



LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

July Meeting

July 2006
Volume IX Issue 4

Date: Saturday, July 22, 2006
Time: 10:00 A.M.
Place: Sepulveda Garden Center
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Program: Our speaker will be **Gisele Schoniger** with **Kellogg Garden Products Corporation**. She has a degree in Ornamental Horticulture. **Gisele** has been working in the Gardening industry for over 26 years. She commenced working for the Department of Agriculture in San Luis Obispo specializing in the Med Fly Project using biological means to prevent their spread instead of chemicals over 20years ago. Since then she has focused on using natural and safe products. Teaching organic gardening is her specialty.

****Note:** A brief meeting of the **LA Chapter Officers** will be held after refreshments**

August Meeting

Date: Saturday, August 26, 2006
Time: 10:00 A.M.
Place: **Don and Judy Weber's** home.
Don has about 7 varieties of avocados plus many other trees-lime, mandarin, Fuji apple etc.

Eat Your Yard And Invite the Neighbors



Lynn Maxson with Tony Kienitz at the May meeting

Speaking to a group of about 65 people, **Tony Kienitz** inspired the Los Angeles Chapter with his deep respect for all things organic. Through his humor and easygoing demeanor, **Tony** reminded our members how lucky we are to live in California. Why not have fruit trees in our front yard? Let's not limit it to a green lawn. And when it comes to sharing with our neighbors, what better way to introduce them to unknown fruits. Thank you, **Tony**, for a wonderful presentation



PAWPAW

By Alfredo Chiri

Asimina triloba, Annonaceae

Var. Hybrid' donated by: CRFG/ Thompson and planted in 1982 (r.f.-09)

Var. Sunflower' donated by: CRFG and planted in 1998 (r.f.-09)

Var. Wells' donated by: CRFG and planted in 1998 (r.f.-09)

Common names: **Indiana Banana, Hoosier Banana, and Poor Man's Banana**

The pawpaw is the largest tree fruit native to the United States. The pawpaw is a small deciduous tree that grows to 10-25 feet high and about 10-15 feet wide. Pawpaws grow wild in rich soils, where they grow as understory bushes in hardwood forests in Indiana and northern and eastern states.

The pawpaw trees often exist in clumps or thickets that grow from suckers or from seedlings developing from fruits that dropped to the ground. In sunny locations the trees assume a pyramidal form, losing their leaves during the fall season.

The flowers are 2 inches across, with dark purple petals. The outer petals are nearly round with spreading inner small sepals. The flowers are protogynous, self incompatible requiring cross-pollination, although some trees may be self compatible. The appearance of the flower with its dark, meat colored petal and the fetid aroma may attract flies and beetles to perform its pollination.

Fruits are yellowish at first, finally brown, 3-7 inches long, and 1-2 inches thick. The fruit is shaped like a short banana, having sweet flesh and large seeds. The fruit falls to the ground when ripe. They may be borne singly or in clusters, which resemble the "hands" of a banana plant. The pulp resembles egg custard in consistency and appearance. It has the same creamy feeling in the mouth and unites the taste of eggs, cream, sugar and spice. It is a natural custard. The shelf life of a tree ripened fruit, at room temperature, is 2 to 3 days, and refrigerated, the fruit can be held up to 3 weeks.

Within the fruit there are two rows of 10 to 15 large,

brown, bean shaped seeds that may be up to 1 inch long. The seeds contain alkaloids in their endosperm, and if chewed, induce vomiting. If swallowed whole, seeds may pass through the digestive tract intact.

The pawpaw plant can be propagated from seed and from chip budding vegetative propagation. Seeds should be removed from the fruit and cleaned, then placed in a plastic bag with some damp sphagnum, and should not be allowed to dry out. The seeds should be stored in the freezer for 60 to 100 days before planting. Seeds should be planted about 1 inch deep into tall pots accommodating the pawpaw's long taproot.

