



Western Washington Fruit Research Foundation

September, 2012

President's Message

By Sue Williams,

Harvest time is upon us and it is a bountiful harvest in the WWFRF Garden! We have enjoyed cherries, plums, blueberries, currants, gooseberries, early peaches, apples and more. Every week sees more fruit ready for us to enjoy. It seems to me that much more summer pruning has happened this year to improve the health and vigor of the trees thanks to our regular Thursday volunteer crew. I have very much enjoyed joining the Thursday group this year and continue to learn from everyone how to grow the best fruit in the northwest. I have often been asked to share the recipe for treats brought for the Thursday volunteers and so you will see a recipe for Blueberry Buckle in this newsletter. Please send us your favorite fruit recipe to include in future editions of the newsletter. *(And include a photo if possible. Editor)*

Our Summer Fruit Festival was a success with enthusiastic responses to the espalier panel and the many speakers. Our last event for the year will be the Apple and Pear Harvest on October 13th. Come join us! We welcome your feedback on any of our events and subjects/topics you would like covered in the future.

Together with WSU, we are in the process of writing a WWFRF Garden Maintenance plan. The plan will put in writing not only the intent and purpose of the garden but how we intend to take care of the trees and plantings including disease and pest management with WSU's guidance and assistance. Since the focus of the Garden is the home gardener/orchardist, it makes sense to prepare a maintenance plan with that in mind. The plan will give us continuity and clarity.

Again, my thanks to YOU, our volunteers. We can't do the work of WWFRF without the help of volunteers both in the garden and for the four events we have each year. Another vital role for volunteers is our board of directors. Please let me know if you would like to volunteer on the board of directors as we guide the organization forward.

Sue Williams

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Blueberry Buckle

1 stick of butter (8 TBSPs)
1 cup granulated sugar
1 large egg
1 tsp vanilla
½ tsp cinnamon (optional)
½ cup milk (buttermilk or plain yogurt can be substituted)
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 tsp baking powder
½ tsp soda
½ tsp salt
2 cups blueberries

Cream together butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add egg and vanilla mix. Alternate adding milk and dry ingredients. Batter will be thick. Spoon into a well greased 9 inch square pan.

Topping (optional)

½ cup sugar
1/3 cup flour
¾ tsp cinnamon
¼ cup butter or margarine.

Cut butter into dry ingredients until resembles meal. Sprinkle the mixture over the batter. Bake 375 degrees for 45 minutes or until a toothpick comes clean when inserted into the center of the buckle.

Serve warm and Enjoy!

Western Washington Fruit Research Foundation Report

20 years of Research and Outreach August 2012

By Sam Benowitz

This article provides an overview of the 40 years of past fruit research at the WSU Mt. Vernon station and the important useful information gained from the research. It also discusses present and possible future projects. Because of limited space we have printed a shortened version of the report. To read the entire report click here [20 Years of Research and Outreach](#).

Twenty years ago, WWFRF formed to continue the fruit research and outreach that had been going for 20 or more years before at the WSU Mt. Vernon station. To view much of the published research go to:
<http://extension.wsu.edu/maritimefruit/>

Dr. Robert Norton had headed this work at the Washington State University Research and Extension Unit at Mt. Vernon Washington. Dr. Norton was the director of the station and his work on tree fruit was only a small part of his duties but the work was highly valued by small scale commercial and home growers and landscapers and garden centers throughout the region. When Dr. Norton retired almost 20 years ago, his tree fruit position was not replaced, however the work was continued by his technician Gary Moulton and his assistant Jacky King. They carried on the work very well until two years ago when the tree fruit research program was canceled by WSU due to lack of funding.

Fortunately, WWFRF with its demonstration garden, the Fruit Garden, has continued providing information to area enthusiasts. Also, Dr. Carol Miles at WSU Mt. Vernon, has maintained an emphasis on organics and has continued some of the fruit research and is constantly seeking grants which can lead to further research to help the agricultural industries and home gardeners in Western Washington.

