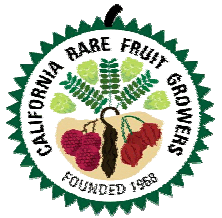


# YEAR OF THE OLIVE

## LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

January 2009

Volume XII Issue 1



<http://www.crfg-la.org>

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### January Meeting

**Date:** Saturday, January 24, 2009

**Time:** 10:00 A.M.

**Place:** Sepulveda Garden Center  
16633 Magnolia Blvd., Encino, CA 91316

**Program:** GRAFTING AND SCION EXCHANGE

**HELP OUR CHAPTER - BRING SCIONS (seeds, cuttings, etc.)**

We need your participation to bring back the glory days of the LA Chapter Scion Exchange!!! Everything helps!

As long as your trees are healthy, just bring moist, bagged, and labeled scions (both ends can be straight cut as long as the upside is obvious) as well as fresh large cuttings. We will let the people who select the scions and cuttings for personal use be responsible for sterilizing them. We're tired of seeing only the same familiar names on the same varieties. Those folks and those varieties are welcome and will be there too, but please bring more of YOURS. Also, keep in mind that many independent new plants grow from seeds and cuttings, so seeds and cuttings are welcome as well. Thank you so much. **It's your ongoing spirit and enthusiasm that makes ours such a dynamic and thriving chapter!** (See next page for more details)

### Nominations for 2009 LA Chapter Board

**It is that time of year again. All positions on the board are open. Please consider serving on the board or nominate some one who would be willing to serve. Board meetings take place only every two or three months immediately after our regular meetings and last no more than 1 1/2 hours. Interested persons may phone anyone of the present board members to discuss any position they may be interested in. You will find the phone numbers on the front page of our newsletter. We encourage you to nominate colleagues or nominate yourself. Members with many years of experience in our chapter as well as members, who are newer to our Chapter, are equally encouraged to make nominations**

### February Meeting

**Date:** Saturday, February 28, 2009

**Time:** 10 am

**Place:** Sepulveda Garden Center  
16633 Magnolia Blvd., Encino, CA 91316

**Program: UC Panel Discussion:** Back in October a general broadcast went out to the CRFG among other organizations by **Daniel Sumner** of UC Berkeley as part of an effort to obtain input on the future of agriculture in California. In response to this, the February Meeting will consist of a panel of speakers discussing this subject. Various speakers have been invited to participate. An announcement will be made at the January Meeting as to who will take part.

Those whose last name begin with A-M please bring something for our tasting table to the January Meeting

### Directions for Scion Exchange

- “ Wood should come from clean, disease-free and non-patented trees.
- “ Select straight wood from last year’s growth and cut as near to our scion wood exchange date as possible.
- “ Wood should be 1/4” – 3/8” diameter (pencil size) and contain several buds.
- “ Cut to lengths that fit easily into a ziplock-type bag. Cut on the end that would have been nearest the trunk (medial).
- “ Bundle by variety in a moist paper towel(s) and place in a ziplock-type bag, leaving a slight opening in the ziplock bag for the wood to breathe. Make sure that the towel(s) stay damp as long as the wood is stored.
- “ Label outside of bag with fruit type and variety, as well as any additional information you feel is pertinent (i.e. minimum chilling hours; needs pollinator; vigor; zip code where successfully grown, etc).
- “ Keep scion wood bag in vegetable bin of your refrigerator until the morning of the exchange. Be careful not to let the scion wood freeze!
- “ At the exchange, please wait to make your selections until directed by the chairman.
- “ Please limit your selections to two of any variety, until all the groups have had their opportunity. Then feel free to go back.

The fruit is round, and it can be green, yellow or red in color, depending on the species. The pulp is yellowish-white or reddish, moist, soft and sticky, aromatic, containing many seeds.

The Araçá plant can be found in the wild from the Guyanas to the northwest area of Brazil (Amazonia). It prefers dry areas and is not affected by the climate; it is resistant to frost. It is propagated by seeds or grafting. Fruiting in Brazil is from January to May and in the U.S.A. from June to October.

The fact is that the Araçás and guavas, in the wild, are very similar and belong to the same family of Myrtaceae, thus their misnomer of Brazilian guava.

The fruit of the Araçá, in general, is more acid than the guava; also, like the guava, the pulp is soft and full of seeds. However, many of the varieties of Araçás have very little pulp, making them of very low economic value.