The "Hybrid" pawpaw's fruit weight is about 150 grams, having white to butter-colored pulp, and green skin and few seeds. It ripens in the late summer. The "Sunflower" pawpaw fruit is larger around 225 grams. It has butter-colored flesh, and the skin is yellowish. It has few seeds. It ripens in the late spring. The "Wells", the largest of the three fruits, grows to 350 grams. It has orange color flesh, and the skin is green. It has 10- 15 seeds and ripens in the middle of summer.

HAVE YOU HEARD THE NEWS?

Thanks to **Emory Walton**, our Chapter now has its own website. There you will find the latest: where our meetings will be held, our most current newsletter, upcoming events and much more. Check it out at <http://www.crfg-la.org>. and when you see **Emory**, be sure to let him know what you think. He did a magnificent job!! Aren't you proud of your Chapter; we are catching up with the latest technology!

DON'T MISS THIS

Be sure to reach the very informative article about irradiation in the latest *Fruit Gardner* (July/August 2006) magazine.

Isn't it great that we are all members of the mother organization-CRFG so that we can enjoy this wonderful magazine.

WHY GETTING DOWN AND DIRTY FEELS SO GOOD

(FRIDAY, May 5, 2006 (**HealthDay News**) -- You may not be able to tear your boss' hair out -- but you can snatch the weeds from your flowerbeds.

You may not have the desire to schlep to your gym's power-lift class -- but you can lug bags of soil and push your wheelbarrow around.

You may not be able to dictate what your office looks like, but you can have flowers and trees in your yard that directly reflect your personality.

And then there's the control -- all those little plant lives are in your hands.

With warmer weather here, more people are charging into their yards and gardens, or maybe thinking about it. And health experts couldn't be happier.

There are oodles of benefits -- both physical and mental -- that come from the range of activities associated with gardening.

The most obvious benefit is exercise, said **Dr. Julie Roth** of the Wellness Institute at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago. And anyone who has planted trees, created a flowerbed from bare lawn or hauled slate to design a walking path will tell you that dominating Mother Nature is hard work.

"It's going to give you a good way to burn calories that's an enjoyable activity for most people," Roth said, adding that studies show that working in your yard or garden can burn between 250 calories and 500 calories an hour, depending on your level of activity.

Diane Relf, a professor emerita with Virginia Tech's Department of Horticulture, said trimming shrubs or trees requires about the same amount of exertion as walking at a moderate pace. Raking the lawn takes as much energy as a leisurely bike ride or water aerobics. And mowing the lawn with a push mower or tilling a garden can equal the exertion you would expend swimming laps, she said.

"Gardening is moderate -- and sometimes strenuous -- exercise that incorporates many important elements of accepted exercise regimes, such as stretching and stance, repetition and movement," **Relf** said. "Some gardening even involves resistance principles similar to weight training."

And while some people just can't bring themselves to climb on a treadmill for an hour, it might help to know that when you "feel the burn" in your garden, you've actually produced something in the end -- besides a toned backside.

Beyond physical exertion, gardening also offers a level of serenity that can help a person's mental health, experts said.

"For a lot of people, it's a very soothing activity," **Roth** said. "You're out in nature, which is a very soothing location. You can turn on whatever music you want. It's a good way to break away from the daily rigor we all go through."

Relf said just spending time in your garden can provide health benefits.

She noted a study from Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City that found that women recovering from breast-cancer surgery discovered that walks in the garden helped restore their ability to concentrate and reduce their depression.

"After a hard, tense day at the office, a slow cruise around the yard will do wonders to restore your perspective," **Relf** said. "As you discover seedlings emerging, flower buds opening, even the damage of the tomato hornworm, you forget about the day's worries." And don't underestimate the stress relief that comes from spending time outdoors after driving your desk in an office all day.

There are several theories why time spent gardening is so soothing, **Relf** said.

