations affiliated in the Seattle area, only fruit that is usable and whole and free of non-organic pesticides is accepted. We recognize that there may be people who want to take the extra time and effort to grow fruit organically but do not do so because they themselves are not likely to use all the fruit or be able to pick it. In this case, our organization can assist them.

For people within or outside the Seattle area who would like more information on starting their own gleaning programs feel free to contact the program director Gail Savina at [gails@solid-ground.org](mailto:gails@solid-ground.org) or me, Don Ricks at [DonnieAppleseed@yahoo.com](mailto:DonnieAppleseed@yahoo.com)



## WCFS OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

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He who plants a tree loves others besides himself.  
Thomas Fuller

**RHUBARB RECIPES**  
From the Rhubarb Compendium**Norwegian cold rhubarb soup with mint****Ingredients:**

4 sticks of rhubarb  
1/2 a stick of vanilla  
1 pt of water  
6oz sugar  
5 sprigs of mint  
1 lemon

**Procedure:**

Take the leaves of the mint sprigs. Peel the rhubarb and cut it into thin slices. Put the rhubarb peel in a saucepan with the water, sugar stick of vanilla, the juice of the lemon and the by now leafless mint sprigs, let it simmer for 10 minutes. Sieve the liquid and add the rhubarb slices. Bring it to the boil, take off the heat and leave to cool. Cut the mint leaves into thin strips. Serve the soup ice cold with the chopped mint leaves on top.

Serves 8 people

**Arugula Salad with Strawberry Rhubarb Vinaigrette****Dressing:**

1 C chopped fresh rhubarb  
1 1/4 C chopped fresh strawberries  
3 large shallots, coarsely chopped  
1 T sugar  
1/3 C red wine vinegar

**Procedure:**

Simmer in small non-reactive saucepan until tender, about 10 minutes. Puree, strain into large bowl, and cool.

Whisk in: 3/4 C canola oil 1/4 teaspoon dijon mustard

**Salad:**

1 bunch arugula 12 whole strawberries 4 oz goat cheese

Check out The Rhubarb Compendium on the internet for everything you wanted to know about rhubarb and more.

**Rhubarb Cream-Cheese Pie****Ingredients:**

13 in pastry  
3 tbsp cornstarch  
1/4 tsp salt  
1 1/2 cups sugar  
1 lb rhubarb, cut into 1 in pieces  
8 oz cream cheese, softened  
2 large eggs, at room temp  
1 cup sour cream  
1/4 cup toasted sliced almonds

**Procedure:**

Preheat oven to 425 F. Roll out pastry disk to line 9 in pie plate. Crimp edge; chill 15 mins.

In saucepan, mix cornstarch, salt and 1 c sugar. Add rhubarb; toss well to coat. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, 8 to 10 mins or until fully boiling and thickened. Pour into prepared pie shell; bake 10 mins.

In bowl, with mixer, beat cream cheese, eggs, and remaining sugar until blended; pour over rhubarb mixture. Reduce oven to 350 F. Bake pie 35 mins or until set.

Cool; chill. Spread with sour cream. Garnish with almonds.

**Glazed Strawberry-Rhubarb Pie****Ingredients:**

1 1/4 c Sugar  
1/8 ts Salt  
1/3 c Flour  
2 c Fresh strawberries  
2 c Fresh rhubarb, cut in 1" pieces  
2 T Butter or margarine  
1 T Sugar  
1 Pastry for 2-crust pie

**Procedure:**

Combine 1 1/4 cup sugar, salt, and flour. Arrange half the strawberries and rhubarb in a pastry-lined 9 inch pie pan. Sprinkle with half the sugar mixture. Repeat with remaining fruit and sugar mixture. Dot with butter. Install top crust and flute edges to make high-standing rim. Brush top of pie with cold water and sprinkle on 1 tablespoon sugar. Cut steam vents in top crust. Bake in hot oven (425 F) 40 to 50 minutes or until rhubarb is tender and crust is browned.



# WCFS

Board Meeting Highlights  
March 22, 2008

The Board Meeting of the WCFS was well attended, 24 Board members and guests present with only two members absent.

The meeting was opened by President Ron at 12:15. He asked for self introductions of those attending.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as mailed.

A financial report was given by Hildegard, who distributed copies to members. As of March 17 the balance was \$8140.57.

