



LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

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

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ONLINE EVENT (Computer/phone in to join)

Presentation: Dr Trent Blare - Finger Limes

Date: Saturday, September 24, 10:00 am

Location: Online (Zoom link to be provided)

Topic: Are Finger Limes Just Another Fad?

We are excited to welcome Dr. Trent Blare who will discuss his work on tropical fruits & present his latest research on finger limes.

Dr. Trent Blare is an Assistant Professor in the Food and Resource Economics Department at the University of Florida based at the Tropical Research and Education Center (TREC) in south Florida. Prior to joining TREC in 2020, Dr. Blare was a Markets and Value Chain Specialist in the CGIAR international agricultural research system for six years with the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) in Lima, Peru and the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) in Texcoco, Mexico. Dr. Blare graduated with his Ph.D. in Food in Resource Economics from the University of Florida in 2014.

FIELD TRIP - NOTE THE SPECIAL DATE!!! This is NOT a Saturday event, but a Sunday event.

Date: Sunday, October 23, 10:00 am

Location: Thousand Oaks, CA

Garden Tour: Shulman Dragon Fruit Garden

We have been invited to tour the Alik Shulman Dragon Fruit Orchard, where we will be introduced to dragon fruit growing and varieties, learn the benefits of eating the fruit and some options for planting. No potluck this time. We will be treated to homemade Dragonnade (dragon fruit lemonade), enjoy specially prepared kosher food, and have the fantastic opportunity to purchase dragon fruit plants and fruit.

Alik was first introduced to gardening in the winter of 1978 in Kiev, Ukraine. One of his 5th grade classmates showed him the beauty of a cactus flower. Alik was so excited to see the pretty flower during such cold weather that he purchased his own seeds and was thrilled when he successfully sprouted them. He is thankful to Chabad of Thousand Oaks for sharing their property to establish the Shulman Orchard. He is happy to share his knowledge and experience. Let's enjoy some dragon fruit together!

Save the date!

CALENDAR FOR LA CHAPTER 2022

November 19 To be announced

December 10 Holiday Party

LOOKING BACK

By Deborah Oisboid, Editor

July 23 – Conejo Valley Botanic Garden, Thousand Oaks

Our field trip to Conejo Valley Botanic Garden was very low key. We met the docents, headed by Director Giuseppe Scarpine, in the parking lot, and they brought us to the gate of the gardens where we had a group photo taken. Then inward, onward, and upward to their Rare Fruit Grove.



To get there, we passed some of their 15 botanical garden groupings, including the Native Meadow and Matilija Poppy Slope, the Salvia Garden and Lillian's Meadow, The Oak Grove and the Mediterranean Garden.

We did not go beyond the hilltop, so we didn't get to explore their Butterfly Garden, Herb Garden, Australian Garden, Desert Garden, Bird Habitat, South African Garden, the Trail of Trees, nor the popular Kid's Adventure Garden.

The Rare Fruit Grove has a collection of around 30 – 40 rare fruit varieties, including white sapotes, persimmons, mulberries, St. John's Bread (aka Carob), quince, apricot, jujube, dragonfruit, passionfruit, Capulin and Surinam cherries, cherimoya, and apples. The passionfruit vines, and quince and sapote trees were loaded with fruit, and there were a few fruits remaining on the Surinam and Capulin cherry trees, but the carobs and apples had been mostly stripped bare by the local squirrels.



The Director, Giuseppe, introduced us to several of the tree varieties and then invited questions. With four CVBG docents and about 30 CRFG members, the questions and answers were somewhat scattered, but hopefully everyone got the information they were looking for!

Dr Ed Hager, who helped establish the Botanic Garden and was a long-time



CRFG-LA member himself, was a firm believer in not trimming any trees, but letting them grow naturally. This resulted in some trees being somewhat heavy on one side or another.

One docent told how the Suebell variety of sapote trees are susceptible to a form of canker but can still produce fruit, which we saw in abundance!

Another docent suggested you can aid pollination of cherimoya trees by tossing down vegetables and rotting matter nearby and let the flies pollinate the flowers for you. (This was an opinion and not confirmed. If anyone has done this successfully, please write to editor@crfg-la.org so the rest of us can be sure!!)

I also learned that St. John's bread is often considered a protein supplement for hikers. When the pods are brown, they are delicious.

The Garden's collection of Capulin cherries used to be the largest in the United States.

The Garden is completely supported by donations and invites volunteers to help care for their collections on weekends. Giuseppe said these weekend work efforts concentrate on "listening to the plants" – finding out what is struggling and what can be done to help. This can include weeding, pest removal, and bagging fruit to



minimize squirrel theft.

