

LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

July 2011 Volume XVI Issue 4

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

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July Meeting

Date: Saturday, July 23rd, 2011

Time: 10:00 A.M.

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

Program: Jorge and Pat Pelaez - Jorge will be speaking about his backyard mango cultivation. Although **Jorge** does not consider himself an authority or an expert in cultivating the “King of Fruits”, he wants to convey his personal experiences both positive and negative. He will be demonstrating how to get a viable supermarket mango seed to germinate.

Pat, his wife, will demonstrate how to peel and cut a mango. They will be bringing fruit, hopefully enough for all the members. Only one each, please.

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS!! If your last name begins with **M-Z** please bring something for our **July** tasting table. Please **label** whatever you bring. Members, **PLEASE** help set up or stay after the meeting to help clean up. Clean up is quick and easy when many work together.

August Meeting

Date: Saturday, August 27th, 2011

Time: 10A.M.

Place The Vieth's garden

Please contact our newsletter editor at:
pat_erati@yahoo.com if you wish to attend.
PLEASE NOTE: For liability reasons,
only CRFG members can attend field trips.

Program: The **Vieth** home and garden sits on a 1/3 acre lot. It has more than 50 fruit trees ranging from mangoes to sweet cherries and includes an extensive planting of more than 30 blueberries. There are also extensive vegetable and flower plantings. Among the flowers are over 200 plumerias and 200 adenium, many of which are rare. In addition, there is a 280 square foot greenhouse with many unusual tropical fruit trees. We intend to break up the group into smaller groups to view and hear about the garden. There is a pool, **so we can not allow children on the tour even if accompanied by an adult.**

Chairman's Corner



Dear Los Angeles CRFG members,

Early this month I got away for some fishing in the High Sierra's. I had a great time away with my brother, and landed the biggest German Brown trout I've ever caught three and a half pounds. Having worked in the Owens Valley many times over the years I was surprised at the snow pack levels. Because of record snow fall, a lot of our reservoirs are at near capacity already. Have you looked at your water bill lately? Now I've got your attention! The L.A. Times recently reported water rates will be rising for the next three years in spite of the record snow fall in the High Sierras.

For me, it's time to think about water wise landscaping and gardening. But I'm not just thinking about it, I removed the grass in the parkway and four sprinkler heads. I installed one bubbler, planted a Crape Myrtle and covered the parkway with two inch polished river rock. Now I'm working on one half of the front yard by removing a dying White Birch and the lawn. I planted one fifteen gallon Tarocco blood orange. Next is the other half; I will remove the grass, another White Birch, redo the sprinkler system and plant a fifteen gallon Tangelo tree. Yes, for me, grassy front and back yards are a thing of the past. I would rather use my water on edible landscapes. Oh, by the way, all the trees I planted were free from the City of Los Angeles. There are a lot of websites and resources to help us rethink and redo our landscapes. Let's conserve this precious resource called water and enjoy our edible landscapes.

PS Have you registered for the Festival of Fruit yet? festivaloffruit.org

Best,

Jim Schopper

Everyone wants to be appreciated, so if you appreciate someone, don't keep it a secret.

Mary Kay Ash

TROPICAL APRICOT

Dovyalis abyssinica x hebecarpa - Flacourtiaceae
Donated by: CRFG/Haluza/SBA and planted in 1984
(r.f.-09)

Common names: Tropical apricot, Kitambilla, Ceylon gooseberry, Koshim, Ankakute, Ongolatz, Aihada.



by Alfredo Chiri

The bush is a natural hybrid from Florida. The tropical apricot differs from the two parents' varieties in that the parents the Kashun (D, Abyssinica) and the Kitembilla (D. Hebecarpa), require male and female for fruiting. The tropical apricot requires one plant for fruiting.

The Tropical apricot is a spiny shrub or tree that grows up to 20 feet high with a rounded crown. The bark is gray with spines up to 5 or 6 inches long. The short-stalked leaves are shiny dark green and ovate to two inches long. The flowers are green sepals. The plant has male, female and perfect flowers.

The fruits are round berries of 1.5 inches. At first the skins are green and hairy, then changing to smooth pale yellow with green stems. The flesh is an orange yellow color surrounding the three or four dark brown seeds.

Fruits are edible. The fruits are collected and eaten raw. The fruit produces a sweet-sour taste with a tingling sensation on the teeth, and when fully ripe, tastes like an apricot.

In their natural habitat the plants are found along rivers in humid lower forests. The plants are not particular as to the soils, doing well in sandy soils. The plant is suitable for subtropical climates. The plant is propagated by seeds or by shield budding.

