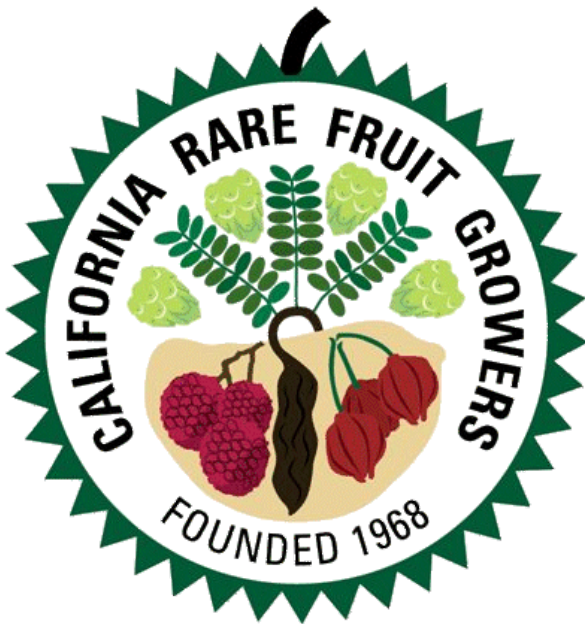


CALIFORNIA RARE FRUIT GROWERS

SAN DIEGO CHAPTER

OCTOBER 2004 NEWSLETTER



Upcoming meeting is October 28

Meeting Minutes from September 23:

Our meeting began with a hearty expression of gratitude to all those who helped make the plant sale a huge success. We must congratulate ourselves on our outstanding demonstration of club spirit. With the money raised from the sale, combined with some of our other funds, we can purchase a new projector and a new or refurbished portable computer. These new technologies will facilitate better and easier presentations. We voted to allot the sum of about \$1800 for the purchase of these excellent educational tools.

The evening's special guest was Terrell H. Salmon, County Extension Wildlife Specialist, who spoke on vertebrate pests of San Diego. The California ground squirrel has thrived among San Diego's wildlife species. This is because its predators, such as rattlesnakes, have diminished in developed areas. Plus, these squirrels have co-evolved with their predators, making them smart about the threats posed by other animals. For example, they have learned to predict their

predators' means of attack, and warn other squirrels about the impending danger.

Another interesting fact about these squirrels is that they literally have to chew on hard organic matter (e.g., our fruit trees) to keep their teeth from growing back into their skulls. I must confess that this knowledge makes it rather hard for me to blame them for the damage they do. However, an infestation can be a real problem for us fruit-growing fanatics, so I'll carry on with the discussion on how to expunge the little sap-sucking vampires (see figure 1).



Figure 1

Their home is underground, and it is their primary resource. If we kill the squirrels in their existing home, new ones will move into their home and take over. Therefore, their home needs to be destroyed. Because squirrels like dryness, flooding helps to remove the squirrels and damage their homes. Fumigation is a common method of destruction; however, the gases used can be very explosive and end up doing a heck of a lot more damage than the squirrels. Anti-coagulants, or blood-thinners, kill by internal bleeding. A significant danger lies in the family pet eating the bait or the rodents that have consumed the blood-thinning agent. One way to help prevent this tragedy is by setting up a bait station made of PVC pipe which is too small for Fido to get at. This method also helps preserve the potency of the poison, as it is made useless by water and sunlight.

While squirrels live in colonies, gophers are solitary animals that also live underground. They are particularly fond of tree roots, which they munch on from their tunnels. One may poison them by first probing for their tunnels and then by putting strychnine-laced bait into a funnel that drops down

into the tunnel. But this is a deadly poison, and one must again use extreme caution to avoid killing other animals.

Thanks for another great meeting everyone and see you October 28th.

Linnea Lamar

THE VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Well. It has been another exciting month. First, we purchased our system. Now, we have a projector that puts out a whopping 2300 lumens of brightness (about twice the brightness of the projector used by the speaker at our last meeting), and we have a new Dell laptop with a Pentium 4 processor and 512 megabytes of RAM. Your executive procurement team, Paul Fisher and I, decided on the new laptop because discussions with computer experts convinced us that we would not be acting responsibly to spend the club's hard earned funds on something as risky as a used laptop, as I originally planned to do. In addition, it was uncertain that an older laptop would do everything we need it to do -- run slide shows, play DVDs of past presentations, and so on.

Having decided what we were going to do, Paul and I were faced with the challenge of doing it for \$1800. Paul is a hard bargainer, and he has some leverage with Dell's small business division, having used it to outfit his regular business. He drove a terrific bargain! As it ended up, we paid \$2199 for the whole package including taxes, shipping and all necessary software. But Dell is sending us a \$95 rebate. They also gave us a new printer, a processor upgrade, a RAM upgrade, a hard shell case for the projector, and a padded case with fitted compartments for the laptop and projector, as well as compartments for documents and cables and other gear. In short, Dell gave us about \$700 in rebates, upgrades and merchandise. This is in addition to waiving shipping charges and some other things to get us down to \$2199 in the first place.

I know that still leaves us about 300 dollars over our authorized budget for the computer, a 17% cost over-run. That extra expenditure was a discretionary decision that the executive team made to advance the best interests of the organization. Not to spend it, would have only been "penny wise". We spent it to ensure that we would have adequate computing power to carry us for a couple of years, and to protect our new equipment with appropriate cases. We effectively spent 2100 dollars on a deal worth at least 2800 dollars.