After our tour, our former LA Chapter chairman Bill Brandt invited members back to his garden for a pop-up mini-tour. This delightful surprise visit allowed us to learn more about his impressive collection, including a citrus tree (tangerine?) which grew fruit the size of a small, flattened grapefruit, and his famous lychee trees.

The time at Bill's was truly sweet and enjoyable. Bill started with the lychees in his front yard. One had lots of impressive, lovely fruit on it. The fruits were varied

in ripeness and colors. The second tree had already been severely pruned, and likely had been REALLY large.

In the back were several trees planted neatly, without crowding, around a swimming pool which occupied the center of the yard. There were citrus and grapevines and an apple grafted with several different varieties. One of the apples - a novelty variety - was blackish-purple in color. Bill kindly offered samples. (Sadly, it did not have a very good flavor.) He also gave samples of the enormous tangerine—it was good!

Bill's yard contains several avocado trees, the biggest of which was completely loaded with hundreds of fruit! Bill sent everyone home with an avocado.



The visit to Bill's really was special, and it made the day very much more than it would have been without that kind invitation!

We also thank our patient and informative guides at the Conejo Garden. What a wonderful day!

<http://www.crfq-la.org/piwigo/index.php?/category/66>

August 20 - Kevin Kratzer's garden tour

Our August field trip to the garden of Kevin Kratzer was new and exciting - and just like old times! He met us at the front gate of his nearly 2/3-acre property and handed out a list of all his fruit trees - well over 100! He even had them sorted by garden zone: Front West, Front East, and Backyard.

He commented on some of his favorite tree sources, such as Kuffle Creek and Four Winds Nursery. (See following article for more details.) This whetted everyone's appetite to see the trees!

Because it was a warm day, the tour started in the hottest part of the garden. The coolest spot is between two enormous pine trees (Black Pine and Star Pine). It was about 5 - 10 degrees cooler there than in any other shade of the yard. Delightful!

There is a wheelbarrow under these two trees which squirrels often bury stuff in. It's full of volunteers: fig, loquat, and ash trees.

His trees were beautifully planted, with a thick ring of wood chips/mulch around each trunk base, surrounded by a ring of rocks at the circle's edge. He gets the chips from the local park (Northridge Community Park, behind the Devonshire police station - enter from the parking lot. Gardeners leave their chips in a big pile for free and easy pickup.)



The West Garden was in full sun by 10 am and yes, it was warm. But we got to see a lovely collection of stone fruits, apples, citrus, loquats, and one or two avocados. Most of the trees were less than 5 years in the ground.

When Kevin finds a tree variety he likes, he will buy multiples of it. His favorite citrus is the Yosemite Gold tangerine. It looks like a small pumpkin, very large but kind of flat, easy to peel, with no seeds. Shasta Gold tangerine is number 2. Seedless Satsumas are great, but they have a very short harvest: they're only good for 4 weeks before getting soft. But when they're ripe, they're awesome!

The best tasting fruit he's ever had was Dapple Dandy pluot. If you can only grow one plum, Kevin suggests Burgundy Plum. It is very sweet and a good pollinator. Santa Rosa is a good pollinator, too. By the way, Santa Rosa is very vigorous, and its grafts tend to take over a tree. We saw a perfect example of that on a multi-graft tree.



Kevin is very conscientious about each tree's environment. He moves his trees around if they don't do well in one spot, hoping maybe they'll do well in another.

He almost pulled out his Tango Tangerine in the East Garden several times but finally decided to give it some time. It's a traditional Tangerine developed at UC Riverside and is finally starting to do well.

He advises avocados should be selected by their heat tolerance not by their cold tolerance. He buries a length of PVC pipe next to each avocado so he can support an



umbrella to shade them when the temperature gets up over 90 degrees.

Kevin pointed to some typical avocado growth pattern for summer: new growth at the tips, but dried-up, older leaves falling off underneath. He says that's what supposed to happen. Old growth falls off to make room for new growth.

He says his West yard is too hot for avocados. The hottest temperature he ever measured in that yard was 125° F. The coldest he's measured was 36° F. Kevin says days of 90 to 95° F are fine for avocados.

He likes the IV Organics (Charles Malki's) brand of "anti-sunburn" paint, and thinks it has a nice aesthetic. To him, white latex paint looks like an emergency ward. However, he encourages the use of either one to protect trees. (Water-based paints should be mixed either 1:1 or 2:1 ratio of water to paint before applying it to tree trunks and branches.)

The East Garden also had stone fruit and loquats, but also some lemons, apples, blueberries, and cherries. (Two cherries in one hole, as recommended by Dave Wilson Nursery.) A wall of *Cereus* cacti lines the front fence and provide delicious fruit in summer. They cacti were planted about 20 years ago and are now 12-15 feet tall.

