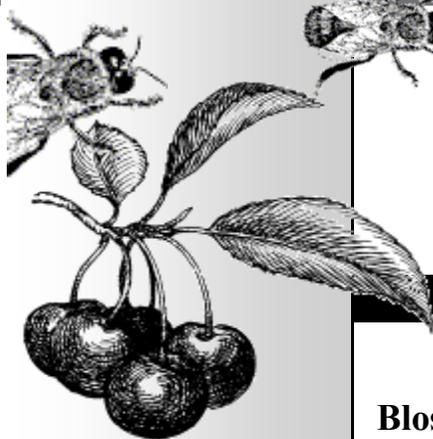


the BeeLine

Summer 2014

Newsletter of the Western Cascade Fruit Society



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

Blossom Blast of Pears by Jim House OOS



Early Infection

Blossom Blast of pears is caused by the bacterium *Pseudomonas syringae* pathovar *syringae* (Pss), which commonly resides on leaf surfaces.

Affected trees show browning of the early buds, brown to black petals, dark brown dead buds and leaves around buds, and detachment of the blossoms from the fruit spur. Generally, the fruit spur is not severely affected but, in extensive infections the fruit spur may become necrotic. In the later stages of infection the fruit spur may remain as a viable spur with few or no leaves or it may atrophy. If the infection is severe the wood of the fruit spur may be affected and cankers can develop.

The bacteria produce proteins which cause water to freeze at temperatures above 32 F. Thus, freeze injury to plant tissue occurs even without a frost and allows Pss bacterial toxins to cause further damage to plant tissue. The cool wet Springs of the Pacific Northwest favor the development of the infection followed by symptoms. Blossom blast can cause severe loss of crops and may be a more common problem than is currently recognized.

Fireblight, another bacterial disease that generally occurs in warmer weather, affects the tips of stems resulting in rapid browning and death of the leaves and twigs for several inches.

Pear varieties show different susceptibility to blossom blast with Packham's Triumph, Bartlett, Eldorado, Anjou, Bosc and Beurre Superfin most severely affected and Comice, red Anjou, red Bartlett less severely affected. The severity of damage may vary with the strains of Pss, severity of weather conditions and possibly more severe lesions if the tree is rapidly growing.

Unfortunately there are no reliable treatments for pear blossom blast. In small orchards, covering trees on cold nights to prevent frost and cold weather damage may help reduce losses. Copper products are reported to have variable rates of success; follow label directions and apply in the fall and dormant season. Some recommend pruning the affected fruit spurs. Where cankers occur they should be pruned off at least 6 inches below the lesion. Removal of affected vegetation from the tree and ground reduce the bacterial population and may reduce the incidence of infection the following year.

If you have further information or experiences with pear blossom blast, please e-mail me at jahouse100@gmail.com - Thanks (additional photos on page 2)

WCFS Membership and Board Meeting

Western Cascade Fruit Society Spring Board Meeting convened at Cedar Valley Grange, Lynnwood, WA. April 5, 2014 at 10:00 am. Thirteen Board Members attended and all Chapters were represented.

Following Chapter reports, the Treasurer's report was approved. Motions to authorize the Treasurer to distribute funds budgeted for speaker's fees, meeting expenses, fruit research funding, and scion wood exchange were approved.

After some discussion, Article VI was revised and the language simplified to make the current arrangement with the Grant Committee legitimate under the Bylaws.

Article VI: The President shall appoint all committees subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. The President, by virtue of the office, shall be the Chairperson of any such committee, except for *ad hoc* committees in which instance the President shall appoint a Chairperson *and except for when the Board of Directors otherwise provides for the selection of the Chairperson.*

Bainbridge Island is a Potential New Chapter: Jean Williams, a member of the (Kitsap) Peninsula Fruit Club, introduced Darren Murphy, a member of the Chapter. The Kitsap peninsula represents a large amount of territory. The current chapter has about 100 members. Murphy reported that 7-8 members from Bainbridge Island attend the meetings. He proposed setting up a Bainbridge Island Chapter.

WCFS General Membership Meeting convened:

President Ron Westin presiding.

Elections Results: President, Ron Weston; Vice President, vacant; Secretary, Joyce Wheeler; Treasurer, Jerry Gehrke.

Directors (5): Elizabeth Vogt elected to term ending in 2015, and Bill Horn and Patti Gotz elected to terms ending in 2017.

WCFS BY LAW Revision of the Amendment of Article VI, on COMMITTEES was approved.

Meeting Adjourned.

An educational seminar and workshop series followed. The program featured Dr. Bob Norton presenting "Growing Cherries in Western Washington" and Dick and Marilyn Tilbury sharing their research on SWD, the spotted-wing drosophila. Bekie Jackson and the SCFS research team presented the results of their SWD trial conducted last summer.

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WCFS Teleconference Quarterly Meeting June 14, 10am

For INFO Chapters should contact
couture222@msn.com

Blossom Blast of Pears



Dead Blossoms



Dead Leaves
And
Blossoms



Fruit spur with blossoms lost



New Lures for SWD trapping Dick Tilbury, STFS

The latest Good Fruit Grower magazine (May 15, 2014) contains four interesting stories on spotted wing drosophila (SWD). I found the article on page 28, "A Better Fly Trap", to be fascinating. It describes research done at the Yakima USDA

lab to identify volatile chemicals most attractive to SWD. They used a tiny electrode mounted against the neural lobes on SWD antennae to record output. The most attractive chemicals were acetoin and methionol combined with pure ethanol and acetic acid.