Dr. Norton pioneered new ways of involving fruit growing enthusiasts in Western Washington. He had fruit tastings, scionwood exchanges, grafting lessons and other activities not only at the station but throughout the region. Over time WWFRF took over the staffing of the events. This allowed the research staff to concentrate on research, especially after Doc Norton retired and King and Moulton were the only WSU staff involved in fruit.

Now WWFRF does all the logistics and WSU personnel are involved as educational presenters.

The popularity of these types of events has mushroomed so that today there are many fruit related groups holding similar events throughout the region. Among these are the Western Cascade Fruit Society and its chapters and the City Fruit group in Seattle. In addition, many colleges, communities and local nurseries now hold similar events.

Although he is retired, Dr. Norton continues to provide support for the program. Other WSU personnel who have helped a lot include Les Price, Babette Gunderson, Hollis Spitler and Bob Peterson. Former station director Andy Anderson supported the program and helped start the Fruit Garden. He also directed vegetable trials in conjunction with the garden. WSU Puyallup Director Dean Glauwe provided support for years. Current WSU Mt. Vernon station director Steve Jones has also been very supportive as has organic researcher Carol Miles.

Many people in the Agriculture industry have been very supportive in contributing money and also being co-operators on their farms. These include Tom Thornton, Joe Biringer, Drew Zimmerman, Alan Merritt, Sam Benowitz and many others. Many fruit groups have been involved in supporting the work especially to Western Cascade Fruit Society and its chapters. The many WWFRF volunteers have worked countless hours on the Fruit Garden and many of the other WWFRF projects and without them, none of this would have been possible. The future of the Fruit Garden and all these projects will depend on the energy and foresight of future volunteers. Moulton, though no longer paid by WSU to do tree fruit or grape research still is often hired privately by many groups to give talks and provide expert advice. The excellent literature published by Norton, Moulton and King, and now by Miles is used widely by home and commercial fruit growers through Western Washington and the nation.

Continuing Research Projects

Cider Apples: Currently Apple Cider research continues and WSU is hoping for a new grant to continue the current research and maybe expand it. (See the cider apple and pear sections below for more details.)

Cherries: Dr. Miles is looking into a renewal of the Cherry variety trial in contact with WSU Cherry breeder in Prosser Dr. Oraguzie to test newer selections. Tom Thornton has an ongoing project of growing cherries in high tunnels in Whatcom county and he is cooperating and sharing information with WSU.

Perry Pears: WSU Mt. Vernon is also maintaining the perry pear collections. Champagne Perry may soon compete with champagne made from grapes and may propel the perry trials forward. Current efforts to fund perry research have been unsuccessful.

Crab Apples: Two small grants for crab apples from J. Frank Schmitt and from the Washington State Nursery and Landscape Association (WSNLA) are converting an existing crab apple plot into an Arboretum. This will include a shelter building, picnic tables and an informative Kiosk sign. WSU is hoping to have a grand opening at next spring's Tulip Festival. In addition, the funding allows them to put a few additional crab apples and also a few new flowering cherries into the block. One of the edible crab apples in the block was bred at Mt. Vernon. It is a cross of Alkemene and Prima. It will be named Puget Spice because of its excellent flavor and red orange color. It is prized for use making spiced apples. It will be trademarked and a royalty collected for its sale.

Grapes: Unfortunately, due to lack of funding plants from the Organic Grape trials have been removed and there is currently no funded grape research at the Mt. Vernon Station.

Tree Fruits: Although the tree fruit research outlined below is no longer funded, small scale research projects are ongoing and new ones will be started in the WWFRF 7 acre Fruit Garden.

*This is a much shorted and edited version of Sam's talk at the Summer Fruit Festival.
See our website at NWfruit.org for the original transcript.*

Thoughts on a couple of plums... *by Kim Siebert*

This year I discovered that I had been picking my Imperial Epineuse plums too early. When I waited until they were very soft and falling off the tree the flavor was really wonderful, but another plum took first place in the flavor contest at our home – my Green Gage plum finally fruited – only two fruits, but what incredible flavor. The weather wasn't ideal during flowering this year so I hope to see more fruit next year...