There exist so many varieties of Araçás: araçá-branco, araçá-cinzento araçá-rosa, araçá-verde, araçá-amarelo; araçá-do-mato, araçá-da-praia, araçá-do-campo, araçá-de-festa; araçá-de-minas. Araçá-pernambuco, araçá-do-pará, etc.

Some of the varieties give fruits that are tasty and are desirable to eat when ripe. Other varieties of fruits are acidic, and their acidity makes them useful in the preparation of sweet-sour flavors, primarily in the making of the mermelada de araçá which is similar to the guava's marmalades.

In Brazil the fruit, plant, and leaves are used in folkloric medicinal preparations.

Among the Araçás the most desirable variety is the Araçá-boi (*Eugenia stipitata*) which is native to Perú and found in the State of Acre in Brazil. The Araçá-boi is a small tree reaching maximum height of 9 feet. The fruit color is yellow and their size varies. Some of Araçá-boi fruits are as large as the guava's (400 grams). The pulp is juicy and delicious in spite of being acid. The Araçá-boi also has been known to be called Brazilian guava.



### ARACA

by Alfredo Chiri

araçá - Myrtaceae

**Common Names:** Brazilian guava, araçá, araçazeiro, araçá-verdadeiro

The araçá tree is native to Brazil and can vary between 3 and 30 feet high. The bark is smooth with some scales; the top is scattered. The leaves are reddish when young, and the flowers are white with a greenish tint.

### Welcome new member

\*Alec & Diana Goldstein and returning member Paul Kao\*. We hope your membership brings you many hours of enjoyment. Be sure to introduce yourself at the next few meetings.



## LOOKING FOR....

Seeds wanted: **Alex Silber** would love to have seeds from anyone that has a great tasting star fruit. **Candace Rumenapp** is looking for seeds from the yellow passion fruit. If anyone can help it would be much appreciated.

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### Winter compote

#### Ingredients

1/2 cup applesauce

1 1/2 cups fresh cranberries

1/2 cup ruby port or other sweet red wine

1/2 cup apple cider

1/3 cup sugar

1 (1-inch) slice lemon rind strip

4 cups sliced peeled Golden delicious apple (about 1 1/4 pounds)

2 cups firm Anjou pears, cored and cut into 1/4-inch-thick wedges (about 3/4 pound)

Cooking spray

3 cups vanilla low-fat ice cream

#### Preparation

Preheat oven to 400°.

Spoon applesauce onto several layers of heavy-duty paper towels; spread to 1/2-inch thickness. Cover with additional paper towels; let stand 5 minutes. Scrape into a bowl using a rubber spatula.

Combine cranberries, wine, cider, sugar, and rind in a small saucepan; bring to a simmer over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat; stir in applesauce.

Combine the apple and pears in an 11- x 7-inch baking dish coated with cooking spray. Pour the cranberry mixture over the apple mixture. Cover and bake at 400° for 25 minutes. Uncover and bake an additional 10 minutes or until fruit is tender, basting occasionally with liquid from dish. Remove rind. Serve compote with ice cream. (Serves 6)

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### INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT OLIVES

Olives appear in one of the earliest cookbooks ever discovered, a 2000-year-old text by a Roman named Apicius.

Olives were so revered in Biblical times that it is said that Moses granted olive growers an exemption from military service. Traditionally, olive oil was the oil burned in Hanukkah lamps. The earliest Olympic flame was a burning olive branch.

Carvings of olives appear on pharaoh's tombs in the pyramids of Egypt.

Traditional Chinese Medicine uses olive soup as a sore throat recipe—the only occurrence of the olive in Chinese cuisine.

The conventional canned “Black Mission” olives are actually green olives that have been cured with lye, which changes the color to black. (This is not true of canned Black Mission olives at Whole Foods Market.)

Governments have begun to grant Controlled Designation of Origin to olives, just as with fine wines and cheeses. Thus, only the olives produced in Kalamata, Greece are permitted to carry that name.

For thousands of years the olive branch has been used as a sign of peace and goodwill. This may be partly due to the fact that in early cultivation of the olive, it took decades to bear fruit for harvest, and, therefore, it was believed that anyone who planted olive groves was expecting a long and peaceful life. The symbolism is also likely related to the Biblical story of Noah's Ark and the dove.