Both Trece and Scentry are using these findings to develop new lures, Pherocon SWD Dual-Lure by Trece and V2 by Scentry. Great Lakes IPM will sell both lures which are expected to last about 30 days; pricing is approximately \$36 for a pack of 10 Trece lures. It is suggested that they be mounted in the top of a standard McPhail trap.

Perhaps this should call for further independent SWD bait testing for our maritime climate by Bekie Jackson and Snohomish County Fruit Society.

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Hildegard Hendrickson's Dedication

There has been no more news of Hildegard to date. We still do not know what happened to her. Hildegard Hendrickson's friends will want to know that there will be a dedication of a fruit tree in her honor (she was a member of the Seattle Tree Fruit Society) planted on the Seattle University Campus. She was a retired Professor of Finance from Seattle University. The Dedication will be on Sunday JUNE 8th. There will be a beautiful plaque inscribed with her name. The ceremony is at Union Green on the Seattle University campus at 1 p.m. on Sunday June 8th. It will be one year since her disappearance during a solo mushrooming trip that very weekend. She is still very much on our mind and in our hearts. Marian Maxwell, PSMS President

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WCFS NEW MEMBERS



NOFC

Rob & Carol Harbour/
Orazem

Tanda McMillin

Ginger & Nicole Meta/
Witham

TAHOMA

Jessie Adkins

Sue Wetherford

Nancy Percival

SCFS

Elizabeth Grossman

Paul Stappenbeck

Tina McAllister

David Hulten

Jessie Cook

Heidi Britton

Stephanie Wendell

PFC

Ralph & Panda Bennett

Bruce McCain

Barney Bernhard

David & Monica Buchholz

Richard & Gloria Griffith

Lisa Hatfield

Don Larson

Lisa Messenger

Chuck Muller

Eileen Maroney

Roy & Brady, Kelley

Neuman

Laurie Nieman

Brian Pruiett

Terry Roberts

Karen Brindle

OOS

Dick Norred

Laurel Moulton

Dave & Cindy Colthrop

The Winter 2014 BeeLine was produced by Editor Marilyn Couture, with input from membership. Please contribute your articles for our next Fall issue!

Issue Deadlines:

Winter December 15;

Spring February 15;

Summer May 15;

Fall August 30

Email your articles to: couture222@msn.com
Permission to copy from the Beeline is granted with attribution.

Summer Pruning, A Primer

From Washington State University Extension

<http://extension.wsu.edu/maritimefruit/Pages/FAW.aspx>

What is "summer pruning" and how does it work? Summer pruning is removing shoots or branches from a tree **when there are leaves or flowers on it**. Summer pruning should be **used with caution**, because the effect of removing parts of the tree is much stronger when the leaves are active than when they are dormant. There are several things to consider when summer pruning. First of all, the effects on next year's crop can be unpredictable. The tree relies on photosynthesis in existing foliage to grow at a constant rate. If too much foliage is removed, resources must be diverted from cell differentiation. Shoot growth may also be stunted. Because most fruit trees develop floral buds over a complete growing season, stunted growth may reduce bloom or fruit set in the following year.

When to use:

To control growth of young trees

To improve light quality in the fruiting zone

To thin heavy fruit loads

To remove water sprouts – large vigorous upright shoots in the center of the tree

Guidelines for summer pruning:Only summer prune **strong, vigorous trees**

Some trees, such as plums, send up many water shoots in the center of the tree. These can be removed by hand early in the season, before they harden up

Take out **no more than 10%** of total canopyKeep early summer pruning to a **minimum**. Pruning in mid June to mid August has a stronger effect on tree vigor than later pruning (September), and response is less predictablePruning to expose fruit to light 3- 4 weeks before harvest is the **most beneficial**, and has less impact on the tree's responseWhen pruning, **thin out, do not head** the shoots to be eliminated.**For more details try this video or article online:**<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NQz5qApNwug>**The Benefits of Summer Pruning Apples and Pears**<http://www.growveg.com/growblogpost.aspx?id=303>

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NAFEX ANNOUNCEMENT—JUST RECEIVED

From Joseph Postman, USDA Pear Repository

There is still time to register for the combined Home Orchard Society/North American Fruit Growers/California Rare Fruit Growers Annual Conference in Portland, before the late fee goes into effect on June 1. The meeting begins on Wednesday August 6 and runs through Saturday August 9. An additional speaker was just added to the lineup for the Wednesday, August 6 speaker session:

Food scientist Sue Queisser took an unexpected journey recently when she was abducted by quinces. Fortunately, she returned safely and has agreed to share some of her experiences and answer many of our burning quince questions such as - Can quince water really be used to coagulate blood? What was the real forbidden fruit of knowledge in the Garden of Eden? How does pectin work, and do you really need all that sugar when making jam? Why we should not hate Rose Knox, even though Quince futures plummeted after her husband invented gelatin?

About 100 people have registered for the conference so far, and registration will end when we hit 180. If you would like to join us, you can download the registration form and find more information here: <http://www.homeorchardsociety.org/events/hos-nafex-crfg-meeting-2014/>

Feel free to contact Joanie (pomonascion@gmail.com) with logistics question or Joseph (joseph.postman@ars.usda.gov) with presentation questions.

