

Winter 2007 Issue

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Just Picked

Newsletter of the
Upper Midwest Organic
Tree Fruit Network

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Deirdre Birmingham, Network Coordinator

7258 Kelly Rd

Mineral Point, WI 53565

608-967-2362

deidreb@mindspring.com

www.mosesorganic.org/treefruit/intro.htm

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Welcome to our first issue of Just Picked for 2007 !

In this issue: John McPherson gives us his third and final installment on the history of the apple. I've rounded up available reports from midwestern land-grant universities with organic orchard research projects. Cider Day sounds absolutely fantastic from those who have gone and from what Ben Watson has to share. Note the opportunities to host a field day, orchard walk, or you name it, at your orchard. Check out the list of grafting and pruning classes. If you know of others, please share them on our list-serv. New additions to our website are listed. Anything you've come across that seems helpful, please let me know. Our first Advisory Council for the Network is taking shape. Meet Council members and meet more growers at our Network's annual meeting to be held during the Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference in La Crosse, Wisconsin on Friday, February 23 at 12:45 PM. Also check out the Conference session on small-scale organic tree fruit production.

If you haven't yet, mark your calendars for the 4th International Organic Tree Fruit Research Symposium to be held March 4-6 for the first time in the Midwest. See inside. Poster presentations are due by February 1. I am organizing a vanload or two from the westside of the Lake heading to the Symposium. Network funds will pay for the van rental. Let me know if you are interested.

--Deirdre Birmingham, 608-967-2362; deidreb@mindspring.com

History of the Apple in America, Part III – the Modern Apple

by John McPherson, Horticulturalist, Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center, Hastings, MN

In Part II of this series (in the September 2006 issue of Just Picked), I wrote about the early dissemination of apples in America from the east to the new settlements in the Northwest Territory and how important the apple was in the lives of these early settlers. The role that John Chapman (Johnny Appleseed) played in his colorful life and how his distaste for grafted or cloned apple trees resulted in him planting millions of seeds ensuring a genetic diversity that seemed inexhaustible. Part II concludes with a description of the modern apple as a blemish free, red, saccharine-filled orb. The apple's ocean of genetic diversity has narrowed to a point that commercial apple production could be vulnerable to a catastrophe due to the increased genetic uniformity and high levels of inbreeding.

continued on page two



A project of the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service
Funded by the USDA Risk Management Agency



History....From page one

How did the apple industry get to that point in a little over 100 years? The 19th century was certainly the most energetic era in the history of fruit breeding and selection. By the end of the Civil War, American nurseries listed more than 800 varieties for sale. Today commercial nurseries offer about thirty distinct varieties; of these only about ten are sold in any quantity. The story of the Red Delicious sheds a lot of light on the trends and economic forces of the apple in the 20th century.

The “Delicious”

There was this stubborn, perhaps miraculous, seedling that kept coming up between the rows of Jessie Hiatte’s orchard in Peru, Iowa, mowing after mowing, until the Quaker farmer decided it must be a sign. So he let the little tree grow, live and fruit, only to discover its apples were far and way the best he’d ever tasted. Hiatte named it Hawkeye and in 1893 he mailed four of them off to a contest at the Stark Brothers Nurseries in Missouri. C.M. Stark awarded it first prize and a shiny new name: the Delicious. Stark, a born marketer had been carrying that name on a slip of paper in his pocket for years, waiting for just the right apple to come along and claim it. But the tag identifying the apple and its owner was somehow misplaced during the hoopla, setting off a frantic year-long search for what would eventually become the world’s most popular apple. Stark waited hoping the same farmer would reenter his apple the following year. Hiatte did. Stark bought sole rights to propagate it and spent three-fourths of a million dollars (over 10 million in today’s dollars) promoting the Delicious to American growers.

The early Delicious bore little resemblance in appearance or flavor to the bloodied cartoon-like apple we see today. Red Delicious is famous for producing “sports,” or genetic variations, with dramatic shape and color differences. Soon nurseries were searching out and selecting the deep red strains that stole the customer’s eye away from the creamy stripes of the original Delicious. With each new strain, flavor was sacrificed for eye appeal. More than any other apple, the Red Delicious demonstrated the power of cosmetics in the fruit business.

CA Storage & Supermarkets

Two important factors merged shortly after WWII,

the advent of CA (controlled atmosphere) storage and the movement away from the ma and pa neighborhood grocery store to large franchise supermarkets. CA storage enabled large growers to store and market the Delicious almost year round. Since Red and Golden Delicious would bring the grower two to three times the price, thousands of acres of other varieties were pulled out and replanted with Reds and Goldens. The chain supermarkets worked with national brokers who only wanted two or three varieties and a consistent, uniform supply. The Red Delicious and the irrigated high-desert orchards in the state of Washington were a perfect fit to supply that demand. The rest is history.



