

# California Rare Fruit Growers



July 2015

North San Diego County Chapter

## Cheers from the Chair

by Richard Reid

Greetings,

Summer has begun in earnest, and after returning from a short vacation I found that the best performing plants in my yard have been the weeds! I have a very small yard, even so, I spent two days trying to get a handle on the rampant growth of all things non-fruit, but it appears to be a losing battle.

How are your plants doing? Why don't you take a few minutes to write down your successes, failures and new discoveries (or even old ones) and submit it to our newsletter. One of the nice things about having a group of like minded enthusiasts is that we all enjoy hearing about each others successes and failures. What we are growing and what we want to grow. As much as I would like to get a chance to speak to every member at the monthly meetings, it is just not possible, so sharing via the newsletter is the next best thing.

As an example, if there is anyone in the group that is growing epiphyllums for their fruit as well as their flowers I would personally love to hear about what your experiences are. I first tasted one at the home of Leo Manuel and was quite impressed with the fruit. I felt that it was as good as any dragonfruit I had tried. However, try as I might I cannot seem to find others who think of them as fruiting plants as opposed to mainly showy flowers.

So please, share your experiences with us. I am sure that every one of us had knowledge and experiences that the whole group can learn from.

Cheers,  
Richard



## New Members

by Dawne Dickinson

Lets give a warm welcome to our newest members:

James Cheney of Oceanside and Farryn Robins of Oceanside

## Member Matters Membership

Chapter dues with E-MAIL newsletters are \$10.00 for one member plus \$5.00 for each additional household member. Chapter dues with USPS newsletters are \$15.00 for one member plus \$5.00 for each additional household member. **USPS is only for those without E-mail.** You must also be a member of our parent organization, [CRFG, Inc.](#) To renew, please fill out a [NEW APPLICATION](#) online or bring it to our next meeting. Please contact our Membership Committee Chair Dawne Dickinson if you have any questions.

## Raffle

There will not be a raffle at our annual picnic. We will be holding our annual picnic plant sale. If you wish to donate plants to the sale, please contact Dottie Logan. Please bring cash to the plant sale.

## North San Diego County Chapter Financial Statement June 1 - June 30

by Dottie Logan and Helen Driver

<b>Opening Balance (6/1/15)</b>	<b>\$13,071</b>
<b>INCOME</b>	
<b>Membership Due</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Raffle Revenue</b>	<b>\$63</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$163</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
<b>Matching Grant to MiraCosta</b>	<b>\$500</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$500</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>(\$-337)</b>
<b>Closing Balance (6/30/15)</b>	<b>\$12,734</b>

## Refreshments For August: PLEASE BRING ITEMS IF YOUR BIRTH-MONTH IS August

Please bring something to share for the refreshments table at our Chapter meetings. Home grown fruits and vegetables are the best. However, other munchies are also greatly appreciated. Please be sure they are ready to serve.

## San Diego Botanic Garden Volunteer Orientation

Join the over 300 volunteers who contribute time to San Diego Botanic Garden. Join others for Volunteer Orientation and discover the many varied opportunities available. A short tour of the Garden is included. RSVP 760/ 436-3036 x206.

Future dates: Friday, July 31, Saturday, November 7 @ 9:30-12.

**NEXT WORK PARTY: July 11, 2015 8:30-12.**

### **Topic: Sustainable Hydroponics From A Rare Fruit Perspective Speaker: Alex Kallas - Ag Pals/San Diego Urban Homesteaders**

Alex defined "Hydroponics" as a style of gardening that seeks to fit the needs of plants. Hydroponics uses controlled parameters. It is also the technique of growing plants without soil.

Alex stated that most San Diego soils are composed of decomposed granite and consequently they have a low microbe count. This makes it difficult for us to grow plants in soil here so hydroponics can be used to compensate for that.

Hydroponics uses inert medium that doesn't break down in water. This medium is clean and sterile. Typical composition is coconut husk fiber, sand, and perlite. Rock wool fiber and expanded clay pellets are also used. It uses one tenth the land, water and fertilizer that conventional agriculture does. Labor involved is less than conventional agriculture and the yield is higher. The system is built once eliminating the need for annual tillage of soil etc. It is a closed system where ninety percent of the resources are recycled back to the plant. Salt level and pH are frequently measured to make sure they are within acceptable ranges.