Kevin had stories for almost every tree and plant. His King David apple is very precocious and produces early. It is supposed to taste good, but it's still a small tree and squirrels have broken all the branches, so it's never produced edible fruit yet.

He has an Asian pear, perhaps 30 years old, which was in the yard when they moved in (2001). It produces late season fruit. As the pears grow, they get rougher - which is the opposite of the 20th Century Asian pear (planted in his backyard).

A Dwarf Little Cado has been in the ground for 5 years but never produced. It has the smallest footprint of any avocado you can buy, but what good is it if it doesn't produce?

His blueberries are potted. Blueberries like a particular acidity, if you don't have the right pH level, you're not going to get the best fruit. Blackberries are sensitive to soil acidity, also.

Along the driveway are Cypress trees, and a nut-bearing hickory tree. Overgrowing all these trees are vines of



orange passionfruit and Frederick passionfruit. Every time he gets a gardener to trim the trees, they trim it wrong - they cut way too high, and he has too much shade instead of the sunlight needed for the fruit trees.

We moved into the backyard next. There is a clump of ice cream banana trees, which Kevin says he bought "in ignorance." He thought all banana trees were the same and was not thrilled that ice cream bananas were very, very tiny.

There is a lovely Cherry of the Rio Grande, obtained during one of the last CRFG in-person meetings before the pandemic. It has not yet produced fruit, and Kevin wondered if it's true that they take 6 years before they become productive.

Right next to the cherry is a Keitt mango which is loaded with fruit. He moved the mango from a very sunny place to its current location. But the banana tree is now taking over and the mango now gets too much shade!



Adjacent to the Keitt is a Mallika mango which has never managed to hold fruit to full ripeness. It just falls off. The tree is very healthy, but it doesn't hold the fruit.

He has a Eureka lemon, and a lime tree and a Pixie tangerine near each other. He really likes the Pixie, but has not been able to get a second one yet. Someone suggested air layering, as Pixies air layer very well.

Kevin is trying to encourage honeybees with an herb garden and with lots of lavender. He noted that he

doesn't have the huge swarms of bees that he used to in past years. It's very disappointing and discouraging.

The herb garden also contains a row of avocados. It's on the east side of the garden. Afternoon sun is a problem, so each tree has an umbrella for protection.

Everything is watered by hand. He rarely uses the sprinkler system. He recently went on a week-long vacation, and programmed his sprinklers: 2 minutes, once a day, 4 days in a row. It was too much for at least one avocado, which is now dying from over watering. It's still too wet now, even a week later, although he hasn't watered the area at all.

Kevin warns not to plant avocado trees in a basin like citrus. They prefer to keep their "feet" dry. Also, watering early in the morning is better for them. He also cautions not to plant avocados at this time of year, or you'll kill them. Have your moisture meter available



when you water your avocado, because it doesn't want to be waterlogged. Only water when it's dry.

There is a bent and graceful black pine tree in the center of the yard, which Kevin referred to as his "bonsai" because of its curved limbs.

There are several tangerine trees up

against the back wall, which have been there about 7 or 8 years. There are Kishu, Gold Nugget, and Page mandarins, Cara Cara orange (his kids' favorite), and an old Valencia from when he first moved in, which must be 35 or 40 years old. He uses it for juice all the time.

Avocado row number two is on the west side of the backyard. There's a seedling, a couple of years old, which is already outgrowing everything else, probably because it was never in a pot, which can stunt root growth.

A small guest house is surrounded by nearby lemon guava, Oro Blanco grapefruit, and Improved Meyer lemon trees. A bowl of lemon guava fruit can fill his whole house with their pungent, tropical smell - yummy!

So many wonderful trees! And a potluck snack lunch as well. Bernadette brought a delicious mix of lemonade,

rose hip and vanilla essences which had a tasty aroma and flavor. Bill brought a delicious baked-pear-and-cinnamon dish, almost like a pie filling without the crust. Christine brought a superb passionfruit and cottage cheese cake/ring which everyone raved about.

Two very sweet but energetic doggies, Nala and Jack, entertained us by enthusiastically chasing tennis balls into the pool, and being very polite about shaking off where people were NOT seated. (Most of the time!)