Recognize that shape?

Red Delicious brought in billions of dollars for the apple industry. A generation of Americans, myself included, found a Red Delicious apple in our lunch bag alongside our peanut butter and jelly sandwich on white bread. It was a time when the marketing objective was to find inoffensive tastes in food, tastes that would alienate no one and presumably claim the broadest possible market share. It was an era of Wonder Bread, Cool Whip, Big Macs, and Campbell’s chicken noodle soup.

Genetic Diversity and Plant “Fitness”

Today almost all the apples we grow in the U.S. have the same five or six parents. Breeders keep going back to the same well, and it’s getting shallower. The practice of growing a dwindling handful of cloned varieties in vast orchards has not only severely narrowed the genetic base of apples but has also rendered it less fit as a plant. This is one reason why the modern apple in large conventional orchards requires more pesticides than almost any other food group. In the wild, a plant and its pests are continually co-evolving, but co-evolution ceases in an orchard of grafted trees since they are genetically identical from generation to generation.

The time had certainly come for a reshuffling of this genetic deck. The greatest biodiversity of any species is typically found in the place where it first evolved, where nature first experimented with all the possibilities of what an apple could be. The presumed centre of origin and diversity of *Malus sieversii* (wild apple) is in the primordial forests of the lower slopes of the Dzungorium Alps in Kazakstan near the city of Alma-Ata, which means “father of the apple.” Locked away in this wild and unkempt apple forest are the genetic codes that could render apples

resistant to rot, blight and insects, apples untouched by deep killing freezes, of tantalizing yet unknown tastes. Apples possessed of deep, rich skin tannins and tangling fresh fragrances could be the basis of new untested wines and ciders.

Exploring the Garden of Eden

From 1989 to 1996 a group of U.S. researchers led by Phil Forsline, a native of Minnesota, and the curator of the Plant Genetic Resources Unit at Cornell University, has undertaken four germ plasm expeditions to Kazakstan. They have retrieved hundreds of scion cuttings and tens of thousands of seeds from what many refer to as the real Garden of Eden.

There is urgency to their mission. These primordial forests have remained undisturbed until recently. Alma-Ata, a city of 1.2 million people and growing, has begun clearing land and building Young Pioneer camps in the forests. Dachas (summer houses) are springing up as the population becomes more affluent. The affect of fragmenting these forests is unknown but the thinking has been to collect as much of the most promising looking cuttings and seeds before they are lost forever.

Designer Apples

Apple research scientists around the world are very close to identifying and mapping the genetic codes for all the common apple varieties plus rare or still unnamed varieties from the Kazakh expeditions whose disease resistances are only now being discovered. In the not too distant future we may see the first designer apples. The ancestry of each tree is analyzed for the gene groups responsible for disease resistance, tree shape, cold hardiness, sugar-acid ratio, firmness, shelf life, juiciness, vitamins, and possibly eventually the interaction of esters and phenyls that provide the subtleties of flavor. Apple trees are then designed that possess gene groups controlling desired traits. Since apples are about the only fruit that is given a name, and, therefore, name recognition and consumer preference, selected traits would likely be introduced into varieties that apple eaters already know and like.

We have 2500 of these wild Kazakh apple trees growing right here in Excelsior, MN at the University of Minnesota Horticultural Research Center. Phil Forsline of Cornell forwarded these cuttings and seeds to the U of M research scientists, Dave Bedford and James Luby. The U of M is home to one of the oldest continuous breeding programs in North America. They are renowned for their cold-hardiness research and their recent release of the Honeycrisp apple.



The MN Honeycrisp has generated a lot of excitement

The Future Looks Promising

The first known use and propagation of apples dates back to 8000 B.C. The modern apples are descendents of thousands of years of selection for color, size, shape, flavor and growth habits. Under our generation's watch this ocean of genetic diversity had been reduced to a near critical stage. Thanks to the vision of Phil Forsline and a handful of other scientists to look further than short-term economic gains to the need to replenish the dying ocean, the future looks promising. There is a fresh supply of germ plasm, the technology to do great things with it, and a far savvier consumer demanding good flavor and texture rather than just a pretty apple.

What a history the apple has to live up to. Steeped in myth, lore and legend the apple has been associated with love, beauty, luck, health, comfort, pleasure, wisdom, temptation, sensuality, sexuality, virility and fertility. Revered in ancient times as "The Tree of Knowledge" and "the Tree of Life." It remains in our most fundamental myths – from Aphrodite to Eve to King Arthur. To bite into such an apple is to bite into our origins. ó

Nor is it every apple I desire,
Nor that which pleases every palate best;
'T is not the lasting Deuxan I require,
Nor yet the red-cheeked Greening I request,
Nor that which first beshrewed the name of wife,
Nor that whose beauty caused the golden strife:
No, no! bring me an apple from the tree of life!

