



LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

2024 Volume XXIX Issue 1

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

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MEETING

Date: Saturday, January 27, 10:00 am
Location: Sepulveda Garden Center
16633 Magnolia Blvd. Encino 91406
Topic: Annual Scion Exchange

Our annual scion exchange and grafting demo will once again take place at Sepulveda Gardens. Bring plant materials to share (seeds, cuttings, scions, etc.) However, there are a lot of "don'ts" this year.

- PLEASE LABEL YOUR SCIONS CLEARLY for each variety.
- Please do NOT bring scions from patented trees. See page 5 for essential PATENT INFORMATION. (<https://southoccrfg.org/patented-plant-list>)
- Help prevent the spread of Citrus Greening Disease: NO CITRUS AT ALL, PLEASE, regardless of where you live. Also, Kaffir lime (*Citrus hystrix*), curry (*Murraya koenigii*), and bael (*Aegle marmelos*) leaves are considered hosts of possible carriers, so no cuttings of those plants. Seeds are ok.
- Observe all quarantine requirements!! PLEASE SEE page 4. And also please check the Cdfa website to verify current quarantine boundaries: www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/pe/InteriorExclusion/quarantine.html
- If you live in a quarantined area, please DO NOT bring ANY homegrown fruit or produce (unless it is cooked).
- Existing quarantines allow you to share cuttings but not fresh fruit. And they allow you to bring plants into the quarantine area, so you will still be able to participate in the Exchange.

To all members: please bring something to share for our snack table. Trading scions is hungry work, and we will all need to keep up our energy levels!

MEETING

Date: Saturday, February 24, 10:00 am
Location: Sepulveda Garden Center
16633 Magnolia, Encino CA 91406
Topic: Homemade Fruit Preservation, with Lydia Shabestari and Brad Golstein

CRFG-LA's very own Lydia Shabestari and Brad Golstein have been making homemade jams and preserves for many, many years. They do not claim to be experts but consider themselves pretty darn knowledgeable and experienced. They intend to demystify the process of fruit preservation and show us how easy it can be to preserve fruit at home. Come join us for a taste of good old fashioned and delicious food! Members are requested to bring something to share for the potluck table.

Save the date!

CALENDAR FOR LA CHAPTER 2024

March 23	Sylmar High/3rd Annual Tony Stewart Fruit Event
April 27	To be announced
May 25	To be announced
June 22	Sepulveda Gardens - Annual Plant Sale
July 27	To be announced
August 24	To be announced
September 28	To be announced
October 26	To be announced
November 23	To be announced
December 7	Holiday Party

LOOKING BACK

By Deborah Oisboid

November 18, Pawpaws

Pawpaw: the largest fruit native to the North American continent. On Saturday, November 18 we learned a LOT about the fruit, how to grow it, and its history as told to us by Don Winterstein of the OC CRFG and Charles Portney of the LA and the WLA CRFG.

Don is a regular writer for the CRFG bimonthly newsletter, Fruit Gardener, and lives in Orange County. A few years ago, he authored an article about pawpaws in FG. Charles subsequently wrote a follow-up article. So, if you missed both articles, you are now getting first, second, and third helpings of pawpaw information.

The name "pawpaw" originally came from the word "papaya." Some people still call it "papaya," so it can get confusing. Always make sure you know which fruit you're talking about!

Asimina Triloba, the American pawpaw, is the largest native fruit north of the Rio Grande. The Latin name is derived from the Native American term for this fruit. It has a lot of other nicknames as well (in addition to "papaya"). A few are "hipster banana," "Hoosier banana," "Quaker's delight," and "hillbilly mango."

In prehistoric times, mastodons and giant sloths enjoyed the fruit. Now bears and turkeys and squirrels (and humans!) love them.

Pawpaws grow naturally in about 26 states in the USA. They are most common in the Mideast and near the East Coast, although they can be found as far north as Canada. They are celebrated across the United States with festivals, songs, a National Pawpaw Day (yes, it exists!), and even towns named after them. They are the Ohio state fruit.

The trees grow up to 40 ft tall in nature, as an understory plant in hardwood forests. Wild pawpaws often grow in riverbeds, so you would think they want lots of water. But rivers dry out in

summer, so the trees are actually both cold- and drought-tolerant.

Pawpaw trees are quite prolific in the wild. To give you an idea of how many varieties could exist: there are 62 named varieties of pawpaw in the state of Kentucky alone! And not everybody registers their variety.

