

Trinity Heritage Orchard Project

In March 2006 Trinity County Cooperative Extension began the Heritage Orchard Project to promote upkeep and renewed interest in the County's heirloom fruit trees. Existing heritage fruit orchards were promoted as a healthy and economical local food source through a series of workshops. Old fruit trees were identified and catalogued by the community, new trees were grafted and planted in public spaces, and events were held to generate knowledge and interest in using heritage fruit. Events were targeted at both producers and consumers in an effort to protect the horticultural heritage of Trinity County.

Project Impacts:

- UCCE-Trinity hosted a workshop on harvesting and preserving fruit, educated food bank employees on proper gleaning and use of fruit, and developed two brochures to distribute to community residents and interested organizations, one focused on proper gleaning techniques and one focused on incorporating heritage fruit into a healthy diet.
- UCCE-Trinity worked to raise awareness of fruit trees and their value-added products by combining events with the annual Salmon Festival. Events included a cider pressing with free juice, an apple tasting, an information booth and vendors selling fruit products. UCCE-Trinity staff also set up a booth at the Weaverville and Hayfork farmers markets and distributed information to potential vendors about producing and selling value-added fruit products. Children are routinely included in the gleaning and processing activities for these events, and conversations with teachers have begun to incorporate heritage fruit tree grafts in high school greenhouses.
- Staff conducted a survey of local heritage fruit trees, collecting information on trees from 27 locations. Heritage fruit from 62 trees was identified by an expert pomologist. The varieties encompassed a range of species typical of orchards planted before World War I and included rare apple varieties such as Hubbardston Nonesuch and Roxbury Russet. Scion wood used for grafting and propagating old varieties was collected from 14 heritage apple varieties and one pear variety.
- UCCE-Trinity hosted several community tree care and pruning workshops. A corps of volunteers was identified at these events to maintain heritage trees in local parks and community spaces. Groups such as the Girl Scouts and 4-H also have volunteered time to maintain community trees.



Learning how to restore neglected fruit trees at a pruning workshop

Next Steps:

- An IPM grant allowed for two additional workshops to be held, one focused on integrated pest management for gardens and orchards and another on summer fruit tree pruning. These workshops continued the community education and pruning maintenance that began with the 2007 project.
- Heritage apple tasting was featured at the Salmon & Heritage Fruit festival in 2007 and is scheduled again for October 2008 with help from local volunteers and Americorps.
- Heritage apple tree identification continues, with rare Catshead, Washington Strawberry, King David, Hyde King and Hoover trees added to the database.
- “Youngster” trees from scion wood collected in 2006 were planted in the Weaverville Children's Garden, Hayfork Children's Garden, Weaverville Community Forest, Lowden Ranch, and the Young Family Ranch.



Apple tasting at Salmon & Heritage Orchard Festival with assistance of Americorps staff.

More Information:

To find out more information about the Trinity Heritage Orchard Project please visit their Web site at www.trinityroots.org or <http://cetrinity.ucdavis.edu>. These Web sites are also featured on a large network of vineyards, local agencies and tourism venue Web sites.

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Citation:

Forero, Larry and Carol Fall. (2007) *Trinity Heritage Orchard Project*. Redding, CA: Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program

