

Giving, Donating and Supporting – Part I

When you have too much fruit, you may reach a point where you can't find more neighbors or relatives who want any. There's a solution to that.

AS I ADVANCE IN AGE, I OFTEN ENJOY GIVING a gift more than receiving one. One gift my wife, Jill, and I love to offer is fruit from our backyard. I am proud to give away some of my best fruit, especially when I can have the fun of handing it directly to the person who will enjoy eating it!



We take lots of our excess fruit to church, usually in individual lunch bags which we hand directly to folks we feel will eat it—those who might need it or appreciate it most. Other times we put fruit in a large basket and supply a stack of lunch bags, allowing people to take what they want and bag it themselves. It's fun to see an empty basket when we're ready to go home. There are advantages to each of these "methods." I like the pre-bag method because I get to see the face of the recipient and can give specific directions or answer questions.

Any fruit gardener with mature fruit trees has probably had crops far greater than can be consumed or stored. It's easy to give excess fruit to neighbors until you get them hooked on planting the same trees in their yards! Then it's time to look beyond neighbors or relatives for worthy recipients. Your local church may have a food distribution system. Most communities have a homeless shelter where small food donations are accepted. Most larger communities run well-organized food banks that will accept large quantities of fresh fruit and distribute it to those in need.

Until recently our local CRFG chapter had no system of efficiently collecting, sorting and delivering fruit to our local food bank. One member saw the opportunity to educate us

all and is encouraging us to get serious about donating surplus fruit to the local food bank. We are learning from her, and getting tremendous satisfaction in the bargain.

We may not see these consumers or hear appreciation as we do at church. But trusting others to be sure our donation gets to those intended is nonetheless gratifying. I'm also a little more careful about what fruit goes into a donation since I won't see the recipient. You see, when I give apples to an older couple at church, I can tell them these are "one-worm apples" which should be dissected with a knife when eating them. In giving a 50-lb. bag of apples to the homeless shelter, I make sure not to give them a single wormy apple!

All fruits are not ideal for a complex distribution program. Some, like figs, perish quickly. Others, such as European pears or cherimoyas, ripen slowly in ideal storage. Perhaps we can develop a guide for handling various fruits when their purpose is distribution by others. We may even educate our food bank friends!

Good news for worriers: All fifty states and Washington, DC, have "Good Samaritan" laws addressing food donations and donor protection. While the laws vary, most extend donors some protection from liability unless there is evidence of unsuitability. Many food distribution programs provide written indemnification or otherwise outline donors' liability.

I challenge you: learn where to donate excess fruit and about your local organization. Test them with a box of fruit and see how good you feel! If you have thoughts on this or would like to share experiences, please contact me. We may have a *Fruit Gardener* story! In any case it is more blessed to give...

president@crfg.org

- MANGO
- TROPICAL GUAVA
- CHERIMOYA
- ATEMOYA
- SUGAR APPLE
- GUANABANA
- LONGAN
- LYCHEE
- PITANGA
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- ACEROLA
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- WHITE SAPOTE
- RIO GRANDE CHERRY
- TAMARIND
- PASSION FRUIT

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CHAPTER CALENDAR

Please send chapter event listings to Dalia Wood by emailing her at dalia@daliawood.com by the 15th of odd-numbered months. The term "TBA," as used here, means "to be announced."

ARIZONA

November 11 (Thur), 7:30 pm Chapter meeting, speaker TBA. U of A Coop. Ext. office, 4341 East Broadway, Phoenix. Call Patrick Hallman at 602-348-5576 for more info.

December 11 (Sat), 11 am Christmas Potluck. Bring a favorite dish to Denise Phillips home, 617 North Tamarisk Street, Chandler. Contact Denise at 602-430-0942.

CENTRAL COAST

November 13 (Sat), 1:30 pm Youth program, Templeton High School.

December 11 (Sat), 12:30 pm Annual Christmas Potluck and Plant Exchange at PG&E.

For info: Art DeKleine at adeklein@calpoly.edu, 805-543-9455; Joe Sabol at jsabol@calpoly.edu, 805-1056; Larry Hollis at l_hollis@hotmail.com, 805-549-9176.

FOOTHILL

For info call Joel Johnson at 626-791-0686.

GOLDEN GATE

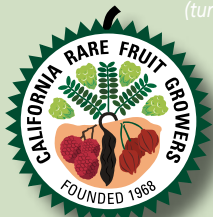
November 13 (Sat) Location and speaker TBA. For info consult the chapter website (http://www.crfg.org/chapters/golden_gate/meetings.htm), call Katherine Pyle at 510-843-1657, or Alice Rosenthal at 415-272-0596.

INLAND EMPIRE

November 13, 11:00 am Chapter meeting at Ed and Shirley Perryman's home, 1673 Marin Ct., San Jacinto. Experience "Backyard Orchard Culture." The Perrymans have created a walk-through orchard with 165 trees, including 21 varieties of figs, stone fruit and more. Our hosts will provide the main course for our luncheon, members need to bring a side dish for potluck. Contact Sandy Millar at 951-369-9784 or rustlover@gmail.com for more info.

December 18, 6:00 pm Annual "Holiday Party" at Sims Tree Learning Center, 6111 Appaloosa Ave., Pedley. Enjoy the Sims' beautiful property which includes numerous gardens with palm, rose, iris, canna, orchid, cactus and succulent collections, citrus and stone fruit orchards, vintage motor cars, Percheron draft horses, nature museum and more. The chapter will provide turkey, ham and stuffing. Members need to bring a favorite side dish for potluck. Contact Sandy Millar at 951-369-9784 or rustlover@gmail.com for more info.

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FRUIT GARDENER

California Rare Fruit Growers



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