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Apple Breeding

<http://turkeysong.wordpress.com/tag/apple-breeding/>
Part 1 reasons home breeders have a decent chance of producing some good apples.

Part 2 covered pollinating flowers to make intentional crosses of two different parent apples.

Part 3 growing the seeds into seedlings, and options for growing those out until they fruit .

<http://turkeysong.wordpress.com/2013/04/11/>

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TRUE CONFESSION OF A FIGAHOLIC

Looking dazed and confused, I stumbled into the room and sat down in the recovery circle for the first time. I told the group I was hooked. It took a couple years before I could admit it and take this first step. There was no turning back now. I was "out."

I said "my name is FIGHEAD and I'm an addict"

In unison, they replied: HI FIGHEAD!!

They asked to hear my story. Well, here goes again:

I overdosed when UPS delivered a package with 15-different fig cultivars that I ordered from the National Clonal Germplasm Repository (NCGR) at University of California, Davis.

I fell off the wagon when learned that the NCGR Davis maintains over 6,600 accessions representing 15 genera and 175 species of fruit and nut crops. I perused the list for FIGS. The repository is dedicated to the conservation and management of genetic resources of Mediterranean fruit and nut crop species such as stone fruit, almond, walnut, pistachio, olive, pomegranate, persimmon, mulberry, kiwifruit, grape and FIG...YES!!! My eyes lit up like a pinball machine.

I want to share this information with members of the WCFS and encourage you to consider this FREE source of exotic and hard to find cultivars. Ordering all kinds of cuttings is easy to do. Basically, you search for the accessions you want then check for availability. If available, click "request this germplasm" and use this tool to continue filling out your request form. Or, you can simply fill out the request form.

Once you've made your selections, send your order in. They make it so-o-o easy!

Presently I am conducting research on fig varieties that fall under the category of San Pedro. These have the potential of producing a good breba crop in our cool Pacific NW. Figs that thrive in places like Greece, Indonesia or Florida are unproductive here and not worth growing outside of a green house. Thus, out of over 200+ fig choices, the repository sent 15 of the 18 varieties I requested. I am hoping that Dauphine (from France), Orphan (China), or a variety with a weird name like Monstrueuse can be as productive as a Desert King.

I opened up a UPS Account to pay for the shipping cost. Failure to do this would not have hurt my chances of getting the cuttings. If you're still reading this, consider yourself hooked!! So go to the Germplasm Resources Information Network (<http://www.ars-grin.gov>) to get started. For more information about ordering proceed to: www.ars-grin.gov/day. You can call the staff @ (530)752-6504.

-Chuck Polance, Tahoma Chapter

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Fig Varieties, Chuck Polance, Tahoma Chapter

It is Good Fruit Grower magazine subscription sign-up time. The deadline is 15 May.

As WCFS members we get a substantial annual group rate reduction. Our individual subscription cost is unchanged for the coming year of \$20. This is a Washington State Fruit Commission magazine that recently contained cutting edge information such as the newest apple being readied for grocery stores and the latest investigation as to the possible cause of the decline of the honey bees. Magazines arrive monthly and some months arrive semi-monthly.

Questions? Email to jerrygehrke60@gmail.com or 206 567 5907

Make \$20 check payable to WCFS and mail to:
WCFS Treasurer
PO Box 2242
Vashon, WA 98070

Also include:

Your mailing name and mailing address.

Your phone number and email address please.

Your deadline is 15 May for me to receive your check and contact information.

Thanks.

Jerry Gehrke

WCFS Treasurer/Membership

Fertilizing Your Garden—Vegetables, Fruits, and Ornamentals

John Hart and Ray McNeilan, Oregon State University
Pub EC1503, Reprint 2000

Plants need an adequate level of nutrients to thrive.

Factors involved in plant growth:

Soil In many cases, garden soil suffers from a variety of problems. For example:

- Topsoil often is removed or covered with fill material during construction. Although a 2- to 4-inch layer of topsoil may be placed over fill, this shallow layer may not support vigorous plant growth without improvement.
- Heavy construction equipment may compact soil, thus slowing root growth and water movement.
- Construction wastes may be buried near the house. These hidden wastes can lead to sudden death of plants.
- Many soils are naturally “heavy” due to high clay content. You can’t solve these kinds of problems simply by adding fertilizer. In all of these cases, you need to improve the structure of your soil. The most effective way to improve soil structure is by adding organic matter, such as composted plant material or manure. These materials increase soil workability at the same time they provide nutrients. Since organic matter is “used up” over time, you’ll need to add it on a regular basis.

Nutrients

Three key nutrients for plant growth are nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K). These nutrients are contained in most commercial fertilizer mixes. Other materials you may need to add are lime, sulfur, magnesium, and boron.

How big is your garden?

To know how much fertilizer to apply, you need to know how big your garden is. To find the square footage of your garden, multiply the width times the length. For example, if your garden is 30 feet long and 10 feet wide, it totals 300 square feet (30 x 10).

The tables in this publication recommend quantities of fertilizer material to apply per 100 square feet. For a 300-square foot garden, you need three times as much fertilizer as you need for a 100-square foot garden.

Nitrogen is important for healthy plant growth. It usually needs to be applied each year because rain and irrigation remove most of the nitrogen not used by plants. Phosphorus is essential for vigorous growth of seedlings, especially in cool, wet, spring weather. Potassium is important for disease resistance and starch formation. Plants use the most nitrogen during or just before the time of rapid growth. For most plants, this is the best time to add nitrogen.