We thank Kevin very much for his delightful hospitality and for sharing his expertise in growing fruit trees successfully. To see photos of the tour check out <http://www.crfg-la.org/piwigo/index.php?category/67>

Links From Kevin

By Kevin Kratzer

Here is a link to the Kuffel Creek nursery that Bill Brandt mentioned at the tour. It is an EXCELLENT resource for gardeners interested in trying their hand at growing apples:

[Apple Nursery \(kuffelcreek.com\)](http://www.kuffelcreek.com)

Here is a link to an excellent resource for everything avocados by Greg Alder, who has presented to CRFG members in the O.C. and San Diego chapters:

[Posts - Greg Alder's Yard Posts: Southern California food gardening](#)

Here is a link to the Four Winds Growers website that is an excellent informational resource for specialty citrus and avocados that can also be purchased. (As I have done for my garden.)

www.fourwindsgrowers.com

Here is a link to the Clausen Nursery website in Vista that offers wholesale pricing and an additional discount to CRFG members. (Bring a CRFG issue with your name on it.) I have purchased multiple avocado and citrus (and a baby Cherimoya) trees from Clausen.

www.clausennursery.com

Saticoy Nursery at 18058 San Fernando Mission Blvd. Granada Hills, is where I have made multiple citrus, avocado and tree rose purchases. Walk the grounds and view the extensive inventory in excellent condition. Wholesale pricing to the public but please bring pictures of presidents. Ask for Fermin. <https://goo.gl/maps/9huq5v8xLfJBf8DZ8>

Finally, a link to an inspiring story from August 18th about a teacher, artist and home gardener who has remade his backyard in Boyle Heights into a wonderful family and community orchard with over 250 fruit trees. Links to the Dave Wilson Nursery, Kuffel Creek Nursery and the California Rare Fruit Growers are mentioned in the article as well.

[He turned his weed-filled yard into a low-water jungle of fruit trees - Los Angeles Times \(latimes.com\)](#)

(Editor's note: if you do not have an LA Times subscription and cannot read this article, please contact me at editor@crfg-la.org and I will send you a word document of the article/text.)

ALERT: Citrus Yellow Vein Clearing Disease

As if Citrus Greening Disease (Huanglongbing or HLB) isn't bad enough, there's a new color in town. Citrus Yellow Vein Clearing Disease has invaded Tulare. This is another strike against California citrus agriculture. Tulare is not far from where a lot of California citrus are grown. But it is also not far from research farms, so maybe there's hope? Please do not move citrus materials of any kind and continue to use good tool and trimming hygiene in your garden. (Destroy citrus trimmings, do not compost them.)

Thanks to Kathleen for sharing this information.

www.farmprogress.com/crop-disease/new-virus-found-residential-citrus

"The discovery of citrus yellow vein clearing disease was announced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) after California officials detected it in a routine multi-pest survey in non-commercial trees in the City of Tulare. The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) conducts regular inspections of residential trees in the wake of Huanglongbing (HLB) being discovered in the state, and detection of the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP), the known vector of HLB, in Tulare County several years ago.

"It is unknown how the new citrus disease was introduced into the United States, or how it found its way to California, according to the public affairs firm representing the California citrus industry and CDFA on the matter. What is suspected is the disease is vectored by insects, including the

citrus whitefly, green citrus aphid, melon or cotton aphid, and cowpea aphid. It is also suspected that it can spread by grafting infected material. The virus is not believed to be transmitted by seed.



Photo credit: <https://gd.eppo.int/taxon/CSYV00/photos>

ucanr.edu/blogs/blogcore/postdetail.cfm?postnum=53918

"Symptom expression is dependent on the citrus variety, viral strain, and environmental conditions, especially temperature. The leaves of young lemon and sour orange trees display a water-soaked appearance and yellow, clear veins on their front side, and wrinkled and warped leaves. Some symptoms of infected trees are more diverse, with irregular ringspots on leaves, and mosaic-like patterns on citrus fruits. Symptoms of lemon or sour orange trees infected with CYVCV are less pronounced in summer. CYVCV can also be asymptomatic on some citrus cultivars. Under severe conditions, virus-infected trees die-back and fruits are malformed, causing reduced quality."

"CYVCV can infect most citrus species, cultivars, and hybrids, particularly lemon and sour orange. CYVCV can be transmitted to some non-citrus hosts including herbaceous plants where it can cause chlorosis, mosaic like patterns of leaves, and general necrosis (Liu et al, 2020). Additionally, CYVCV has been detected in weed species, but the infected plants are mostly asymptomatic (Onelge et al., 2016). In 2020, CYVCV was reported to also infect grapevines (Afloukou and Onelge, 2020)."

https://www.cdffa.ca.gov/citrus/pests_diseases/cyvcv.html

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has confirmed positive identifications of Citrus yellow vein clearing virus (CYVCV) in the city of Tulare."

"For any questions about CYVCV, please call the CDFA Pest Hotline at 1-800-491-1899 or contact your [local Grower Liaison](#)."