All chapter books have been audited and submitted. Also the WCSF's books had been audited and Hildegard submitted a budget for 2008. She reported the total gross income for 2007 exceeded the \$25,000 threshold which would trigger a requirement to submit a tax filing (form 990) to the IRS. Patti reported that we had made filings several years previously when the WCSF organization was grossing quite a bit of money on its Fruit Shows and other events.

In a discussion regarding the issue of the portioning of the dues between the clubs and WCFS., it was noted that while this was still open to further adjustment in the future, the last Board meeting had lowered the WCFS share from \$11 to \$9.

Ron asked about the reason for the increase in the proposed 2008 budget for the WCSF website expenses, and Patti explained that Carolyn Cooper had not fully charged us as yet for some consulting services and that Patti would be taking more training this summer. This was the primary reason for the proposed \$600. A question was also raised about the Budget line item for the BeeLine. This was based on the previously authorized approval of \$200 reimbursement for an STFS mailing of the BeeLine newsletter last year to assure that the STFS members received a "hard" copy. It appears that this was not done according to Leonard. Discussion ensued about the reasonableness of retaining that proposed amount to cover unspecified administrative costs that may arise with the BeeLine.

Patti said that our "at-large" members have been assigned to a club to reduce the bookkeeping. Patti will contact the "at-large" members. Judi also pointed out that we have previously sent the BeeLine to nurseries and others involved in fruit tree education.

Club Reports;

**Peninsula** held grafting sessions in several schools and 4-H club in which they had about 270 students involved. The club had enjoyed visiting different places with other Fruit clubs. They had been to an orchard and done extensive pruning. The club did a grafting workshop on March 1, where they sold scion wood, root stock and Mason Bee condos. The club will have a booth at the Kitsap Fair in August again for educational purposes.

**Olympic** has about 45 active members. Their pruning workshop started with a lecture at a nursery and ended with a demonstration in an orchard. In March was a scion wood exchange where they sold grafting kits. Four or five members will work with high school students on grafting.

**Seattle Tree Fruit Society** working with WWFRF on a double booth, received the Flower and Garden Show's award for "educational booth of the fair". The next meeting will be at Camp Long, West Seattle on April 26; and will hope to have a speaker on fruit tree diseases. This Saturday's show was the best we have put on, certainly with the fullest program of speakers. But attendance appeared less than hoped after doing a much better job of publicizing than last year. The club had purchased rootstocks in anticipation of a larger crowd.

**South Sound** has about 35 households as members. They will have Sam Benowitz of Raintree Nursery as a speaker. On April 22 the club is scheduled to go to Tom Woods place in Chehalis to see how he grows all kinds of berries, trees and plants under cover with great results. Other clubs were invited to attend.

**Vashon** has about 130 households as members, down from 150. Some of the non-renewals will probably return when they realize they are no longer receiving notices of Club workshops and meetings. They are holding usual workshops such as pruning sessions earlier this year and a grafting workshop last week. Vashon schedules quarterly meetings that include a program (next month it will be on the topic of soils and irrigation) and every month schedules a workshop such as the upcoming April one on pest control by the Club entomologist, Elizabeth Vogt.

**Tahoma** has 35 members plus life members. The club has held two scion wood exchanges, in February, stone fruits; and in March pears and apples. Bob Hartman has supplied the root stock. Henri Carney is the new president. They will be at the Puyallup Spring Fair in April for five days. He also asked for help for the Fall Fair which requires a lot of manpower to run the booth. One gets free pass and a parking spot. They sell about

Board meeting Highligthes cont.

\$2500 in raffle tickets for the Cornell cider press.

**North Olympic Fruit Club** has recently lost a lot of members, and the board is calling those who have not renewed. The club met in Port Townsend for grafting demo. They will have their Fall Fruit Show on October 18 and will try having something new each year. They may try a blueberry pie eating contest for kids

**Piper Orchard** has about ten active members. They do not hold meetings but report to work at the orchard. They would like to maintain a relationship with the STFS and WCFS.

#### Old Business

Carlyn reminded club treasurers to notify her of new members via e-mail. It would also help to tell her that there were no new members. The deadline for the next issue is May 15. There will be no chapter news in the BeeLine. That business is to be posted on the website.

Currently three clubs are posting their news on the website. If a club wants to post on it, the president is to notify Patti of that poster person.

Judi was editing some 500 pictures for the preparation of the disc of the Gelato tour. It will come with new music.