It might be that plants provide a simple aesthetic joy, or that people are responding to ingrained psychological and physical cues borne of thousands of years of evolution. It also may be that caring for plants satisfies the human instinct to nurture and provide support, rewarding good gardeners with colorful and fragrant flowers or luscious, ripe fruits and vegetables.

Which leads to the last reason why gardening is such a health activity -- when it's all said and done, you benefit from a diet of fresh fruits and vegetables.

"It gives you direct access to healthy food," Roth said. "Whatever you put in there, one way or another, it's going to be good for you."

For more on the health benefits of gardening, visit the [University of Illinois](#). (Source: **Diane Relf**, Ph.D)

TASTING TABLE

If your last name begins with A-M please bring something to share for our tasting table. Also, it would be great if you could share either the name of the particular fruit you bring or the recipe of the special treat you prepare.

DID YOU KNOW?

Among the fruits native to the United States are: pawpaws (see article by **Alfredo Chiri**), concord grapes, cranberries, and blueberries.

Grapefruit has been cultivated since ancient times, but the early varieties were full of seeds. Our modern variety began around 1860 with the discovery that a single tree on a farm near Lakeland, Florida, had yielded nearly seedless fruit. In England, during Queen Victoria's time, no high-fashion dinner was a success unless a peach was served in a nest of snowy cotton.

Peaches at that time cost a guinea -- about five dollars -- each!

For centuries, blueberries have been used in some countries as a home remedy. A 1703 book about



Scotland described them as "awful guid," and reported that "fluxes are cured by taking now and then a spoonful of the syrup of blew berries." And in Russia, a preparation of dried blueberries is still said to be a home-prescribed cure for stomach troubles.



WALKING THE WALK

Dr. Ed Hager leading group
at the Conejo Valley Botanical Garden

A walking tour of the rare fruit orchard of the Conejo Valley Botanical Gardens was led by **Dr. Ed Hager** last month. Even the weather favored us on this beautiful June morning as about 35 of our members turned out for this field trip. We were delighted to see the largest collection of capulin cherries in the US and the many varieties of white sapotes (many members had a chance to take some of these fruits home).

It was great to see that the Selma cherimoya tree that was planted in honor of **Dr. Art Schroeder** is thriving. It was also an opportunity for members to learn about hand pollination of the passion fruit

After the tour we enjoyed a great potluck of sandwiches, salads and desserts as we socialized with one another. As always, **Christine Warren** did a fabulous job by providing the delicious sandwiches. Thanks also to all the members for the great cakes and salads provided. And of course, a big thanks to **Dr. Hager** for the wonderful tour.

HAVE YOU MADE YOUR RESERVATIONS?

It's that time of year again. The Central Coast Chapter will host the **2006 Festival of Fruit**, to be held in San Luis Obispo on the campus of California Polytechnic State University **September 8 and 9**, and with tours and special events in the surrounding community **September 5 to September 8**. You can find the reservation form on line at http://www.crfgcentral.org/2006_Festival/festival_2006_home.htm. You can also check out all the information about tours and speakers in our latest *Fruit Gardener* magazine.

GOT BLUEBERRIES?

This is a great and easy sauce. Serve over ice cream, cheesecake, or ...?

2 cups fresh blueberries

1 tablespoon cornstarch

¼ cup sugar

1 juice and zest of one lemon

1/8 tsp cinnamon

1/8 tsp cardamom

¼ cup Grand Marnier or orange juice

Place all but Grand Marnier in small pot and stir to blend. Cook for 4 minutes at which point will be thick. Add Grand Marnier, stir and cool

GREAT CHEAP PLANT SALE PLACE YOUR ORDERS NOW!

Our grafted plants are now available for only **\$8 and under** depending on size. We have many varieties of pears, asian pears, apples, plums, pluots, peaches, apricots, and nectarines. Get details and place your order today by calling **Dave Payton** at (818) 222-7556. Varieties are available on a first-come basis. Order for pickup at next meeting.