WWFRF Financial Report: January to August 2012

By Mike Ewanciw, WWFRF Treasurer, Board Member

Revenue

Membership Dues and Donations	\$5,765
Foundation Sponsored Research Donation	887
Fruit Garden Event Revenue	1851

Total Revenue **\$8,503**

Operating Expenses

Printing, postage and insurance	\$4,250
Foundation Sponsored Research	4800
Fruit Garden (maintenance and events)	2622

Total Expenses **\$11,672**

Difference **\$-3,169**

Volunteer in the Fruit Garden!

Thursdays at 9:00 am

Volunteering in the Fruit Garden is a great way to learn more about how to grow fruit and get to know other fruit loving volunteers!

**Contact Tom Wake:
thomas.wake@att.net**

Fruit Garden Update

by De Arbogast

Our blueberries have gone crazy this year, bending the canes almost to the ground.

Perhaps amending with blood meal fertilizer, along with the usual ammonium sulfate, was partly responsible. Taste suffered a bit, but few complaints were heard. Volunteers did an excellent job pruning the bushes this year.

Second year in a row for outstanding production on the Imperial Epineuse plum, along with good production from the other plum cultivars. Peaches even made a good show.

New apple anthracnose cankers were found on several of our Gravenstein trees and were immediately torched. We appear to be gaining on anthracnose control with weekly inspections as we do our summer pruning.

Hardy Kiwis, black currants and Aronia berries all came on strong. Sure nice to have some fruit varieties that don't interest our prolific bird population.

We are re-designing our spray program using the WSU Hortsense website as a guide.

Only non-toxic, OMRI-certified (Organic Materials Review Institute) products available to backyard gardeners, will be used. Garden sanitation, aggressive summer pruning, propane torching, pest trapping techniques and visual inspections are some of the tools we use to control pests and disease. Although

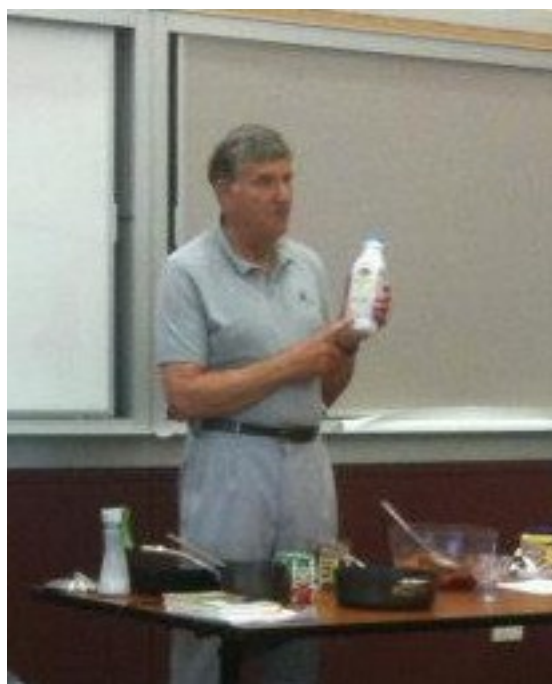
we are not organically certified, we're heading in that direction.

Aside from the blueberries, we do very little fertilization of the fruit garden. The deeply buried irrigation system conserves water and is mainly used during July and August. We control the voles by mowing tall grass and weeds from around our fruit trees, then apply an herbicide to finish the job. Visible vole holes are seeded with vole pellets.

Our small group of volunteers continue to gain knowledge all through the season. There is nothing better than hands-on learning.



Dr. Robert Norton teaches about summer pruning.



Graham Kerr is always a favorite!

Summer Fruit Festival!



Sam Benowitz, Kristan Johnson, Christy Nieto, and Jim Gilbert

More Summer Fruit Festival Photos *by Christy Nieto*



WWFRF would like to thank our commercial members.