Erik thought that the board should consider teleconferencing rather than having meetings as we do now. He thought with the price of gas that we should look into it. Mike said that their club pays for the gas for the vans required to take the Board members to the meetings; so it wasn't an undue burden for them to participate. Phil thought that some of the work could be done by computer.

After a lengthy discussion on a proposal for two memberships for the price of one to encourage new memberships it was decided to postpone making a decision on the proposal until all implications for each club could be determined. Judi has been asked to

provide a written proposal of the program to all of Board members prior at the next Board meeting.

Erik announced that the National Orchard forum from the UK had published his article taken from the WCFS newsletter on the Owens Square graft, complete with illustrations.

#### Life Membership

Judi read a recommendation detailing Erik Simpson's long and dedicated service to WCFS and nominated him for the honor of a Life Membership in WCFS. Motion passed

The next meeting will be held at the Fire department in Silverdale during the latter part of June. Mike was asked to make the arrangements and notify the Board of the details.

Meeting adjourned at 2:03.

#### Annual Membership Meeting

Ron opened the annual membership meeting

Ron asked for a vote on the nomination for Life membership of Erik. Passed.

Officers/Directors slate nominated for next year were: Mark Youngs of STFS as President, George Moergeli of Peninsula as Vice-president, Hildegard Hendrickson of STFS as treasurer, and Bill Horn of Tahoma and Del Simpson of OOS as directors.

Bill moved, Renae seconded the acceptance of the above slate. Passed.

Ron noted that the organization still needs a secretary and another director, and he tasked the Chapter presidents with best efforts to find good candidates for these vacancies. He also noted that in the absence of a Secretary, the chair would be forced to delegate the task of taking minutes at each meeting, which could fall on anyone in attendance.

Adjourned at 2:10.

Respectfully submitted,

George Moergeli, Secretary

A farmer purchased an old, run-down, abandoned farm with plans to turn it into a thriving enterprise. The fields were grown over with weeds, the farmhouse was falling apart, and the fences were broken down. During his first day of work, the town preacher stops by to bless the man's work, saying, "May you and God work together to make this the farm of your dreams!" A few months later, the preacher stops by again to call on the farmer. Lo and behold, it's a completely

different place. The farm house is completely rebuilt and in excellent condition, there is plenty of cattle and other livestock happily munching on feed in well-fenced pens, and the fields are filled with crops planted in neat rows. "Amazing!" the preacher says. "Look what God and you have accomplished together!"

"Yes, reverend," says the farmer, "but remember what the farm was like when God was working it alone!"



## VASHON'S FRUIT GROWING REVIVAL

By Carol Wissman

In the latter 1800s before eastern Washington emerged as the state's primary agricultural area, and before railroads and highways linked its abundance of food to the hungry mouths of a growing nation, Puget Sound served as a major transportation artery. And smack in the center of the ocean inlet, Vashon Island farmers, many of them Japanese, provided much of the fruit transported in barrels to points as far-flung as San Francisco.

Peaches, cherries, and apple thrived on Vashon. Although only vestiges remain of its fruitful past, scattered throughout the island are thousands of relic fruit trees, many more than 100 years old.

Now, Vashon offers a bucolic bedroom community for retirees, home and small business based enterprises, and Seattle commuters working a ferry ride away. And while many love their land, they're not always entirely sure what to do with the surviving fruit trees from the island's agricultural past.

Such was the case with Ron Weston, who retired from a Coast Guard career and moved with his wife to a 20 acre farmstead appropriately called Applesauce Acres. "We were attracted by the magnificent Douglas firs, but amongst them were a lot of remnant apple trees," he said. "They become a liability harboring pests and disease when they're not cared for."

Then, in 2004, another newly arrived and retired resident, Bob Norton, placed an ad in the local paper calling for a meeting of those interested in growing backyard fruit. Norton, a horticulturist, had served as supervisor for Washington State University's Northwest Washington Research and Extension Center in Mount Vernon, where, for thirty years, he researched the growing of fruit varieties

adapted to the local climate.

Norton was the answer to a need. From an initial gathering of about twenty interested islanders, the Vashon Island Fruit Club formed. Oriented to enthusiasts of all fruit varieties, most are hobbyists or growing food for their own consumption. Some are farmers' market scale growers and a small percentage grow fruit commercially. Attendance now numbers about 150 families. Norton serves as a director, and Weston as president.