- Henry David Thoreau

University Research Project Updates

These are also being added to our RESEARCH web-pages.

Michigan State University

Anna Fiedler runs a project on biological control that focuses on enhancing beneficial insect populations with native plants. They are updating their website (<http://www.ipm.msu.edu/plants/home.htm>) and plan to have:

- 1) information on plant establishment
- 2) slide sets on natural enemies, bees, and native plants available for use
- 3) updated results
- 4) a link to our new extension bulletin

In addition later this month, a new extension bulletin will be released titled: *Attracting beneficial insects with native flowering plants*. Fiedler A., Tuell, J. Isaacs, R., Landis, D. Jan. 2007 MSU Extension Bulletin No. E-2973.

Already listed on our website is *Identifying Natural Enemies in Field Crops*, a handy, pocket guide for the field. MSU Extension Bulletin No. E-2949. For those who do not already have this, the Network Coordinator can do a group purchase, with sufficient interest, to get a bulk order of this publication or the new one above, for distribution at the Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference in February in WI, or the National Organic Tree Fruit Symposium in March in MI. Let Deirdre know ASAP. .

University of Wisconsin-Madison, Peninsular Agricultural Research Station.

Matt Stasiak reports on what was accomplished in 2006 in further establishing their organic tart cherry and apple orchard near Sturgeon Bay. For more info on last year's planting, see the January 2006 issue of Just Picked. Matt Stasiak can be reached at mstasiak@wisc.edu or 920-743-5406.

2006 Accomplishments and Highlights:

ó In May: planted Scarlet O'Hare/G.16 (50 trees) on the outer two rows of all four sides. Within the block planted one to two rows of Sansa/G.16 (50 trees) and Florina.G.16 (25 trees) in early May. Spaced at 15 x 6 feet. (Honeycrisp on Bud-9 were planted in 2005 as were 80 Montmorency cherries on Gisela-6.)

ó Fungal leaf pathogens on both apple and cherry were observed and rated. Infection periods were more numerous than in the 2005 season. Cherry

leafspot was present early, but was kept under control with 4 applications of Champion copper fungicide (copper hydroxide). Both apple and cherry were treated with Serenade for powdery mildew; apples 3 times and cherries twice. Some leaf apple scab was observed on the Honeycrisp trees, but was not a major concern.

ó Insect pressure was limited to leafroller (OBLR) and gypsy moth feeding in mid-June. Infestations were controlled with a single application of Entrust on both apple and cherry.

ó Potato leafhopper damage became quite heavy in mid-summer on all apple varieties. No measures were taken against it.

ó Mulch treatments were maintained as they were established at planting (which were organic mulch, plastic mulch, and a combination of these two.) Most trees planted have heavy woven plastic mulch. Only one row of cherries has straw mulch and a couple of rows in the apples. Where there are breaks in the plastic, some weed emergence did occur. These area were mulched with wood chips, straw or pea vines (the latter being a good nitrogen source and a by-product of our pea variety trials). To reduce rodent damage under all of the mulches and an effort was made to remove and finely chop organic residues in an effort to reduce habitat.

ó Site preparation was completed for apple trees to be planted in spring 2007. Tillage without prior herbicide applications was done.

ó Tree growth was acceptable for first and second year apple and cherry plantings. Nitrogen fertility management was recognized to be a concern especially for cherries, which can have a heavy requirement for this nutrient.

ó Cherry leaf defoliation from a phytotoxic reaction to copper fungicide sprays was observed to be more severe than in conventional cherry plantings. Possibly the lower fertility status of the organic trees may have contributed to this reaction

ó Fall 2006 the first half of a wildflower demonstration trail was established, the second half will be planted in spring 2007. The following species were planted as nectar and pollen sources to attract beneficial insects.

Scientific Name	Common name	Blooming period
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i> L.	Butterfly weed	June-Aug
<i>Aster azureus</i>	Sky blue aster	Aug-Oct
<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i> L.	Lanceleaf tickseed	June-Aug
<i>Echinacea purpurea</i> (L.) Moench	Purple coneflower	July-Aug
<i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i> Michaux	Rattlesnake-master	July-Sept
<i>Euphorbia corollata</i> L.	Flowering spurge	June-Aug
<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i> (L.) Sweet	Oxeye sunflower	June-Aug
<i>Parthenium integrifolium</i>	Wild quinine	June-Sept
<i>Tradescantia ohioensis</i>	Smooth spiderwort	June-July
<i>Zizia aurea</i> (L.) Koch	Common golden alexanders	May-June

future as the level of phytotoxicity from the copper fungicide on Balaton was less than that observed on Montmorency.