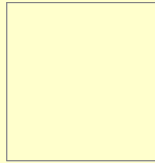
Bee Diverse - www.beediverse.com

Beez Neez - www.beezneezapiary.com

Northwoods/One Green World - www.onegreenworld.com

Raintree nursery - www.raintreenursery.com

Skagit Farmers Supply – www.skagitfarmers.com

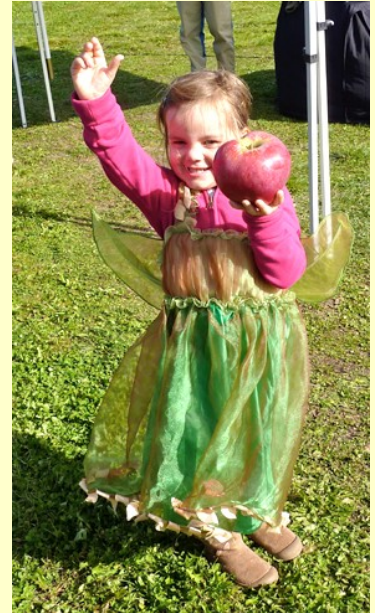


Apple and Pear Day

Saturday, October 13th

11:00am – 2:00 pm

**Sample apples and pears!
Learn about hard cider research!
Learn about apple diseases and pests!
Sample cider fruit!**



Epilogue



After the damage from the snow last winter, one day I discovered that my husband had repaired the Methley plum with a stake, rope and black electrical tape! It bore a bountiful harvest, even on the broken branch. Kim Siebert

Board Meeting

Tuesday Sept 25th, 7 pm.

If you would like to attend this board meeting, please contact Sue Williams suefoisie@gmail.com for the conference call number and passcode. We will have a board retreat in November, date yet to be determined.

All members are welcome to attend board meetings.

PLEASE SEND YOUR DONATION ALONG WITH THIS FORM

Enclosed is my gift of:

___\$5000 ___\$1000 ___\$500 ___\$100 ___\$50 ___\$25 \$_____ (Make check payable to WWFRF)

To make a donation by credit card go to our website and click on *support-donate* to make a donation through PayPal.

Please designate my monetary gift toward: ___Where it is needed most!

___Fruit Display Garden

___Fruit Variety Trials

___Sampling and Field Days

I would like to volunteer!

___In the Fruit Garden

___To help with Summer Fruit Festival

___On sampling and field days

___By doing work that can be done from my home

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email address _____ Phone # _____

Please make my gift: ___In Honor of: ___In Memory of:

(Name of person) _____

Address of person or person's family _____

(So we can notify them) _____

Thank you.. Please send to:

WWFRF

C/O Christy Nieto, Membership

2609 Cedarwood Ave

Bellingham, WA 98225

Your gift is tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. Please consult your tax accountant for details.

Credit cards accepted through PayPal! Just go to our website and click on *support-donate* to make a donation.

WWFRF Board Meeting

July 14, 2010 2:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Held at Skagit Valley Food Co-op

Board members present: Sue Williams, Mike Ewanciw, Kim Siebert, Kristan Johnson, Christy Nieto, Jay Scott, Keith Rubin, Ira Collins

Other WWFRF member present: De Arbogast.

Special Guest: Carol Miles

Financial Report – Mike Ewanciw presented current budget to actual expenses reported. He is still learning the system. Mike wrote a check to himself for \$200 to give to Tom Wake for the Fruit Garden expenses, since the debit/credit card can't be used at this time. A cash box for smaller Fruit Garden expenses may be a good solution for ongoing expenses to avoid needing to use a credit or debit card.

Draft Financial Policy and Procedures – Mike presented a draft document for board review. The discussion was spirited and several changes and inconsistencies were identified. Mike will revise and send out to the board prior to the next conference call board meeting in September. It is planned that at that time the board will vote to approve so that we can move forward on budget planning for next year. Some of the items (but not all) to be detailed are

- Who will be on the Financial Review Committee and what are their responsibilities?
- Who is on the Finance Committee and what are their responsibilities?
- Will there be a budget line item for unanticipated expenses under \$300?

Contingency fund – Kristan proposed and Ira seconded a motion to restore funding (\$300) to the contingency fund and add \$300 to the budget for restocking Fruit Booth items in the 2012 budget.