If you apply nitrogen fertilizers late in the growing season, most plants can’t efficiently utilize the nitrogen, and the excess is likely to remain in the soil after the growing season.

pH

Soil pH is a measure of how acidic or alkaline a soil is. A soil with low pH (below 7.0) is acidic, while a soil with high pH (above 7.0) is alkaline (basic). Vegetable gardens produce well in a soil pH of 6.0–7.0, and lawns do well in a pH of 6.0. “Acid-loving” plants such as azaleas, blueberries, and rhododendrons require a soil pH below 6.0 and preferably 4.5 to 5.5. If soil pH is too low, add lime to make the soil less acidic. Use 5 to 10 lb lime per 100 square feet if mixing into the soil before planting. For established lawns or plants, add 5 lb per 100 square feet. Retest soil pH 3 to 6 months later to see whether you’ve achieved the target pH. You can use various methods to acidify the soil if pH is too high. Gardeners in western Oregon and Washington typically need to acidify their soil only if they are growing acid loving plants.

Types of fertilizer

Opinions vary concerning the merits of manures or other organic fertilizers versus “chemical” fertilizers. Excellent gardens may be grown using either method. Plants do not differentiate between nutrients from organic and chemical fertilizers; the form absorbed by plant roots from both sources is identical. Plants can use chemical fertilizers as soon as they are applied. Soil bacteria and fungi must act on most organic nutrient sources to change them into a usable form. Thus, if you use mostly organic fertilizers, you may need to add a small amount of a source of more readily available nitrogen early in the season to ensure adequate plant nutrition until the organic sources become available to plants. Options include liquid fish, blood meal, and chemical fertilizer.

Packaged mixes

Both chemical and organic fertilizers are available as packaged mixes containing N, P, K, and sometimes sulfur (S). Package labels tell how much of each nutrient the fertilizer contains. The nutrients always are listed in this order on the label: nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium. Thus, a fertilizer labeled 5-15-10 contains 5 percent nitrogen, 15 percent phosphorus (in the form of phosphate), and 10 percent potassium (in the form of potash). In other words, every 10 pounds of this fertilizer material contains 0.5 pound nitrogen, 1.5 pounds phosphorus, and 1 pound potassium (10 lb material x 0.05 N = 0.5 lb N). If a fourth number is listed, it represents sulfur. Thus, a 5-15-10-10 fertilizer also contains a 10-percent concentration of sulfur (in the form of sulfate). The remaining components of the fertilizer material include carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and coating materials.

Unblended organic sources

Wood ash is a good source of potassium. You can use ash as a fertilizer and liming material on vegetable gardens, flower beds, lawns, and most shrubs. It’s particularly useful on acid soils low in potassium.



(6 cont. Fertilizing) Apply ashes evenly, and if possible mix them into the soil. Never leave ashes on the surface in lumps or piles. If ashes are concentrated in one place, excessive salt leaches into the soil, creating a harmful environment for plants. Spreading wood ashes in a thin layer over your lawn is a safer application than to use them in your garden, where they are more likely to be concentrated in the soil. Be aware of several precautions if you use wood ashes:

- Don't apply wood ashes to acid-loving plants such as blueberries, rhododendrons, and azaleas.
- You may have problems with potato scab, a fungus disease, if you use ashes where you grow potatoes.
- Don't add fertilizer containing nitrogen in the form of ammonium immediately after adding wood ash; the presence of ash can result in the loss of ammonia.
- Don't add fresh ashes to newly germinated seeds.
- Some types of ash are not safe to use on plants, including coal ashes, ashes from lead-painted or chemically treated wood, and ashes where trash has been burned.
- If the potassium soil test value is above 600 ppm, do not apply wood ashes for 5 years.

Grass clippings A 6- to 8-inch layer of grass clippings can be added to gardens as a fertilizer material. Grass clippings are a good source of potassium. Do not use fresh clippings from weedy lawns, bentgrass lawns, or turf with rhizomes. These sources may introduce weeds and unwanted grass.

Manure can modify the soil structure and water-holding capacity of a garden. In fact, these benefits often are greater than the nutrient benefit of manures. Manures are extremely variable in their nitrogen content. More than 50 percent of the nitrogen in manure can be lost during storage or after it is applied to the soil surface. Nitrogen loss is least when fresh manure is spread in the fall and worked into the soil immediately. Manures often contain weed seeds. Some of these weeds may be very difficult to control. In addition, manure that has been in contact with soil may contain symphylans, insects that can be very damaging to plant roots. Don't use fresh manure in vegetable gardens. The manure may contain disease-causing organisms that can make people sick when they eat the vegetables.

Blood meal applied at 1.5 to 2 pounds per 100 square feet is another good source of organic nitrogen.

Methods of applying fertilizer Regardless of the method you use, keep the following facts in mind:

- The nitrogen in chemical fertilizers is highly water-soluble and is carried to the roots by irrigation and rain. Thus, you don't need to mix these materials into the soil, but you do need to water your garden if rain doesn't fall within a day after you apply them.

Fertilization rates for fruit trees.*

Tree age (years)	Pounds of fertilizer to apply (per tree)**	
	Apples, pears, prunes	Cherries, peaches
1	0-1.25	0-5
2	2.5	5
3-5	2.5-3.25	5-7.5
6-7	3.5-5	7.5-10

* Based on 10%-nitrogen fertilizer. For 5%-nitrogen fertilizer, multiply times 2. For 20%-nitrogen fertilizer, divide by 2.