Patty McManus, plant pathologist at UW indicates that she has been working on copper compounds on tart cherry—whose results will be applicable to all growers. She is trying to

In the apples all wildflowers were planted on the ends of rows. In the cherries, since there is more in-row space between trees, they were planted one species between every tree. Fall vs spring planting will be compared, although this may not be the best year since so far fall and winter have been exceptionally mild.

Plans for 2007

Additional trees will be planted in the spring of 2007. Variety and rootstock combinations are to include Scarlet O'Hare/G.16 (150 trees), Pixie Crunch/NIC29 (25 trees), Murray/ G.16 (25 trees) and Nova Spy/G.16 (25 trees). These variety rootstock combinations will also be planted elsewhere on the station in conventionally managed blocks for comparison.

Following is a list of other plans and objectives:

ó Weed management strategies, focusing on mulching treatments, will continue to be established and expanded.

ó Special attention will be focused on nutrient cycling, primarily nitrogen in the cherry planting. Nutrient and disease trials with liquid fish fertilizer from the Dramm Corporation are being planned.

ó Expansion of pest scouting will include trapping for major, and some minor, apple and cherry insect pests. Included will be pheromone and other traps for OBLR, GFW, STLTM, RBLR, CM, AM, and CFF. This will contribute to the pest complex database and begin to bring to light differences between conventional and organically managed systems.

ó Insect management trial with organically approved insecticides will be established as Honeycrisp and Montmorency cherry will likely begin to produce fruit.

ó Balaton tart cherries are being considered in the

minimize fungicide resistance development. Copper is an excellent fungicide for cherry leaf spot, but it is somewhat phytotoxic. Early data from one of her grad student suggests, however, that the phytotoxicity, although ugly, does not negatively affect photosynthesis. While yield was not measured, there was not any noticeable difference. This work has been done jointly with George Sundin's group at Michigan State University. Patty McManus can be reached at psm@plantpath.wisc.edu or 608-265-2047.

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

From Entomologist, Rick Weinzierl, I've pulled the following items from his reports that are directly relevant to organic growers. His research is conducted at Urbana (east-central IL) and Dixon Springs in Illinois' southern tip. If you were at the Prairie Fruits Farm field day last September 13 in Champaign, IL, you heard from Prof. Weinzierl. He can be reached at weinzier@uiuc.edu, Ph. 217-333-6651

Two sources for the conclusions below are 1) his poster presented at the Entomological Society of America's national meeting in Indianapolis in December 2006, titled: *Effectiveness of Reduced-Risk and OMRI-listed Insecticides for Control of Codling Moth and other Insect Pests of Apples in Illinois* and 2) a more detailed report in the 10th Annual Illinois Fruit and Vegetable Research Reports published this month. It is titled, *Insecticide Evaluations in Apples in Illinois, 2006*. Both are available on our Network webpage under RESEARCH, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Weinzierl's 2005 work on control codling moth and European red mite included the use of Entrust as one of four insecticide treatments evaluated at the Urbana Pomology farm. In the e-version of this newsletter, you can click on the titles and the poster and report will open.

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Network Advisory Council

By Deirdre Birmingham

In our Spring issue last April, I wrote about what I saw as the need for an Advisory Council for this Network. Since many heads think better than one, I thought a group of Advisors was a good idea. The Network was not started by me alone; there were growers who already envisioned such an entity as this Network. The Network seems to be scratching quite an itch; a lot of growers, plus researchers and extension personnel, are getting involved.

To guide growth and chart a future, a group of growers dedicated to such is needed. Several people have responded either to the newsletter article of last summer or my list-serv posts this winter.

While the Advisory Council will ultimately decide much of this, I envision the Council to be comprised of one grower per each of the upper Midwest states, plus one at-large member. We may not want to be hard and fast about the “upper” part of this. The Council can decide, for example, if our name should just be Midwest.

The Advisory Council would meet two to three times per year, primarily during the winter and by conference call. Our budget from our MOSES and Risk Management Agency partnership can be used before September 30, 2007, for those conference calls. This year, we also have \$100 toward each council member’s registration fees to the Conference to help make their participation possible. In some cases that \$100 will be applied toward their participation in the Organic Tree Fruit Research Symposium in Michigan.