Membership Report – Christy Nieto

- March saw 43 new and renewing members
- Current membership is 143 not including Cherry Day renewals or additions
- More renewing and new members were collected Saturday for Cherry Day
- Membership has been higher in past years.
- Christy suggests strongly that we need a Publicity lead that would send out letters or postcards to members who membership is coming up for renewal to catch as many as possible. The board will need to define this role in the near future.
- Christy and Kim will work together to design a postcard that would be sent to renewing members something along the lines of the WWFRF business card with key events and dates.

Garden Report – Garden Report – De and Jay, Thirty six cherry trees will be ready in November, being specially grafted for us by Biringer Nursery for the new cherry block that is being planned. A handout was provided and was given out today that details the plans. Bill is seeking out replacement antique apple trees for those that have died or need to be replaced this fall. It will be within the

budget. Sue asked if there was a long term (2-5 years) plans for the garden. This is something to consider for future discussions.

New Business—

- Kristan told us that he worked with Bill Pierce to define the role and responsibilities for Cherry Day so that Bill can take the lead for this event next year.
- Summer Fruit Festival – Kristan has planned the agenda and activities. Bonnie is working on volunteers and other aspects. Publicity has gone out.
- No one has come forward to say they will be the lead to coordinate the Fall Harvest/Tasting. Action item for the board to ask around for anyone interested. Carol can help provide someone to speak about cider making.
- NW Flower and Garden Show will need a lead coordinator as well. Some of the tasks are:
 - Storage and set up of the booth with Seattle Tree Fruit Society
 - Recruiting of Volunteers (Ira did this last year)
 - We need to register for booth now(Rachel Petrich may know more about this)
 - Elgin Electric will need to be contacted regarding power requirements for the booth
 - The Seattle Tree Fruit Society is paying for rental space in Seattle – We may be able to work out an arrangement to share this rental space to have a place to keep our Flower and Garden Show booth items.
- Winter Field Day – Mike agreed to take the lead for the 2013 event
- Carol asked for a liaison to NWREC from WWFRF. Sue asked and the board accepted that she will take on the role to meet with Steve Jones and Carol on a regular basis as well as make sure Steve gets all board communications and invites.

Lesson learned from the Cherry Day—

- 40-60 people attending. (Christy will give us a final accounting soon). The \$500 minimum appears to have been collected by the \$5 per bag charge
- Great response to the education provided by Carol and Jacky. They did a great job on all of the materials/ handouts provided!
- Handouts should continue to be provided at registration and allow the participants to choose what they want so they are valued
- Handouts should be provided on the web site as well
- Charging for bags seemed to well accepted although Kristan believes that smaller bags should be used in the future. We saw several people over filling bags that would result in fruit being crushed
- Several people came as late (saw signs as driving by) as 1:45 to taste cherries. Suggest that hours be changed to 11-1 pm so that everything could be wrapped up by 2 pm.
- If each tree had a tag for variety, paper plot plans would not be needed.

Why Summer Pruning?

By Christy Nieto

Aside from finding a dry day in our Pacific Northwest winters, there are other obstacles to pruning during the winter, the traditional time for orchard pruning. Winter pruning promotes vigorous growth. Many of the trees that come into my care are old and endured many years as unkempt and neglected fruit trees. Others spent their lives having every water sprout cut off, year after year. It takes years for these types of trees to be rehabilitated into an upright, open and healthy tree. Because winter pruning promotes heavy growth I prefer pruning at another time of year - summer. By summer I mean late summer, August. When you prune in the summer, the tree is heading into its dormancy stage but still hasn't had time for the leaves to store all their energy into the roots so you don't end up having as many strong upward shoots each year and it becomes easier to manage the tree. This way it takes less time for the tree to be shaped into a more natural habit and keeps the fruit at an easier height to harvest. Also, thinning out the upper branches of a tree in the summertime allows more sun to reach the fruit. Lastly, pruning in dry weather avoids the problem of opening up the tree to disease, a problem that occurs when we make cuts during the wet season.