And speaking of the best interests of the group, I have spoken to an excellent garden writer, Nan Sterman. She is interested in touring some of our spectacular gardens in order to write an article for *The Union Tribune*, Homescape section. She will be touring later this month or early next month. In the process, she got me interested in a project that she is doing: she is establishing a fruit garden at an elementary school. I'd like us to help. In fact, fruit projects with school kids are very worthwhile in general. This is the wish list for the fruit garden, prepared by Tom Spellman of Dave Wilson Nursery. The idea is to have fruit that ripens during the school year. Here is the list of fruits that are still needed: (You all might have some better ideas, though.)

6 Pomegranate: Eversweet, Sweet or Utah Sweet (we prefer pink or white over red for obvious reasons on the school grounds)

7 Citrus: Etrog, Orange: Cara Cara Navel, Lemon Variegated Pink Eureka aka Pink Lemonade; Lime Bearss seedless

5 Date Palm: Medjool

2: Olive: Swan Hill (fruitless)

12 Grape: Assortment of American hybrids such as Golden Muscat

12 Passiflora: Frederick aka "Bountiful Beauty"

I'm going to donate a few rare pomegranates for the project.

I also chatted with a garden writer up in LA a couple of weeks ago for an article on Pomegranates. She quoted me and mentioned our group in the article. I got a few calls, but not as big a bounce out of it as I had hoped.

On a completely unrelated topic, someone left a bag of fruit on my porch a few weeks ago. They looked kind of like smooth skinned green potatoes. After puzzling over it a bit, I figured out that they were Pawpaws that Nevin Kleege grew. That totally amazed me, not that Nevin grew them, but that they fruited at all in San Diego, much less in Nevin's coastal neighborhood. The taste was interesting, if not exactly great. But these are just seedling fruits. I am going to get a bunch of seeds of named varieties in the next few months, hopefully. Anyone interested can have a few to grow out. Perhaps we can develop a few more palatable low chill varieties.

Take care. See you at meeting on the 28th.

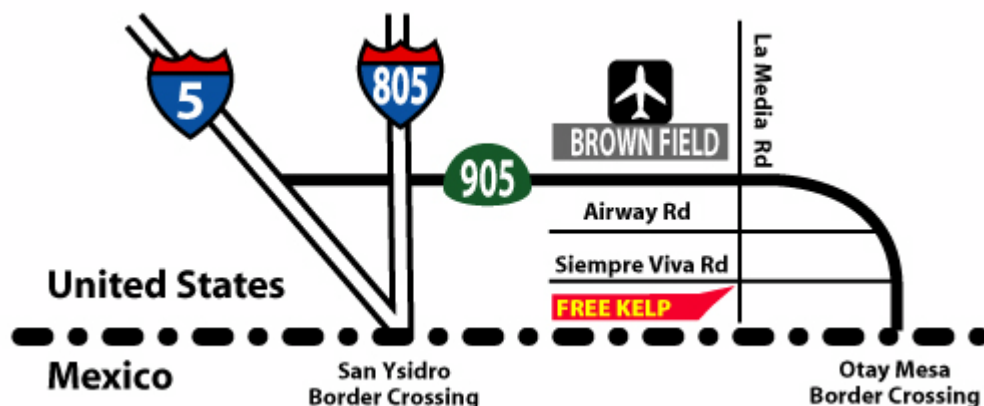
David Silverstein

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Announcements:

Free Kelp Fiber

Great stuff as thin top dressing (1/16th inch) or tilled in (1 inch layer) or potting mix (up to 10%). Due to extreme water holding capacity don't exceed recommended amounts. Corner of La Media Road and Siempre Viva Road in Otay Mesa, just west and north of the Otay Mesa border crossing (see map below). Hours: Monday-Friday, 8am to 4pm. Available through December 31 only. Haul as much as you want, or delivery available for nominal delivery charge (minimum order required). California Soil Solutions' <http://www.casoils.com/index.html> lease is up. All material must go. Go to southwest corner of La Media Road and Siempre Viva Roads. Turn right on Siempre Viva, go five feet and turn into our driveway. Drive to the center of the property for help. Call (866) 535-7672 for more info.



HUMIC AND PHOSPHORIC ACID PRODUCTS ARE HERE. I got Humax, Fulmag (like fulmax but with magnesium supplement), and Phosguard. They were cheaper than expected and they arrived very quickly. The outfit I dealt with was Hughes Horticulture Products up in Valley Center. Nice folks. We'll order from them again. Actual prices including shipping and sales tax are below. These are actually cheaper than my original estimate. Go figure. -- David

Humax Liquid -- \$ 12.00 /gal

Fulmag (Fulvate and Mg Liquid for foliar feeding) -- \$16.00/gal

Phosguard 0-28-25 -- \$24.00/gal

Don't forget to check our website at www.crfgsandiego.org.

NEXT Meeting:

WHERE: Casa del Prado Building Room 101, Balboa Park

WHEN: October 28 at 7 pm

MEETING TOPIC: Nut Trees -- Pecans, Macadamias, Almonds -- Ice Cream social -- Exotic Fruits

For membership, please mail your application form and check to

CRFG, San Diego Chapter

C/O Paul Fisher
1266 Vista Del Monte Dr.
El Cajon, CA 92020



San Diego Chapter 2004 Calendar
Year of the Berry

Month	Meeting Topic	Event(s) For the Month
October 28 Casa del Prado 101	Nut Trees -- Pecans, Macadamias, Almonds etc. Ice Cream social -- Exotic Fruits	
November 18 Casa del Prado 103	Winter Pruning	
December 16 Casa del Prado 101	Holiday Dinner, Elections and Gift Exchange	