Those who have stepped forward so far are: Iowa – David Sliwa and Maury Wills; Michigan – Jim Koan, Tom Rosenfeld; Minnesota – Harry Hoch; Wisconsin – Bill Wright. Please contact me if you are also interested. We are not necessarily limited to one person per state, at least in our first year. ó

New Additions to our Website

Under RESEARCH (<http://www.mosesorganic.org/treefruit/research.htm>):

Functional Ecology: Developing Measures of Sustainability. <http://www.functional-eco.msu.edu/index/htm>

Michigan State University Whalon Lab Organic Project Summaries and Plans, September 2006. Also presentations Mark Whalon gives are often available at <http://whalonlab.msu.edu/presentations>.

University of Wisconsin-Madison Peninsular Agriculture Research Station – Started an organic tart cherry and apple orchard in 2005.

Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems – Don Schuster is working with the Eco-Fruit Project to develop an apple budget spreadsheet. For more information contact Michelle Miller at mmmille6@wisc.edu.

Midwest Apple Improvement Association. This Association of growers and university researchers aims to produce economically viable varieties for the lower Midwest that include qualities such as resistance to fireblight and scab. <http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/maia/default.html>

The PRI disease-resistant apple breeding program involves Purdue University, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, and the University of Illinois. Check out their webpage for the many interesting varieties they produced and the history of this project, which formally ended in 1990. <http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/pri/default.html> ó

12th Annual Cider Day Celebrates the Spirit of the Apple

by Ben Watson, Slow Food,
Monadnock Region, NH

(Ben is the author of *Cider – Hard and Sweet: History, Traditions, and Making Your Own*)

On the weekend of November 4-5, 2006, Franklin County in western Massachusetts played host to the 12th annual Cider Day, which has become one of the nation's premier celebrations of real cider – hard and sweet – as well as all things apple. Cider Day is sponsored by West County Cider, the county's Chamber of Commerce, and CISA (Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture), a western Massachusetts nonprofit that promotes family farms, urging consumers to "Be a Local Hero" and buy local products.

Though the event has grown over the years, it still retains its small-town identity, as hundreds of weekend visitors from far and wide travel a circuit of local orchards and historic sites in this long-time apple-growing area. Most of the workshops – on topics ranging from "Cidermaking 101" to "Grafting Apples" and "Wassailing," are offered free of charge, and take place either at the orchards themselves or at the old Brick Meetinghouse in the scenic hill town of Colrain, just south of the Vermont border. Lou Chadwick of Hillside Orchards brought dozens of locally grown apple varieties for an informal, self-guided tasting. And, as always, an enthusiastic band of home cidemakers swapped samples of their best homemade stuff, networking with one another and asking questions of commercial cider producers and other experts.

Saturday's activities culminated in the popular Cider Salon, featuring the products of 14 artisan cideries from all over the U.S. This year's featured cidemakers were Charles and Milissa McGonegal from Aepfel Treow Winery, who drove all the way from Wisconsin! Sunday events at historic Deerfield once again included a heritage apple tasting, this year featuring Southeast varieties seldom seen in New England, followed by the popular artisan cheese and cider pairing, sponsored by Rubiner's Cheesemongers in Great Barrington.

With so many products that are represented on Slow Food's US Ark of Taste (artisan cider, raw milk cheese, and heirloom apples), Cider Day complements Slow Food USA's efforts to preserve and promote local agriculture and heritage foods. Mark your calendars now for next year's Cider Day, which will take place on November 3-4, 2007.

(Note: Want to go in 2007 or 2008? Let the Network Coordinator know! Perhaps we'll get vanload heading east. Also Ben Watson and Rich Stadnik, owner of Pup's Cider Co., are starting an apple nursery of cider varieties. Varieties will be listed at <http://www.pupscider.com>). ó

Field Days, Orchard Walks, Demonstration Days, Work Parties and more

I will be organizing at least three field days for this year, but our in-field events are not limited to what I organize. If you are interested in a formal event, or something less formal, with no registration fee and everyone BYO's whatever they need for food and drink, please let me know. In fact, for something you want to do on your farm or orchard, you don't necessarily need me and can just announce it via the list-serv and with enough notice, in this newsletter. The newsletter is issued quarterly (January, April, July, and September).

Perhaps you wish to get together with others who will be bench-grafting. Perhaps you've had enough questions thrown at you about pruning, you are willing to demonstrate for all interested --and to give others as much practice as they like!

No one is hosting an event, whether formal or informal, because they have all the answers. None of us do. The purpose of this Network is to share information and to encourage research to improve the organic production and marketing of tree fruits in our region. So let's get together more often and in more locations toward that purpose.

We do have funding for at least three formal field days. That is where the host preps a program and receives a modest honorarium. We usually meet from 10 AM to 3 PM. Educational handouts are provided. Advance registration is required to cover lunch and refreshments, and to ensure enough handouts are made. In some cases, with additional sponsorship, we can invite guest speakers to join us. The Network has funding so far for events in Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota.