Alex showed us pictures of various fruits being grown hydroponically. Avocado and citrus are grown in wooden boxes using a sand and perlite mixture. The "Continuous Flow" method is the technique used. Papayas are grown in "Dutch Buckets". Bananas are grown in perlite and expanded clay. Blueberries do very well using hydroponics if an acidic pH is maintained. Figs and pomegranates do well. Grapes grown hydroponically have been found to have a high brix level.

Other edible plants typically grown hydroponically are tomatoes, lettuce, peppers and strawberries. Tomato vines grown hydroponically can grow to thirty to forty feet. Fruit is produced on the last eight feet. Leaves are stripped off up to that point. Strawberries are grown in gutters placed on top of rebar. Water slowly flowing through the gutters keeps roots moist. Strawberries are also grown in vertical towers.

Alex answered a few questions our members had at the end of his presentation. A member asked about where to go to find more information about hydroponics. It was recommended that instead of relying on the Internet for information members should find qualified instructors to teach them the subject. His opinion was however that information on the Internet has gotten better over the years. Another member asked which system was a good one to buy "off the shelf". Alex recommended the "Dutch Bucket". A question was also asked about using the color white to improve plant photosynthesis. Alex stated that he tries to paint everything white to utilize this technique.

Alex finished with a couple of thoughts. He stated that his belief that in ten years hydroponics will be as commonplace as cell phones. He finished by saying that there is no plant that cannot be grown hydroponically. However does it make sense to do so?

Your Co-Secretary found this presentation informative but felt there was some statements made that needed data presented to back them up. No negative aspects of growing hydroponically were stated. This would have brought a more fair and balanced approach to the topic. On a positive note I thoroughly enjoyed the pictures of beautiful and healthy fruiting plants being grown in innovative ways. The pictures of papaya inspired me to at least try that technique some day to grow a finicky plant in a protected environment.

Submitted by Ben Pierce

July Picnic & Plant Sale  
July 18th, 11:00 AM @ San Diego Botanic Garden (Quail)

**MAKE RESERVATIONS NOW**  
**Call Dottie Logan at 760-806-6678**

**It's here! Bring your appetite! by June Andersen and Dottie Logan**

We will have our July potluck picnic Saturday, July 18th at the San Diego Botanic Garden (formerly Quail Botanic Garden). All attending members must also be members of our parent CRFG organization. We have, again, invited our friends from the San Diego City Chapter to join us. Let the Admission person know you are there for the CRFG picnic and you will not be charged admission or parking.

We will be in the patio area next to the Ecke Building, near the Undersea Succulent Garden. The picnic is from 11-2, but food should be on the table at least 10 minutes before noon and ready to eat. Please bring a ready-to-serve dish that will feed 8-10.

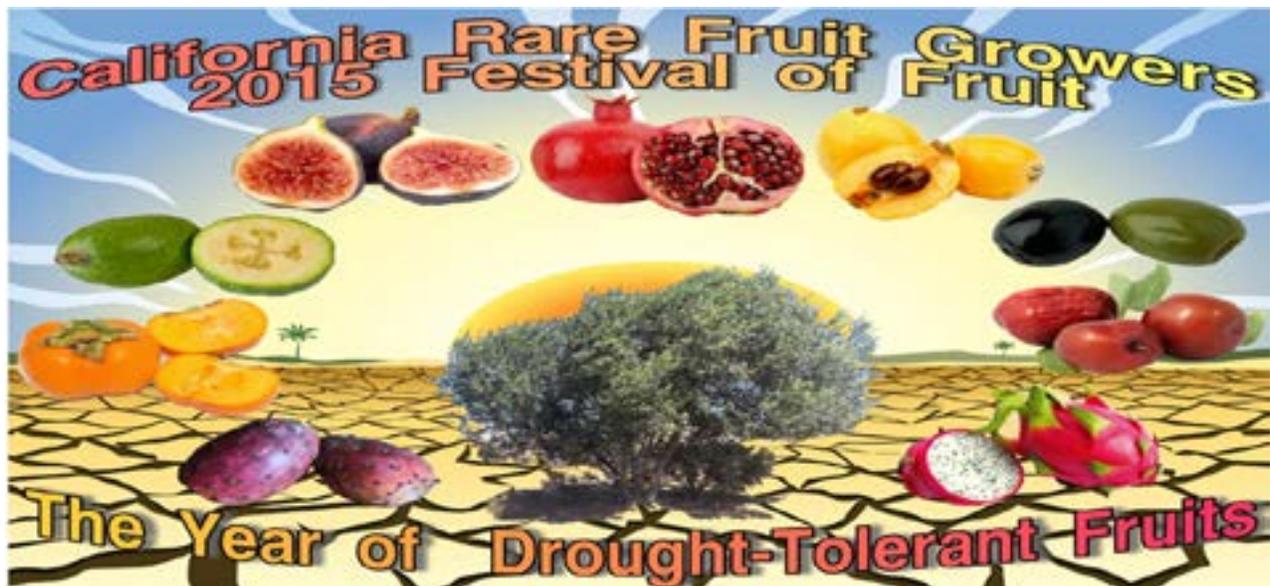
All volunteers should be there by 10:40 to help price donated plants and other tasks, as needed. Please bring plants and other garden related items for our fundraiser sale between 10:30-11. We need volunteers to 'plant sit' any leftover plants and bring them to the August meeting for the raffle. We will also have a complete set of "Fruit Gardener" magazines for \$1 each. This is the perfect time to replace your missing issues. If you have any questions, please call June Andersen (760-729-3501) or Dottie Logan (760-806-6678).