**1 pound of fertilizer usually equals about 2 cups.

- Organic sources of nitrogen are most accessible to plants if mixed into the top 2-3 inches of soil.
 - Phosphate moves slowly in the soil. You'll obtain best results by banding phosphate containing fertilizer 2 inches below the seed when you plant or by tilling it into the soil during spring preparation.
 - Work potassium fertilizers into the soil by banding or broadcast method. Do not allow potassium to contact roots.
- Broadcast** Scatter the material uniformly over the surface.
- Band** Place the fertilizer in a trench about 3 inches deep. The corner of a hoe works well to make the trench. Sow seeds 1 1/2 to 2 inches above and to the side of the fertilizer. The plant roots quickly absorb the nutrients and grow rapidly.
- Sidedress** Scatter the fertilizer material close to growing plants. Keep fertilizer granules off leaves to prevent burning. Nitrogen is very soluble and need not be mixed with the soil. A fertilizer blend containing nitrogen, phosphate, and potash should be lightly scratched in, but take care to avoid damaging roots. Irrigate so the plants can absorb the nutrients.

Fruit trees

To determine fruit trees' need for fertilizer, observe tree growth, as well as the size and color of leaves and fruit. Young trees should grow 18-30 inches each year. You also can have a laboratory do a leaf analysis to determine which nutrients are present in leaf tissue in adequate, deficient, or excessive amounts. To determine the need for lime or sulfur, perform a soil test. Nitrogen probably is the only nutrient needed in most home orchards. Apply according to the above Table in the spring around the time the trees finish blooming. Broadcast the fertilizer under the entire canopy of the tree. Be careful! One- and two-year-old trees can be injured if nitrogen is banded around the tree. Suspect a nutrient deficiency if poor tree performance cannot be explained by lack of pruning, poor pollination, disease, winter injury, deep cultivation, insects, physical injury, limited moisture, rodents, poor weather, or poor soil drainage.

(cont. on page 8)

(7 cont. Fertilizing)

Ornamental shrubs

In general, if your ornamental shrubs are growing well, there is no need to fertilize them. Azaleas, blueberries, and rhododendrons may require special care. These acid loving plants require a soil pH below 6.0 and preferably below 5.5. They grow best when soil pH is 4.5 to 4.8.

If your soil pH is above 5.0 Fertilize acid-loving shrubs with ammonium sulfate (21-0-0-24) to lower soil pH. For mature bushes, use 2/3 to 3/4 pound (about 1 1/3 to 1 1/2 cups) ammonium sulfate per bush. For younger plants, use one-third to one-half as much, depending on age. For lower analysis organic materials, increase the application rate proportionally. For example, if the organic material has an analysis of 7-3-2, use three times the amount listed above (4 cups per mature bush or 1 1/2 to 2 cups for younger plants).

If your soil pH is below 5.0 Use any of the fertilizer recommendations in Oregon State University Pub EC1503, Reprint 2000. For azaleas and rhododendrons, fertilize around the time the plants bloom. For blueberries, which are both shallow rooted and inefficient in using nitrogen fertilizer, it's best to split fertilization over two or three applications. Apply half before bud break in the spring and half about 6 weeks later. Or, if using three applications, apply one-third at each of the above times and the last application no later than July 1.

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See this very useful table listing normal values for soil nutrients: <http://soils.tfrec.wsu.edu/webnutritiongood/soilprops/soilnutrientvalues.htm>

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Puget Sound Resources

A free resource for backyard fruit growers in the Puget Sound region is the Seattle Tree Fruit Society's Facebook page. Check this out:

<https://www.facebook.com/SeattleTreeFruitSociety>

250 apple varieties on one tree.

Cloning machines.

Hour-long BBC documentary on how our modern apples came to be (YouTube).

Snails balanced on cherry stems, kissing.

Do-it-yourself cider press.

Clove-scented currant.

Local pollinators other than bees.

A quince blossom that looks like it stepped out of the game Candy Land.

-Mark Lee

* * * * *

Blueberry plants: What you Need to Know

Denise Ruttan, The Oregonian, April 4, 2014

Plant blueberries now for a great crop of sweet, healthful fruit in the future. Three categories of blueberry plants are best suited for our Northwest climates: Northern highbush varieties, rabbiteye varieties and half-high varieties, according to Bernadine Strik, berry specialist, OSU Extension Service.

Cold-hardy Northern highbush blueberries are some of the most commonly planted in the U.S. according to Strik. These 4 to 6-foot-tall plants grow well in any region in Western Oregon and Washington. Recommended are Spartan, Reka, Bluecrop, Jersey and Chandler.

If you want to try rabbiteye blueberries: Powderblue and Ochlockonee are best for flavor. Rabbiteye blueberry plants, which are too cold-sensitive to grow outside the Willamette Valley, need lots of space because they grow to 8 feet or taller. Their fruit ripens in late summer. Half-high blueberries are an option for limited space, because they grow only 1 1/2 to 3-feet tall. They are suited for cold regions and containers. Recommended are Polaris, Northsky and Northcountry varieties. Keep in mind that you must grow two rabbiteye blueberry varieties; they need to pollinate each other to get fruit. It's also a good idea to grow more than one highbush or half-high type for good cross-pollination. Any two varieties will do.