So give it some thought, and let me, the Network Coordinator, know. I will start announcing events on the list-serv and in our April issue of Just Picked.

Also don't overlook events happening in your state and organized by tree fruit associations and/or Extension there. ó

Grafting and Pruning Classes

Robert Tomesh of UW-Extension offers grafting workshops throughout Wisconsin. Last year he offered workshops in 14 counties. He will be setting his schedule this month. Contact: rjtomesh@facstaff.wisc.edu or 608-265-4536.

The Wisconsin Apple Growers Association and UW-Extension are holding a Winter Pruning Clinic on Tuesday, January 23rd, from 1 PM to 3:30 PM at Ferguson's Morningside Orchard N17543 Grover Lane, Galesville, Wisconsin. The clinic is free and open to the public. No registration is required. The clinic will be held unless weather is severe. Messages will be on an answering machine at 608-262-9751 or 800-722-3120 beginning January 22nd. Dress appropriately for outdoor demonstrations. Visit <http://www.waga.org> on the web.

Dan Bussey of Albion Orchard in Edgerton, WI is offering an apple grafting workshop on Sunday, March 4 at 1:30 PM at Garfield Farm Museum in La Fox, Illinois, (northern IL) about 5 miles west of Geneva. Each participant makes three grafts to take home, cool store, and plant later in the spring. As time permits, Dan also discusses pruning of young trees. Call the Garfield at 630-584-8485 to make reservations. Cost is \$25/person.

Bob Purvis is offering his "Sixth Annual Minnesota Grafting Seminar" on Saturday, April 21, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Apple Shack at the Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center near Hastings, MN, southeast of the Twin Cities. The workshop includes instruction, demonstration, and hands-on grafting of apple, apricot, cherry,

pear, and plum cuttings of Minnesota-hardy varieties onto semi-dwarf or standard rootstocks. Anyone age 12 and up wanting to learn this skill is welcome. Cost of \$70/person, includes lecture notes, refreshments, scions, and 6 rootstocks. Please bring your own lunch. Registration limit is 25.

Bob Purvis will demonstrate pruning on bearing-age apple trees at Fischer's Croix Farm Orchard, right next door to the Carpenter Nature Center, on Saturday, April 14 from 1 to 5 p.m. Cost is \$39/person and includes lecture notes, beverages, and anything else needed. Anyone 12 and over who wants to prune is welcome to register. Class limit is 20.

If you want to attend both, Bob offers a "package rate" of \$105. He will send out registration forms in late February or early March. Those interested should contact: Robert Purvis, 7300 Iden Ave. S, Cottage Grove, MN 55016-1935; phone (651)-769-8473, or e-mail purvisrc@msn.com.

Weston's Antique Orchard in New Berlin, WI, has a grafting class on April 29 at 1 PM. The cost is \$25. To register go to <http://www.westonapples.com/bench.htm>, print out the form, and mail it to the address on that page, with the comment that you want to attend the class. Or call 262 679 2862.

If you know of other grafting or pruning events, please post them to the list-serv or contact the Network Coordinator. ó



2007 Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference

February 22-24, 2007

La Crosse Center, La Crosse, WI

Thursday Feb 22, Organic University, day-long intensives

**Check for updated information on the
MOSES website at www.mosesorganic.org**

715-772-3153

Research....From page five

Conclusions based on the observations from trials completed at Urbana and Dixon Springs in 2006:

ó Regular applications of Entrust + Pyganic can effectively control codling moth and oriental fruit moth (and some other insects). Consequently, these OMRI-listed insecticides may be effective for small-scale organic growers whose orchards are not large enough for effective use of mating disruption against these key pests.

ó Restrictions on the number of applications of Entrust allowed by the label mean that organic growers may need additional insecticides to obtain adequate control over the course of a season.

ó Applications of Entrust + Pyganic did not adequately prevent late-season entries into fruit by plum curculio larvae in southern Illinois.

ó Oriental fruit moth was prevalent in apples in Illinois for the first time in research and commercial orchards in 2006 (Dixon Springs and in commercial apple orchards in Calhoun County in southwestern Illinois).

ó Injury by potato leafhopper and Japanese beetle was near zero in the cultivar 'Goldrush' in comparison with other cultivars. 'Goldrush' appears to be resistant to these insects.