### There'll be a dip in the avocado supply

**Too-hot weather at the wrong time this year has caused a shortfall in the California crop. Prices are expected to creep up around late spring.**

By **Jerry Hirsch** (appeared in the *LA Times* on December 26, 2008)

Holy guacamole! An avocado shortage is looming next spring.

California farmers expect to harvest the smallest avocado crop since 1990 and possibly even as far back as 1980. Hot weather in June, at just the wrong point in the growing season, is responsible for the shortfall.

Luckily for football fans, there is still plenty of the green-fleshed fruit, the basic ingredient of guacamole, to last well beyond the bowl season, experts say. But by

Cinco de Mayo, shoppers could be paying more.

The crunch will come in late spring and early summer, when imports from Mexico and Chile are at their lowest production levels.

Prices shouldn't explode, but they'll creep into the higher range of what consumers expect, said Wayne Brydon, field service manager for the California Avocado Commission, based in Irvine.

"Retailers see avocados as a prime produce item that already has good margins, and they probably won't want to raise the price far up," he said, but "they have some room to maneuver."

Americans eat about 3 pounds of avocado per capita per year, with people in the West and Southwest eating more than average.

The shortage will be more pronounced in guacamole-crazy Texas and the eastern half of the nation because California growers will favor longtime customers in Pacific coastal states, Arizona and Nevada, Brydon said.

Yet even during that three-month period of May to July when California avocados are king, there still could be enough competition from beyond our borders to help regulate prices, said Avi Crane, owner of Prime Produce International, an avocado-packing house in Orange.

Avocados in Mexico are grown at different elevations and latitudes, making the fruit almost a year-round crop and giving farmers there a degree of flexibility over when they have fruit to sell, said Ben Faber, a UC Cooperative Extension avocado expert.

"Mexico is so huge that if they see good prices here, they will divert fruit up here to capture those higher prices. And that drives up prices in Mexico too, so it is very clever," Faber said.

Of course, that could irritate Mexican consumers by increasing the price and reducing the availability of avocados there.

Mexico, the world's largest grower of avocados, exported about one-third of its crop to the United States this year and is expected to send an additional 500 million pounds of the fruit north next year, Brydon said.

Chile, another large grower, is expected to ship about 180 million pounds to the U.S. next year, mostly after August. The Dominican Republic is a small but growing player in the U.S. avocado market.

Americans buy almost 1 billion pounds of avocados annually, and the demand is growing. "Twenty years ago, basically most avocados were eaten in California, Arizona and Texas. Now they eat them in Wisconsin," Faber said.

Crane said the local demand "is so strong that you could probably sell the entire California crop in just the five-county Southern California metropolitan area."

California growers are expected to produce about 210 million pounds of avocados in 2009. That's about a third less than this year's crop and only about half of what farmers had hoped for, Brydon said.

"The problem is that it was hot and dry at just the wrong time for avocados," Brydon said.

The state's avocado regions, which stretch from San Diego County to San Luis Obispo County, suffered five to seven consecutive days of 100-degree weather in June, which damaged the fruit that was just beginning to mature on the trees, he said.

This will be the third year in a row that Jim Finch, an avocado farmer near Ventura, has a small crop. "We lost our fruit in the '07 crop and our buds for the '08 crop to the freeze in January 2007, and now we have a very light 2009 crop," he said.

The smaller crop might push prices higher for farmers, but Finch is worried about what retailers might charge during the coming year.

"If people have to pay \$2 for an avocado in this type of economy, they might decide not to buy it," Finch said.

California is by far the largest producer of avocados in the U.S., supplying 85% to 90% of what is grown domestically. Florida also grows avocados. California is home to 6,000 growers, who produced 330 million pounds last year with a value of \$330 million.

The state is responsible for development of the premium Hass -- rhymes with "pass" -- variety of avocado.

Although archaeologists have found evidence that avocados were cultivated in Mexico as early as 500 BC, the coveted Hass is traced to a single tree growing in the La Habra backyard of Rudolph Hass in the 1920s. That tree is the genetic origin of every Hass avocado worldwide.

The tree succumbed to root rot in 2002. The Avocado Commission reports that its wood is in storage in a Ventura nursery awaiting a decision on a memorial to what has become known as the Hass Mother Tree.