Dr. Bob Norton with WCFS members on Fruit tour of Northern Italy, 2007

"Dr. Norton is our treasure," said Weston. "He's gregarious, likeable, and very interested in getting others excited, motivating them to raise their expertise. He's also spent a lot of time and effort training a core of expert pruners who can offer their services to others."

Amazingly active at 82 years old, Norton is planting

a heritage orchard of his favorite old time varieties such as Esopus Spitzenburg and Roxbury Russet

apples. He writes a column for the local paper, and is beginning a book on western Washington backyard fruit culture.

During its first year the group affiliated with the Western Cascade Fruit Society, becoming one of seven chapters. Some activities, such as field trips and spring and fall fruit shows, occur across chapter lines. The club maintains a calendar of year round activities. Its monthly workshops and quarterly meetings are a big draw, Weston said. "They're hands on. You'll see a demonstration, then be handed pruning shears to practice what you've learned."

Members are assigned responsibility for the monthly program, coordinating the topic and speaker, and location. Subjects cover the gamut of growing tasks: pruning, spraying, irrigation, grafting, pest control, and soil testing and management.

(Vashon's Fruit growing revival continued)

Speakers are drawn primarily from island residents, though occasionally an expert on a topic such as mason bees comes from off-island. "There's a lot of talent in our community," said Weston. "We have a commercial cider operation and four commercial growers of Pinot Noir wine grapes. And while many members are just hobbyists, they may have been gardening for 35 years. We draw on that expertise."

The club is nearing completion of a video on summer pruning, which is set for commercial release. Norton notes that no other videos are available on the subject. The group's newest goal entails selling organic produce into farmers' markets, restaurants, and local stores.

Norton is a champion of high-density cultures, coaching members in the planting of more than 100 trees in a plot no larger than 20 by 40 feet. Most people don't want bushels of the same varieties, but prefer to plant several varieties that can be picked over a period of weeks, from August to November, he said.

Trees on dwarfing rootstocks can be trellised and maintained at a maximum height of eight to ten feet. With some growing systems, they can be planted as close as 14 inches apart, producing fruit on short spurs as soon as the year after planting. Work such as spraying and pruning can be accomplished from the ground, requiring no risky and cumbersome ladders. Deer and birds are more easily kept at bay with fences and netting.

The high-tech trees appear to coexist in happy harmony with their larger, centagenarian cousins, the remaining fruit trees from Vashon's agricultural past. Many of those relics now stand pruned and productive, thanks to the efforts of the Vashon Island Fruit Club.

Professional fruit tree pruning available.  
Norway Viticulture.

Over 15 year's experience with tree fruit pruning,  
and small fruits

Assorted hybrid grape plants available. Bred lo-  
cally for the Puget Sound climate

Contact David at [charchemish2000@yahoo.com](mailto:charchemish2000@yahoo.com)  
253 394 3487

## BEESWAX IN THE AMERICAS

A beachcomber found an amber luminescent egg-shaped object near Gold Beach, Oregon this winter. Experts say it almost certainly is a chunk of beeswax from a Spanish trading vessel that sank off the coast more than 300 years ago. The wax has been turning up on Oregon's north coast in the Nehalem and Manzanita areas for centuries..

This chunk could have been from the Santo Christo de Burgos, which sank in 1693, or the San Francisco Xavier, which disappeared in 1705. Both were en rout from the Philippines to Acapulco, Mexico, with tons of wax. Such discoveries have been traced to the Philippines by the wings of the bees, native to those islands, found in the wax.

Beeswax was once preferred for candles over malodorous tallow or rendered animal fat. The Catholic Churches in Mexico needed lots of beeswax for candles and there were no native honeybees in the Americas so they imported it from the large Asian honeybees which produced a lot of it.

The San Francisco Xavier was carrying some 75 tons of beeswax, according to shipping records. When the Northwest fur traders came into the country, the Indians were trying to trade beeswax to them. Finds of the wax along the coast still occur.

From an AP story.

The WCFS Forum is a private email list for members only. Find out about a certain cherry, ask how to spray or prune, offer scionwood or come by and pick up a bag of apples. Send me an email and I'll add your name to the WCFS Forum.

Judi Stewart [js@olympus.net](mailto:js@olympus.net)

**A chicken crossing the road is poultry  
in motion.**