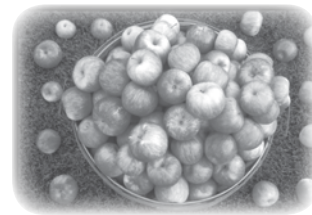
More About Dixon Springs: Two demonstration plantings containing disease-resistant apple cultivars, each approximately 1 acre in size, are established at the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center near Simpson in far southern Illinois in 1999. To observe and record the effectiveness of different management plans, one of these plantings is managed in compliance with organic certification standards (with application for organic certification planned for 2007), and the other is designated as an "integrated pest management (IPM)" planting, with pesticides applied according to results of insect and weather monitoring data. In each planting, there are 3 adjacent rows (19 trees per row) of each of the scab-resistant cultivars 'Enterprise,' 'Goldrush,' and 'Liberty.' Two border rows of the disease-susceptible cultivar 'Golden Delicious' are planted on each edge of each planting. In general, the insecticides used in the organic block since its establishment have been dormant oil, Surround, Pyganic, Bt, and Entrust.

Note: The Urbana orchard, with trees about 30 years in age, does not have a section under organic management. However, this could change when the orchard is relocated in a few years. ó

Organic Tree Fruit Growers Unite!

This Network was launched almost three years ago by growers at the Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference. We continue to meet annually there. Come to our fourth gathering on Friday, February 23 at 12:45 PM at the La Crosse Center in Room C, lower level South Hall. You do have to be a Conference registrant to participate.

You will meet other growers, meet the Network's first Advisory Council, and help shape our plans for 2007. If you would like to discuss anything else at the meeting, please let the Network Coordinator know in advance.



Upcoming programs in Illinois, from the IL Fruit and Vegetable News:

ó **Western Illinois Fruit and Vegetable School**, January 30, 2007, Quincy, IL. Contact Mike Roegge, University of Illinois Extension, 217-223-8380 or roeggem@uiuc.edu.

ó **Southern Illinois Tree Fruit School**, February 6, 2007, Mt. Vernon, IL. Contact Elizabeth Wahle, University of Illinois Extension, 618-288-4584 or wahle@uiuc.edu

ó **Southwestern Illinois Tree Fruit School**, February 7, Hardin, IL. Contact Elizabeth Wahle, as above.

ó **Stateline (IL-WI) Fruit and Vegetable Conference**, February 15, 2007, details to be announced. Contact Maurice Ogutu (ogutu@uiuc.edu or 708-352-0109)

The NetEx

The Network Exchange, or NetEx, is for you to use. Please use it similar to a Classifieds section, but at no charge. NetEx allows Network participants to exchange information on services or things to share, buy, or sell. It is not for product or input advertising. However, for now, knowledge-based services provided by Network participants are fine. Other examples: exchange or share scion wood, find others to make bulk purchases, orchard consulting or pest scouting services, find orchard or processing equipment, host a work day, offer a seminar (such as grafting or pruning), and any other way to help us improve our organic production and marketing of tree fruits, except for product advertising.

Looking for Natural Fruit

Natural Direct, LLC distributes produce directly from farmers in northern Illinois to homes in the Chicagoland area. Organic certification preferred, but not required. Farm pickup is available. Contact Scott at 630-551-7878 or scott@naturaldirect.com.

B & J Consulting

Eco-system organics of fruit trees.
Setup * Maintenance* Conversions
Bob Johnson 608-624-3777
Jamie Bjornsen 563-538-4546

Network Lending Library?

Interested in seeing this happen? We are happy to host one if interest is sufficient. Contact Jim and Barbara Lindemann. 608-838-8206, jfl0102@yahoo.com

Symposium Schedule

For more info, see page 11.

Organic Tree Fruit Symposium Tentative Schedule of Events

Date	Time	Event
Saturday, March 3:	4-8 p.m.	Registration
Sunday, March 4	8:30 a.m.	Registration, welcome, Meeting Processes and Goals
	9:30 a.m	Field Trips to Organic Orchards
	12:00-1:15	Lunch
	3-5:30	Wine and Cheese, Poster session
Monday, March 5	8:30 a.m.	Plenary Topics: New Orchard Establishment, Orchard Transition, Horticultural Practices, Pest Management, Soils, Marketing
	12:00-1:15	Lunch
	1:15-3:30	Topics Continued
Tuesday, March 6	8:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions
	12:00 -1:15	Lunch
	1:15	Adjourn

Our List-Serv – A Rich Resource

The Network's list-serv has been unusually quiet for this time of the year. And I know that is not because we each have it all figured out.

I have taken the initiative to ask new members to introduce themselves. When I add new members, per their request, only the two of us know they were added; you don't. Nor do you know how incredibly interesting these growers are. I inquire as to how they learned of the Network and list-serv, and ask them to tell me where they are located and about their orchard and involvement in organic tree fruit production. So I thought I should be sharing some of their responses.