Pawpaw is a nutritious fruit. It is higher in fat than anything except avocados, and it can be frozen or dehydrated as well as eaten fresh. The flavor is tropical, with hints of banana and mango.

The fruit is a favorite of Native Americans. They also used the leaves to make cloth, and found many uses for the wood. In medicine, pawpaw leaves have a known laxative effect.

Thomas Jefferson liked them. Chilled pawpaw was George Washington's favorite dessert. Daniel Boone ate them when he travelled. Lewis and Clark were rescued by their Native American guide who knew about pawpaw - the fruit helped them survive as their supplies were running out. (And some of the men on the expedition may have had a bad reaction to the fruit.)

In fact, the leaves and seeds of all annonas in general are toxic if eaten too much, although Don doesn't think it's that extreme. The only case he knows about is from islanders who eat a lot of soursop, and make tea from the leaves. (Soursop is another annona, related to pawpaw.) Annona toxicity symptoms are similar to Parkinson's disease.

Pawpaws are rarely grown commercially. They have an extended harvest period, and labor is very intensive, so it would be an expensive fruit.

Charles has never seen them for sale in a commercial nursery on the west coast. He says if you find a place which sells Pawpaw trees, get them at once! They sell out quickly and go on backorder almost immediately. Some of his favorite sources include One Green World Nursery and Hidden Springs Nursery. He also advises keeping your eyes open when you go to the annual CRFG Fruit Festival, as some local members often bring some for sale.

The tap root is brittle, so it is best to purchase them in extra-tall taproot pots. Buy 1 to 2 ft tall saplings which are shipped in soil, if possible.

Charles has read that pawpaw trees want 400 chill hours, but he ignores that. And he successfully grows them in a coastal location with minimal frost.

The flowers have three petals, and sometimes grow little nubbins but not fruit. They have a slightly rotten odor because they are pollinated by flies, not bees. They can also be hand pollinated. This is the only fruit Charles is willing to hand pollinate.

When his flowers are open, Charles will hand-pollinate every few days by swiping a child's paintbrush in circles inside every single open flower. He pollinates either in the morning or in the late afternoon.

The ideal time to harvest the fruit is when they are slightly soft or when they begin to fall off the tree. Charles strips his tree when a wild animal bites into its first fruit, because otherwise he won't get any.

Unrefrigerated fruit can last one to three days. Refrigerated fruit can be kept for a little over one week. When they get too soft, you can make sorbet or freeze the pulp without skin. They can last a month or so in the freezer.

Pawpaw seeds need some stratification to sprout. Wrap them in a moist paper towel and place them in the refrigerator for 80 - 120 days before planting.

Just as blueberries grow better around other blueberries, pawpaws like growing near other annonas. They also prefer slightly acidic soil, around 6 to 6.5 pH.

Charles says you don't need to feed pawpaws fertilizer when they are first planted. In fact, Charles doesn't feed his trees at all. If you choose to fertilize, he recommends spring and summer feeds. Don't fertilize when the tree is heading into dormancy.

Charles strongly urges growers to use root barriers. Pawpaws sucker into thickets and can propagate themselves more than 15 feet away from the parent. He plants his trees three to five in a circle and advises digging out suckers in bad locations.

On the positive side, pawpaws rarely need pruning, except as needed to keep them shaped well.

Suckers are not likely to produce fruit and do not transplant well, but you can always graft onto them. According to Don, pawpaws are easy to graft. His success rate is about 75% using a cleft graft.

Don has a friend who brings back scions when he visits family in Missouri. Don says his friend is like the Johnny Appleseed of pawpaws. He has provided plenty of fruit materials to the Orange County chapter and now the entire chapter grows them.

Don grows Pennsylvania Golden Pawpaw. He waters very minimally, when he feels like it - once per month in summer, none in winter.

Question time!

If you buy pawpaw how long can you leave them in their pots? One to two years. Keep them in the shade until they're strong enough to be in full sun.

Can you graft pawpaws onto other annonas, such as cherimoya? No, not really.

Charles is not aware of any California import issues for this tree. It's not known for carrying problematic insects or pathogens.

As far as Charles and Don are aware, there's no real difference in wild pawpaw flavors from South Florida to North Canada.

After the dual presentation there was a plant sale and our potluck. There were some wonderful plants donated that day. (Although no pawpaws.)

Before the pawpaw presentations began, Charles Portney walked us through all the plants we had for sale that day, telling us a little about each one. He also donated a lot of planting pots (dozens of long-taproot pots as well as terra-cotta pots and saucers), watering wands, cork pads for indoor plants, and even a *Sukkah* kit. (A *Sukkah* is a temporary outdoor structure for a harvest holiday.)