Blueberry plants prefer soils with a high level of organic matter and good drainage. They are adapted to acidic soils with a pH of 4.5 to 5.5. If the pH is not in a suitable range, then the plants cannot take up the nutrients they need to grow.

Always test your soil to determine its pH before planting. If the soil test shows pH above 5.7, you will need to acidify, or lower the soil pH. Do this by incorporating elemental sulfur into the soil. It takes at least six months for the sulfur to react with water in the soil and create acidification. If your soil pH is not in the right range for planting this spring, follow instructions for lowering soil pH and delay planting blueberries until early October. It's a good idea to add organic matter to the soil before planting. Gardeners should not incorporate composted yard debris or manure into the soil, as these materials have a high pH – typically 7 to 8. Instead, incorporate bark or sawdust to improve plant and root growth. One final tip: Prune off the flower buds or flowers at planting so that the plant does not produce any fruit in the planting year. Fruit buds are the “fat” buds at the tips of the shoots of the plant. “Research I’ve done shows that letting young plants produce fruit in the planting year, or the year after an October planting, reduces root and plant growth,” said Strik, a professor in OSU’s College of Ag Sciences. “Plants need to use all their energy to build the plant instead of to produce fruit in the first year.”

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Try These Currants, Gooseberries and Jostaberries for flavor recommended by Gil Scheiber of Skiple Organic Farm, Snohomish.

Black Currant: *R. nigrum*, come in tar-like intensity of flavor to rather mild and sweet. To date my favorites are 'Ben Lomond' for sweet and 'Black September' for a more intense flavor. 'Ben Sarek' is like 'Ben Lomond' but only half the vigor -a dwarf otherwise- growing only 3 to 4 feet instead of 5 to 6 feet. There are some 20 or so varieties generally floating around nurseries in the country. As a plantsman/grower and fruit connoisseur, I'm interested in growing, or at least tasting all of them.

Red Currant: *R. rubrum* also come in various berry sizes. My favorite is 'Rovada'-this is a large berry and a large cluster and seems to resist some of the leaf puckering that comes with aphids on 'Red Lake' and 'Cherry'.

Gooseberries: *R. hirtellum x uva-crispa*; I like big berries- the one named 'Colossal' is probably the largest but it's susceptible to mildew, like many gooseberries. 'Invicta' is another large grape-sized fruit that is very resistant to mildew and very thorny with good flavor and production. The dark colored gooseberries are quite flavorful where 'Black Velvet' is small, high yielding, resistant to mildew but very thorny and as dilution goes, it's flavor is one of the most intense of the gooseberries. 'Hinnonmaki Red' would be my second favorite good flavor and yields, bit sour skin but welcome for gooseberry pie.

Jostaberry: *R. x nidigrolaria (R. nigrum x R. divaricatum x R. uva-crispa)* is a complex cross of these three offering the best of all-flavor, hybrid vigor (it grows big-to 7 feet) good yield and resistance. It's quite tasty and thornless. I'm about to grow a gifted 'Orus 8' which is from the U.S.D.A. breeding program in Corvallis. It has a few thorns but the flavor is said to be better than 'Jostaberry'.

For the Ribes tribe, the smaller the berry, the more intense the flavor. I am very moderate with both water and nitrogen and prefer to 'stress' the plant sufficiently to maintain its growth but not to excess- this will tend to produce the best flavors.

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The apple developed by WSU under the name WA 38 has been officially named **Cosmic Crisp.**

Here's the story in Fruit Growers News:

<http://fruitgrowersnews.com/index.php/news/release/35852>

SCFS Plants Strawberry Buckets by Gail Dillaway

On April 11, the Snohomish County Fruit Society provided the opportunity for children at the Snohomish Boys and Girls Club to participate in a hands-on activity planting strawberry pails. Approximately 65 students were aided by 8 volunteers from the society in their successful planting of 9 strawberry plants in 5 gallon pails. Students worked in small groups or 1 on 1 with volunteers to complete their plantings. While helping the children, the SCFS volunteers educated students about the process of planting and caring for strawberry plants. Participants ranged in age from 6 to about 14 and all seemed to be excited and happy with their accomplishments. After planting, students took their pails home with instructions on the proper care for their strawberry plants. SCFS volunteers were able to introduce the next generation to the satisfaction of caring for growing plants.



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Sunday, Sept 28, 2014

A chance to visit Apple Heaven while still on earth! Growing over 350 apple varieties ORGANICALLY.

- 1) Apple Festival Website: saltspringmarket.com/apples/
- 2) Apple Festival PAST HIGHLIGHTS (NEW): www.saltspringapplefestival.org
- 3) Apple Festival Video Channel: youtube.com/user/SSIAppleFestival/videos

www.appleluscious.com

Harry Burton, Salt Spring Island, BC

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Seattle Tree Fruit Society

Tahoma Chapter

How did YOU shake-off the winter blues? The Tahoma Chapter found THEIR cure!!

The WCFS booth joined 60-vendors in the Garden Marketplace at the Spring Fair in Puyallup, April 10-14th. Look who else was soaking-up the sun: Ciscoe Morris and Marianne Binetti!!

They gave live broadcasts and added to the festivities.