Although summer pruning is advantageous for older trees I find the benefits are also shared by young trees, taking care to only make needed cuts to shape the tree and not remove more than necessary on young, small trees that are not well established. And it is fine to work on the trees twice a year (winter and summer). In fact, I find that doing so creates less of a shock to them. Pruning a little bit in the summer means there is less work to do in the wintertime when the weather is usually less enjoyable so put pruning on your gardening calendar for next summer!

Changes happening in the Fruit Garden

Since the Fruit Garden's inception, WSU has assisted us in managing disease and insect pests through routine pesticide applications on the trees. Tom and De are informed of any spraying in advance as well as pertinent instructions regarding re-entry time into the Fruit Garden.

A well-meaning garden volunteer reported to the State Health Department, WSDA and the WSU Pesticide Education Program that a spraying that occurred in late July might have impacted the volunteers who were working in the garden that week. Please be reassured that first, the chemical application made for codling moth and apple maggot was fully compliant to label instructions and state law. Second, all volunteers who were potentially impacted were contacted by the Health Department with no one reporting any adverse effects from the chemical application. But this has brought WWFRF and the Fruit Garden to the attention of many in the Health Department, WSDA, Washington State Attorney General's office, and WSU administration and WSU Extension.

Now WWFRF Fruit Garden managers and leadership are working with the WSU Pesticide Coordinator, WSU NWREC Director Steve Jones and faculty liaison Carol Miles to determine how we will manage the garden from this point forward. WWFRF volunteers have been commended for their quick, thoughtful and positive response to this situation. We immediately instituted a hand washing station to be used before our coffee breaks. Carol placed a bulletin board with key information on one of the garden sheds. We will no longer use commercial chemicals in the Fruit Garden, we will now only be allowed to use home and garden products or cultural, biological and/or mechanical means to control weeds, disease and insect pests. Before any chemical is applied in the garden, we will first check with

Carol so she can confirm that it is okay to use. We will also work with the WSU Urban Integrated Pest Management Program to develop an plan for the garden. and a list of products for use in the garden. Safety training for all garden volunteers in being developed and will be required. The training will occur on a volunteer work day so that it is simple and easy to complete.

More details will be forthcoming as we (WWFRF) work together with WSU to complete the process to create a garden management plan that meets the safety needs of everyone. WSU NWREC is committed to continuing a great collaboration with WWFRF. As Steve Jones told the volunteers recently, “ the Fruit Garden is the crown jewel of NWREC”. The situation that led up to these changes is not viewed negatively but rather as an opportunity to improve how we manage the Fruit Garden and broaden the experience of our volunteers and of the general public.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Annual memberships cost \$25/year for Individuals and \$40/year per Family (Parents with their minor children). Membership entitles you to the newsletter, participation at all Field Days/Open Houses and Sample the Harvest Days, at no additional charge; other types of memberships are also available. Visit nwfruit.org to download the membership form OR use the membership form found on page 11 of this newsletter.

The **WWFRF Newsletter** is printed 3x/ year in February, June, and September and mailed to all members.

FIELD DAYS/ OPEN HOUSES are free to members, and open to non-members for One-Day only fees of @ \$15/ Individual and \$30.00/ Family (Parents with their minor children) for each event.

- **The Winter Field Day/Open House** is the first Saturday of March, and consists of hands-on pruning, grafting and budding, talks on insects and pests, scion wood sale, and root stock sale.
- **The Summer Fruit Festival** is the 3rd Saturday of August and covers various topics, some of which may be best fruit varieties for our area, harvest techniques, preservation and storage, orchard mason bees, fertilizer and nutrition, home wine and cider production, cooking tips and of course, fruit tasting and Sample the Harvest from pre-picked fruit.

HARVEST DAYS are free to members, and open to non-members @ \$15/ Individual and \$30.00/ Family (One household only) at **each** event:

- **Sample the Harvest Days** are held in July and October. The following fruit is harvested in season: cherries, pears, plums, and apples. Paid members and non-members are allowed to keep their portion of the harvested fruit.
- **Special Volunteer Harvests** occur on an as-needed basis to assist the WSU NWREC staff in harvesting specific fruit for data collection. This harvest is open to paid members only, and paid members are allowed to keep a portion of the harvest.