The nice thing about unglazed terra-cotta pots is that they "breathe," which provides air to the roots, and they also wick water, which means you don't have to add water as often.

Lunch was delightful: lots of fresh persimmons, guavas, pomegranate seeds, and finger limes, homemade quiche, salads, and plenty of desserts. Thanks to everyone who donated plants and food and other materials. And special "thank yous" to Charles and Don for teaching us about an impressive All-American fruit!

December 12, Holiday Party

What a nice day for a party! About 30 people attended and participated in an exotic White Elephant gift exchange and the best Potluck table of the year! Gifts exchanged included homemade jams, a knife set, and even a small convection oven (which was used to cook a quiche served at the potluck).

Our fabulous food table including two kinds of soup (cabbage and papaya moringa), bluefin tuna with Dukkah, homemade apple pie, savory cranberry semolina tea bread, some fabulous Charles Portney sorbets (papa, plum, Asian persimmon), and so much more!

Awards of recognition were presented to Kevin Lieu and to Art Fitzsimmons (in absentia) for their wonderful support to our chapter.

Candace Rubinapp brought fresh Fuyu persimmon scions for anyone who wanted them for grafting.

Alasdair Burton invited us to a special lecture by Jorge Ochoa (fruit expert) sponsored by the Foothill CRFG chapter to be held on January 6th at 10:30 am at Long Beach City College.

We also had a brainstorming session to come up with new ideas for events and meeting subjects. Some ideas tossed around included how to dehydrate and preserve garden produce, have a day when people can just get up and talk about their fruit passion, holding a propagation party, hold an even for sharing homegrown produce, and having another "Ask the Experts" session. Other suggestions included finding experts who could talk about drought gardening, non-pesticide solutions to garden problems, small gardening and vertical gardening, and providing information about the

various Quarantines and what we can and should not do within and outside of the borders, and, finally, a day showing Dave Wilson videos on fruit tree care and pruning.

All in all, we shared an enjoyable, productive day with our fellow CRFG members. It was a wonderful way to end 2023. See you all next year!

Good Scion Preparation

Are you ready for a Scion Exchange! Time to start preparing. Despite the seemingly daunting restrictions on moving plant material due to fruit fly quarantines (see the following section), we can still share scions. Please prepare your cuttings so they have the best chance of successful grafts.

- Scions are small cuttings which can be grafted onto another tree or rooted to become their own plant.
 - Scions should be 1/4" – 3/8" diameter (pencil size) and contain several growth buds (2 -3 minimum).
 - The buds should be closed. If the leaves are starting to open already, its energy will go into the leaves instead of the graft.
 - Scions can be prepared and stored up to several weeks ahead of time, but please try to harvest as close to the event as possible. Freshly cut wood is better for successful grafting.
 - Wrap cuttings in a damp (not soggy) paper towel(s) and place in a ziplock-type bag, leaving a slight opening in the bag for the wood to breathe.
 - If necessary, store the scion bag in the vegetable bin of your refrigerator until the morning of the exchange. Be careful not to let the scion wood freeze!
 - LABEL each bag with fruit variety, as well as any additional information you feel is pertinent (i.e. minimum chilling hours; pollinator needs; vigor; where successfully grown, etc).
 - When labeling figs, please specify if they are OPEN or CLOSED eye varieties. (Open eye varieties are susceptible to the insidious Black Fig Fruit Fly.)
 - Bundle by variety.
 - Please include your name on the scion bags, in case people have questions.
 - At the event, PLEASE WAIT to make your selections until you are directed to do so.
 - At the event, please limit your selections to two of any variety until everyone has had an opportunity to make their own selections. Then you can take more.
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Patently Wrong for a Scion Exchange

When you come to the January Scion Exchange, please do not bring patented fruit varieties with you. A plant patent is for newly invented strains of asexually reproduced plants (not from seeds). To be patentable, the plant must have been asexually propagated, such as by rooted cuttings, air layered cuttings, budding, grafting, or inarching. You cannot propagate patented plants without the inventor's permission. Violating plant patents is against the law and is a form of theft.

Plant patents typically expire 20 years from the application date. Since it can be challenging to confirm whether a variety is patented or not, the South Orange County chapter of CRFG has created a patented varieties list, including the patent expiration date when known. (Plants with expired patents may be shared.) The SOC chapter has graciously shared the link with us and encouraged us to share it with other chapters as well. The list is not complete, as data is always being added/corrected, but is a good place to start.