But there's more! A stroll through auto alley, the Alaskan pig races and reptile show made for a memorable affair. HEY!! Can't overlook the beer and wine garden with tasty food offerings that warmed spirits at this annual celebration of spring. Now look ahead, folks!! How are you planning to close-out the summer? Well, here's an option:

WCFS members are invited to sign-up for a shift at our Society's booth during the 17-day run in September. Hope to see you at the Fair.

-Chuck Polance
Tahoma Chapter

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New Bainbridge Island Chapter of WCFS

On June 19th, the BIFC will hold its first meeting at the Grange Hall, 10340 Madison Ave NE, Bainbridge Island, with plans for subsequent meetings the third Thursday of each month. Agenda items for our first meeting include: WCFS History and Background, as well as Recent Activities, General Requirements for the New Club (e.g., Bylaws, Officers, Membership, Dues, and Special Discussion Item-Spotted Wing Drosophila (major new threat to soft fruit in the Puget Sound area).

If you have any questions, please feel free to email Darren Murphy

gardendadbi@gmail.com

Darren is a long-time resident of Bainbridge Island, active in Peninsula Fruit Club, the BI Farmers Market and BI 4-H.

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Greetings WCFS.

It was wonderful to see so many of you at the WCFS Annual Membership meeting in Cedar Valley Grange. STFS used this location again for our Spring Grafting Fair on April 12. We found the Grange to be a good fit for these events, given the kitchen, adequate parking, basement workroom and large meeting room.

At both events we were fortunate to have access to the "The Travelling Show" collection of scionwood and accompanying rootstocks thanks to Lori Brakken and Laure Jansen. This resource has become an integral part of our spring grafting show and is shared with other chapters of Western Cascade Fruit Society (WCFS) and groups such as Western Washington Fruit Research Foundation. Rootstocks are welcome from individual donors but most are purchased wholesale from Raintree in Morton a valuable friend and supporter of STFS in its mission to promote fruit growing west of the Cascades.

This year South Sound Fruit Society, Peninsula Fruit Club, Olympic Orchard Society, North Olympic Fruit Club and Snohomish County Fruit Club participated in the "Travelling Show". Each club had the opportunity to sell scionwood to their members for fundraising and was encouraged to contribute additional scionwood to the collection. After the final chapter visit this year the remaining stock was donated to a WSU project. We eagerly anticipate next year's 'Show'.

In addition to the grafting portion of the WCFS meeting we were treated to a presentation by Dr. Robert Norton about Growing Cherries in Western Washington. As much as we love cherries, most of us are intensely frustrated by the problems of growing them here. Dr. Norton covers the bases: climate, soil, rootstock, scion varieties, pollination, management, training, pruning and pests. There's not a better source of information anywhere. I am again inspired to ignore the failures of the past and give cherries another try. I'll keep the flier from this presentation handy.

Finally, at the last STFS meeting we were treated to a presentation by Jacqueline Cramer on "Food Forests". She discussed planning, designing and maintaining the Beacon Food Forest permaculture project in Seattle. We plan to devote more attention to projects such as this one because they involve sustainability, the key to making our contributions to urban agriculture permanent.

Paul Mallary

President: STFS

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Peninsula Fruit Club

The Spring Grafting Show had a nice turnout despite a huge downpour on that particular Saturday in March. Lots of trees are blooming with these new grafts now! Later in the month at our meeting, we had an Intro to Permaculture presentation which generated requests from members for speakers on building quality soil. In April, we had an unusual and interesting speaker on Carnivorous Plants, from Scott Vergara of Woodland Gardens. Very few of us had ever seen these amazing and beautiful plants before. To start out a series of talks on soil development, our May speaker, Laura Pfafman, a resident of the Olympic Peninsula, came down to talk about her knowledge and love of earthworms. A PFC member brought a big bucket of his worms to share with those who wanted to get started right away on their own earthworm farms. We also held our annual member plant sale that night, which is a particularly popular event for our group. Lots of dirt, plants, and bugs were happily exchanged. Our speaker for June will be Gayle Larson from Dancing Raven Designs, speaking on warm-weather fruits (melons, cucumbers and squash) in an edible landscape.

Darren Murphy, a PFC Director, is in the process of starting a chapter of WCFS on Bainbridge Island. He will be starting with a first meeting this summer with some equipment support from our chapter. PFC is in the process of figuring out how best to support this new club on the Island and what our official relationship will be. Until recently, Darren expressed interest in starting a new club, but now he's fully committed and ready to get going. Expect to hear more news soon as our Board meets to discuss this exciting development.

Denise Syrett, President

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Attention WCFS Members

Want to know instantly what's happening in the organization?

Subscribe to the WCFS Forum. It's a benefit of membership. The Forum is private and closed to the public. It keeps us together and on top of what's happening in our chapters.

Click on this link and follow the prompts:

<http://lists.ibiblio.org/mailman/listinfo/wcfs>

Judi Stewart, Forum Administrator

Chapter News WCFS

Olympic Orchard Society

Our April program on **Unusual / Fruiting plants & New Tools / Gardening plants**, by **Ji Douglas, Sunny Farms**, gave OOS Members an opportunity to view, learn about, and purchase assorted edibles including:

Columnar Apple trees.

Citrus - Improved Myer Lemon, Bearss Lime and Washington Navel Orange.

Bay tree and Eucalyptus.

Various Bamboo.