Occasionally growers mistake the Tropical apricot for the Kei apple (D. Caffra). The Kei apple, or Umbolo,

requires at least two plants for pollination, since each plant has only male or female flowers. The fruit varies from light yellow to light brown. At maturity the fruit is acid and generally is cooked for consumption.

In many villages in Africa, the Dovyalis plants are planted around the village as a protection against lions and tigers. Now gardeners are utilizing these plants to protect those areas that are subject to intruders or those areas where fences can not easily be built.

Watermelon Festival 2011

AUGUST 12-14, 2011
Our 50th Year!

Sunland Park
8651 Foothill Blvd., Sunland, CA 91040

Check out their website for more information:
lionswatermelonfestival.com

IT'S Watermelon Time!!

- The first recorded watermelon harvest occurred nearly 5,000 years ago in Egypt.
- Watermelon is 92% water.
- Watermelon's official name is Citrullus Lanatus of the botanical family Curcurbitaceae. It is cousins to cucumbers, pumpkins and squash.
- By weight, watermelon is the most-consumed melon in the U.S., followed by cantaloupe and honeydew.
- Early explorers used watermelons as canteens.
- The first cookbook published in the U.S. in 1776 contained a recipe for watermelon rind pickles.
- In 1990, Bill Carson of Arrington, TN grew the largest watermelon at 262 pounds that is still on the record books (1998 ed. Guinness Book of World Records).

About 200-300 varieties are grown in the U.S. and Mexico, although there are about 50 varieties that are very popular. You can do an online search or contact a seed company to find out more about common and historic watermelon varieties. The modern watermelon

lover sees his or her watermelon options as these five types: Seeded, Seedless, Mini, Yellow and Orange.

Watermelon is thought to have originated in the Kalahari Desert of Africa. The first recorded watermelon harvest occurred nearly 5,000 years ago in Egypt and is depicted in Egyptian hieroglyphics on walls of their ancient buildings. Watermelons were often placed in the burial tombs of kings to nourish them in the afterlife.

From there, watermelons spread throughout countries along the Mediterranean Sea by way of merchant ships. By the 10th century, watermelon found its way to China, which is now the world's number one producer of watermelons.

The 13th century found watermelon spread through the rest of Europe via the Moors.

Southern food historian, John Egerton, believes watermelon made its way to the United States with African slaves as he states in his book, "Southern Food."

The United States currently ranks fourth in worldwide production of watermelon. Forty-four states grow watermelons with Florida, Texas, California, Georgia and Arizona consistently leading the country in production.

(Editor's note: watermelon is highly nutritious and packed full of the **phytochemical lycopene**. It's one of the few foods that contain it in large amounts. Other good sources include tomatoes, red and pink grapefruit, and guava.)

Watermelon Confetti

Ingredients

4 cups 1/4 inch cubed seedless watermelon
2 cups 1/4 inch cubed jicama
1 cup 1/4 inch cubed carrots
2 cups minced purple cabbage
1 cup minced sweet yellow banana or bell pepper
1/4 cup minced fresh parsley
6 pieces juice from the limes
1 dash sea salt to taste.

Prepare each ingredient and toss together just before serving.

Serves 12 to 16 as a salad or salsa.

A MEMORIAL WEEKEND!



Charles Portney expounds on blueberries

Saturday, May 28th was definitely a **Memorial** day for the eager group of members who came to hear **Charles Portney** speak about “30 Years of Amateur Blueberry Growing in Southern California”.



Recognition for **Charles**

Of course, we couldn't pass up this opportunity to thank **Charles** for all he has done for CRFG and especially for our LA Chapter. **Jim Schopper** our Chapter Chair, on behalf of the LA Chapter, presented **Charles** an award for his outstanding contributions to our organization. We are deeply grateful for all of his support and generosity-not only in sharing his wealth of knowledge and expertise, but also in his many noteworthy donations of beautiful and vibrant plants for our plant sale.

A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawn mower is broken."

- **James Dent**

JUNE TOUR



The LA Chapter members were greeted by the granddaughter of the **San Gabriel Nursery**, a family-owned and operated business that was founded in 1923. Over the years they have expanded their operation to include over 14 acres of growing grounds in San Gabriel and Monterey Park. After an interesting tour of not only, the various fruit trees, but also beautiful azaleas, bonsai collection, and much, much more, the group headed over to the **888 Seafood Restaurant** for lunch. There we feasted on an innumerable selection of dim sum -from steamed buns with roast pork - to those wonderful shrimp dumplings. There was also time to visit several markets in the area. Many came home with fresh mangosteen, lychees, jackfruit and a few brave souls even bought durian!