# **Coming to San Diego** **The 2015 FESTIVAL OF FRUIT** **August 7, 8 & 9 2015**

Dear CRFG : Don't miss your chance to register and attend this year's Festival of Fruit. With the current water shortage affecting much of the Western U.S., this year's theme of drought tolerant fruits will hold something for all who attend. Topics on fruits which survive and bear fruit with minimal water as well as ways to conserve water in your orchard and landscape will be of value to everyone who wishes to continue to grow their own fruit, despite the current drought. The Marketplace which is being organized by the UC Master Gardeners of San Diego County will be a great addition to our Festival with more than 60 vendor and information booths. Friday and Sunday will have tours available for interested CRFGers and the Friday night reception and Saturday night closing dinner will have dynamic speakers and activities for all to enjoy. Friday will also enjoy a presentation by Joe Simcox (fruit explorer extraordinaire), book signings by local authors, appetizers and a flight of fruit juices, and an olive oil and vinegar tasting, and a chance to socialize. Come meet fellow fruit enthusiasts from our organization, make new friends, revisit old friendships and participate in the fellowship and knowledge of our organization and our members that makes belonging to the California Rare Fruit Growers such a valuable experience. Together the whole is TRULEY greater than the sum of the parts (ie. synergy)... Go to [www.festivaloffruit.org](http://www.festivaloffruit.org) for registration information and for more information on this wonderful event. Visit the website often for updates and for new tour information. Early registration closes July 8th and on-line and mail-in registration closes July 24th. Some tours are limited, so sign up early and we look forward to seeing many of you at this year's Festival!

This event is becoming a reality thanks to all the hard work and effort of all of the volunteers who have donated their time and energy to this event. As the date for this festival approaches, we need the help of many more volunteers and hope that everyone can find a little time to give back to our Chapter by participating on this event in some way. Please come to a Festival of Fruit Committee meeting or contact a Chapter Board member or FoF Committee member to volunteer or for suggestions on ways that you can participate to help. Hope to see everyone in the near future.

Sincerely, Tom Del Hotal and Maddie Wichman, (FoF Co-Chairs)



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 Vista, CA 92084-7246  
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Calendar of Activities	
North San Diego County CRFG	MORE DOIN'S in the County
7/18 North County CRFG Annual Picnic at the San Diego Botanic Garden (Quail Botainical). RSVP to Dottie and sign up to volunteer. 11AM	7/25-26 Insect Festival at the San Diego Botanic Garden. 10AM-4PM <a href="http://www.sdbgarden.org/insect.htm">http://www.sdbgarden.org/insect.htm</a>
8/21 Yasha Magarik of the Leichtag Foundation, Two Men Who Plant Trees: Observations on Edible Afforestation, 7PM.	8/7-9 The Festival of Fruits <a href="http://www.festivaloffruit.org">www.festivaloffruit.org</a>
	8/21-22 Pitahaya Seminar and Field day. More info coming