We can be each other's best resources at times, so introduce yourself sometime to the group. You probably had no idea that we are 200 strong now! To join the list-serv, email me at deirdreb@mindspring.com with your email address in the body of the message. ó

4th International Organic Tree Fruit Research Symposium

March 4 to March 6, 2007

The Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center
East Lansing, Michigan, USA

Orchard near Flushing, Michigan, is managing 100-acres of apples organically. He will discuss not only his production challenges, but challenges in finding sustainable markets in marketing his fresh and value-added products.

The Symposium provides a forum for researchers across the country and internationally to get together with growers in one room and exchange ideas as to where the state of the art of organic tree fruit research is and where it should go.

At the Symposium, we will discuss:

- ó What organic tree fruit research is being conducted and what are the results from that research.
- ó How can growers utilize these results to move the state of the art of organic tree fruit growing forward.
- ó How does current research affect and/or change growing techniques?
- ó Where do we need to go with research? What are priorities and needs for research projects? We know there are finite research resources available so to what priorities should those resources be focused?

The orchard tours organized as part of the Symposium allow us to look closely at research projects and to kick the dirt in discussions of what those projects mean.

Grower-Oriented Scientific Program

This Symposium was started by growers, is for both growers and researchers, and growers will be taking leadership roles throughout the course of the Symposium. It features a true interface between all aspects of organic tree fruit production from soil to the market place! The Symposium will cover current research in soil quality, ground cover, tree, pest and horticulture management and other advances in organic tree fruit production. Practical research, on-farm advances and realistic marketing strategies will be emphasized. In addition, the Symposium immediately follows Michigan's two-day Upper Midwest Organics and associated programming during the Agriculture and Natural Resources Week at Michigan State University. Participants may wish to consider attending both events.

Sunday Field Trip

The field trip on Sunday is an important part of the Symposium as it allows growers and researchers to meet and talk in an orchard environment. We will visit two orchards, a private orchard and Michigan State University's research apple orchard at Clarks-ville, Michigan. Owner-operator, Jim Koan, of Al-Mar

Abstracts and Posters

Producers and growers may submit an abstract or poster for presentation. Industry and academic professionals are asked to present their research in poster form. Final deadline for abstract and poster submission is February 1, 2007. Topics should relate to one of the following sections:

- Pest Management
- Insect and Mite Management
- Disease Management
- Marketing
- Soil Fertility
- Tree Vigor & Training
- Ground Cover Management
- Grower Organizations

Please send your poster/abstract title(s), full authorship, and the name and mail/email addresses of the presenting author to rpmnews@msu.edu by February 1st. Poster space is not guaranteed for late submissions. Poster presentations will be on Sunday, March 4th. Posters will be grouped by themes. Symposium attendees will visit the themes as a group on Sunday evening. Each presenter will give a 2-3 minute synopsis, followed by discussion with the group. For more information or questions about posters, e-mail RPMnews@msu.edu.

Accommodations

Accommodations are available at area hotels and on-site at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center at <http://www.kelloggcenter.com/> or by phone at (517) 432-4000. Registrants should make their own hotel accommodations and should do so as soon as possible.

Local Organizing Committee:

M. Whalon, G. Bird, L. Gut, J. Koan, K. Delate & D. Birmingham.

e-mail: RPMNews@msu.edu

tel. (517)-353-9425

fax: (517)-353-5598

For the Symposium agenda, please see the box on the previous page.

Events Calendar

February 23-24, 2007 - Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference - La Crosse, Wisconsin. David Sliwa of Sliwa Meadow Farm and Harry Hoch of Hoch Orchard and Gardens will be conducting a session on small-scale organic tree fruit production on Friday, Feb. 23 at 8:30 AM.

Also on Friday at the Conference: Annual Meeting of the Upper Midwest Organic Tree Fruit Growers Network @12:45. Room to be announced in the Conference program. Meet fellow growers, including the new Network Advisory Council, and help shape grower activities for 2007. You must be registered for the Conference. Full conference information is at <http://www.mosesorganic.org>.

March 4-7, 2007 – 4th International Organic Tree Fruit Research Symposium. Kellogg Center, East Lansing, MI.

See inside for grafting and pruning events.

Next issue will be early April. To get events listed, contact the Network Coordinator.

The Upper Midwest Organic Tree Fruit Growers Network was started in 2004 for the purpose of sharing information and encouraging research to improve organic tree fruit production and marketing in the Upper Midwest. The Network is supported by the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES) and the Risk Management Agency of the USDA in addition to other event sponsors. This newsletter is produced by MOSES, layout by Jody Padgham.

Upper Midwest Organic Tree Fruit Network
c/o MOSES
PO Box 339
Spring Valley WI 54767