<https://southoccrfg.org/patented-plant-list/>

Quarantine Information

<https://ucanr.edu/blogs/blogcore/postdetail.cfm?postnum=58334>

Several active fruit fly quarantines are in place throughout California. If you live within one of these quarantine zones, fruits and vegetables **SHOULD NOT** be moved off of the property they were grown on.

CDFA regulations specifically prohibit "movement out of, into, or within the quarantine area any fruit, vegetable, pericarp of nuts, seeds or berries, or soil which has been within the drip area" of plants which have produced any of these, unless said produce (or soil) has been cooked or otherwise rendered deadly to the specific fruit fly.

Fresh fruits and vegetables may be consumed or processed (i.e. juiced, frozen, cooked, or ground in the garbage disposal) at the property of origin. If they are not consumed or processed, dispose of them by double-bagging them in plastic bags and putting the bags in the garbage bin for collection.

Quarantines are in place for the Mediterranean fruit fly, Oriental fruit fly, Z.Tau fruit fly, and Queensland fruit fly. And, recently, growers in the San Joaquin valley have identified the *Carpophilus truncatus* Beetle as a new pest which attacks almonds and pistachios, and which could threaten the entire California Tree Nut industry. They overwinter in "mummy" (leftover) nuts on the tree and ground. Crop sanitation will be critical in controlling this pest. **PLEASE CLEAN UP** all fallen and remnant fruit in your yard!!!!

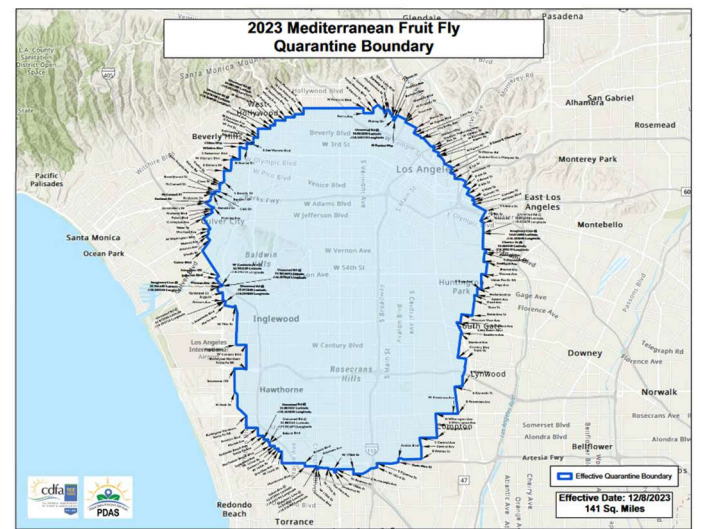
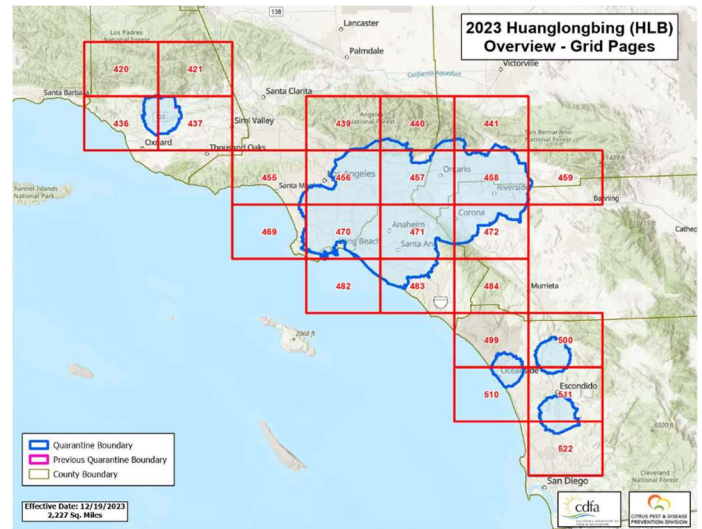
Active quarantines are currently in effect for:

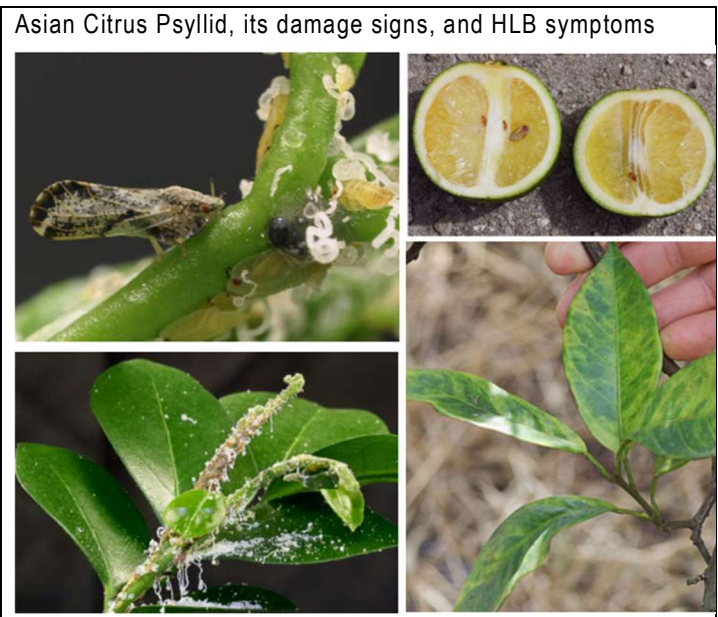
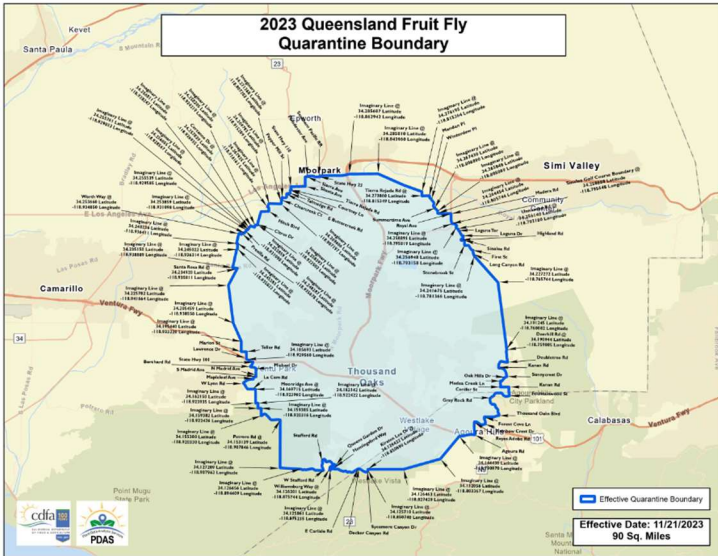
- [Asian Citrus Psyllid](#) / Huanglongbing (Statewide citrus quarantine: see also <https://ucanr.edu/sites/acp/>)
- [Mediterranean Fruit Fly](#) (Los Angeles County, Leimert Park area)
- [Oriental Fruit Fly](#) (San Bernardino/Riverside, Sacramento, Contra Costa, and Santa Clara counties)
- [Queensland Fruit Fly](#) (Thousand Oaks)
- [Zeugodacus Tau Fruit Fly](#) (effective 11/16/2023: Stevenson Ranch, Santa Clarita, Castaic, Newhall, Valencia)
- [Black Fig Fruit Fly](#) does not have a quarantine but might be controlled with yard sanitation measures.
- The [Carpophilus truncatus Beetle](#) has no established quarantine yet. Initially identified in the San Joaquin Valley, the beetle is known to fly extended distances.

If you suspect any of these pests is in your area, **PLEASE** contact your local UC Cooperative Extension farm advisor (<https://ucanr.edu/About/Locations>), County Agricultural Commissioner (<https://cacasa.org/county>) and/or the CDFA Pest Hotline (<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/reportapest>) at (800) 491-1899. Let's not give these pests a chance to proliferate!

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/fruit_flies/downloads/fruit-fly-active-quarantines.pdf

CTRL-Click on a Quarantine map to view it larger on the internet:





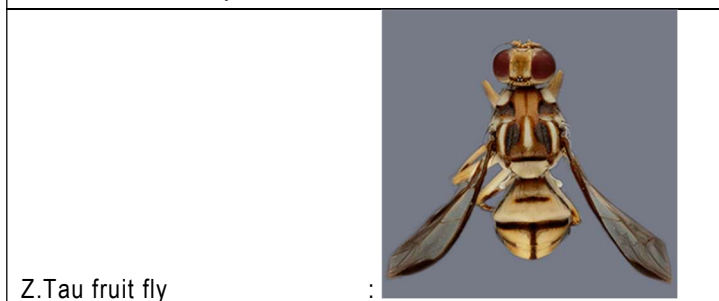
Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly):



Oriental fruit fly:



Queensland fruit fly:



Z. Tau fruit fly :