Fruiting Shrubs – Currants, Jostaberry, Gooseberry, Sea Berry, Aronia, Cranberry, Guava, Elderberry, Goumi, Honeyberry, Arctic and Black Raspberries, Hardy Kiwi, and Climbing Yams.

Note: the **Sea Berry** is prized throughout Europe and Asia for its nutritious fruit, medicinal value, attractive habit and tolerance to even the most inhospitable growing situations. It is an excellent source of vitamins A, E and especially C (7 times the vitamin C as lemons)!

In May Bob Cain, Clallam County Master Gardener, delivered a fine program on plant pathology that focused on problems and issues of Tree Fruit. He included a Diseases Diagnosis Summary that will aid in determining whether the problem is fungal, bacterial or viral. Bob delivered the good News that the spotted wing drosophila is not in Clallam County yet...but be on the lookout.. June 10 OOS will offer another fine Extension program that relates to Tree Fruit, gleaning program and composting. Marilyn Couture, Secretary.

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Snohomish County Fruit Society

Great talks, booth time, workshops, and community involvement – March, April and May was a good portion of all of these. Greg Giuliani gave our club an overview of the first five years of planting and caring for fruit trees, from rootstock to fruiting. Bekie Jackson presented a crash course on ten important fruit tree diseases for the Puget Sound. Dr. Carol Miles gave an excellent presentation on growing tomatoes, including a look at how to graft tomatoes.

SCFS held our first grafting workshop and potluck at the end of March. We had around 30 people attend, from beginners to experts. Lowell Tools was on site with a wide variety of pruning and grafting tools. Greg Giuliani and Bill Davis gave demonstrations on sharpening tools and grafting and then worked in small groups with members to allow them to get some hands-on experience putting together trees. Lori Brakken and Laure Janzen helped many a participant find just the right scion wood for their tree. Overall, more than 200 trees were grafted that day including 60 for the Snohomish County non-profit group, Farmer Frog (FarmerFrog.org), to plant in participating school gardens. A big thank you to Polestar Farms, Greg, Bill, Lori and Laure! All have given above and beyond with their knowledge, time, and resources to our club. Thank you!

At the beginning of March we had a booth at the WWFRF Winter Field Day where we sold notecards, posters, and SWD traps. The first weekend of April, SCFS participated in the WCFS Annual Members Meeting with a chapter booth, an SWD display, and a presentation on our 2013 SWD research. On April 11th, 8 volunteers helped children from the Snohomish Boys and Girls Club make about 65 five gallon strawberry buckets (see separate article). It was a great time with the kids who seemed fascinated with the dirt and a good opportunity to give back to the community and the Boys and Girls Club who let's us use their facility for our monthly meetings.

Coming up - Irrigation with Jeff Thompson in June and the Evergreen State Fair booth in August-September.
Beckie Jackson, President

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WCFS OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President	Ron Weston ronweston09@comcast.net
Vice President	Vacant
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Vashon Island	Carolina Nurik carolinanurik@comcast.net



Links

Here is a list of sites on the web that may be of interest to you.

Related Organizations

Backyard Fruit Growers

www.sas.upenn.edu/~dailey/byfg.html

California Rare Fruit Growers

www.crfg.org

East of England Apples and Orchards Project

www.applesandorchards.org.uk

Indiana Nut Growers Association

www.nutgrowers.org

Midwest Fruit Explorers

www.midfex.org

North American Fruit Explorers

www.nafex.org

Northern Nut Growers Association

www.northernnutgrowers.org

Oregon Sustainable Agriculture Land Trust

www.osalt.org

Western Cascade Fruit Society

www.wcfs.org

Western Washington Fruit Research Foundation

www.wwfirf.org

Home Orchard Society

www.homeorchardsociety.org/

Seattle Tree Fruit Society

www.seattletreefruitsociety.com/

Seattle Tree Fruit Society—Apple ID program

www.seattletreefruitsociety.com/appleid.php

Fruit Research

National Clonal Germplasm Repository

www.ars-grin.gov/cor

Tree Fruit Research and Extension Center, Washington State.

www.tfrec.wsu.edu

Northwest Berry and Grape Infonet.

berrygrape.oregonstate.edu

Pedigree: A Genetic Resource Inventory System

www.pgris.com

Oregon Department of Agriculture

www.oda.state.or.us

Government Sites

US Dept. of Agriculture

www.usda.gov

USDA Agricultural Research Service

www.ars.usda.gov

Helpful Sites

Orange Pippin

www.orangepippin.com

Kiyokawa Family Orchards

www.mthoodfruit.com

Red Pig Tools

www.redpigtools.com

Friends of Trees

www.friendsoftrees.org

Cornell Gardening Resources

www.gardening.cornell.edu

http://www.fruit.cornell.edu/tree_fruit/GPGeneral.html

The National Arbor Day Foundation

www.arborday.org

UBC Botanical Garden

www.ubcbotanicalgarden.org

The Reckless Gardener

www.recklessgardener.co.uk

Farm & Garden

www.farm-garden.com

SeeMeGarden.com

www.seemegarden.com

GardenGuides.com

www.gardenguides.com

VitiSearch: Helpful Resources about Grapes

www.vitisearch.com

Avant-Gardening: Creative Organic Gardening

www.avant-gardening.com

The Hardy Plant Society of Oregon

www.hardyplantsociety.org

Ask the Berry Man

www.asktheberryman.com

BackyardGardener.com

www.backyardgardener.com

Tom Brown's website

www.applesearch.org

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