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EVENT



GRAVENSTEIN BRAND APPLE FAIR 2024



RAGLE RANCH PARK • SEBASTOPOL, CA
AUGUST 10 & 11 • 10AM~6PM
GRAVENSTEINAPPLEFAIR.COM



Visit us at the Grav Fair

[Buy Tickets](#)

Slow Food Russian River will be there with our Community Apple Press, pressing local apples and giving samples. Come and fill your senses with just how good fresh pressed apple juice can taste!

Enjoy live music on two stages, all things Gravenstein, fabulous local food, art & crafts vendors, activities for kids, craft ciders, microbrews, premium wines, Artisan Tasting Alley, VIP Lounge, and of course the Farm Yard at Life on the Farm!

August 10 & 11

Saturday, and Sunday

Ragle Ranch Park, Sebastopol, CA 95472

COMMUNITY APPLE PRESS



Good news at the Community Apple Press "CAP"

We re-designed our website

[Visit our new MAIN WEBSITE](#)

Calendars

We added all-new user-friendly scheduling calendars. Check them out.

[Schedule a time to PRESS YOUR APPLES calendar](#)

[Volunteer to HELP RUN THE PRESS calendar](#)

School Press Calendar

The calendars for schools to come to the press on Fridays and for volunteers to

help the children press apples and run other activities we offer are open. This is a wonderful program. Have a school to suggest? Send your suggestions to info@slowfoodrr.org.

Apply for a SCHOOL VISIT

Volunteer

Remember, helping people like you at our press is easy and fun. As an all-volunteer organization we can always use a few more hands. If you can give one or more four-hour shifts during this season, please sign up to volunteer!

WINE UPDATE WITH PAUL





Top row: *Veraison*; a lateral shoot; powdery mildew on grapes.
Bottom row: *Botrytis* mold; sunburned grapes; leafing to allow more airflow.

Our busiest time of the year

Managing growth for circulation and exposure

Spring and early summer. Grapevines focus on growth beginning at bud break until around *veraison*, when the grape berries soften and turn from green to gold, pink, or red. Shoots slow and eventually stop growing around this time so the vines can focus on ripening their fruit.

June and July. Vines are generating new leaves, both at the tip of primary shoots but also lower down, where they push smaller shoots from buds that lie

at the base of every leaf stem (or “petiole”). These secondary shoots, often called “laterals”, create new opportunities for photosynthesis. But they also congest the canopy, reducing sun exposure and air circulation around the grape clusters.

Stressing vines mid-season

When vines stop growing they shift their energy from producing new plant material to ripening fruit. If a vine does not make this shift and continues to grow through the ripening period (after *veraison*), it may not fully optimize the ripening cycle. The grapes it produces may lack phenolic (skin and seed) ripeness.

Farmers can encourage vines to make the transition by:

- Cutting back water or nitrogen during the growth stage.
- Not mowing the grass between rows to create competition for resources.

Stressing vines mid-season is usually better than stressing them at the end of the season. It may also help lower labor costs by producing smaller vines with less canopy to manage.

Manage growth to avoid fungal infection

Before *veraison*, mildews like powdery mildew and downy mildew are the primary risk. After *veraison*, molds such as *botrytis* and grey rot take over.

Mildews and molds thrive in the absence of air circulation. By increasing airflow we greatly reduce the risk of infection. Excess leaves and laterals can crowd around clusters. This reduces airflow and increases the chances of a fungal outbreak. Removing some leaves and laterals around clusters improves air circulation and sun exposure.

Optimizing sun exposure

Sun exposure helps develop grape skins, which contribute to the color, aroma, and tannic structure of wine.

- Too little sun: Pyrazine aroma compounds can make wine smell and taste overly green or vegetal.
- Too much sun: Sunburned grapes can lead to baked, raisiny, or bitter flavors and may cause wine to oxidize easily.
- Just the right amount: “Dappled sunlight” optimizes skin and berry development without risking overexposure.

The busiest time of the year

Managing growth takes a lot of work.

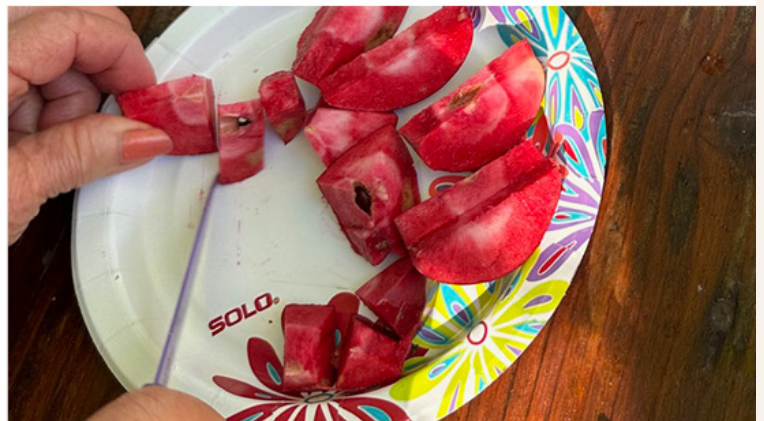
- Vineyard managers are stressing vines with deficit irrigation and nutrition management so vines will transition from growth to ripening at veraison.
- Crews are positioning shoots, hedging, and leafing for ample airflow and dappled sunlight to avoid infection and optimize ripeness.

The most critical canopy work of the year happens now before the grapes even start to ripen.

By Paul Sequeira



APPLE PRESS KIDS BY ZENO



NOTE: [The application for teachers to bring the class to the press is now open](#)

Redlove apples amaze school kids

When we bring school classes to the Apple Press – Friday mornings during Apple Season – the kids love to experience different cultivars, how they taste, smell, their appearance, and texture. Hear their cries of joy when they are amazed by the reddish flesh of a Redlove Apple [in this brief video](#). Redlove apples are a series of cultivars bred by Markus Kobelt in Switzerland.

Apples originate from the [mountain region of Kazakhstan](#). They are not true to seed (apple seeds are a combination of two different genetic parents), so propagating by planting seeds generally creates a new variety. Stable cultivars are propagated by grafting scions on rootstock. There are over 7,500 known cultivars.

Sonoma County orchards grow a wide range of cultivars. A list is [on our website](#).

You can contribute to our Apple Press School Visits program by donating to the [Paula Downing Memorial Fund](#).

By Zeno Swijtink

SAVE OUR ORCHARDS NOW!





Small growers like Carole Flaherty have relied on Manzana Products to process their apples into juice, applesauce, vinegar and cider.

July Update

History. Last Fall, during the height of apple harvest time, Manzana closed its gate to all local apples for 3 weeks. Approximately 1,000 tons of local apples were not processed, many were not picked and many were already in bins and loaded on trucks where they rotted. Then, at the beginning of 2024 Manzana announced they were closing and moving to Washington and would not process apples in Graton after 2024.

What does this mean for our apple farmers? Manzana processed about 8,500 tons of local apples every year. Without a local processor, our farmers have no financially viable option.

What does this mean for our orchards? Imagine our county without apple orchards and you have the answer. Apples are the historical and cultural heart of our community. Apple farmers live on slim profit margins and we are already seeing orchards torn down and converted to vineyards.

How did Slow Food Russian River and our Apple Corps get involved?

Years ago Slow Food International declared the Gravenstein apple an endangered heritage food – one of only 6 species in the United States. Saving them and restoring their market requires us to work to save all orchards and varieties. Slow Food champions diversified agriculture in all areas.

Our action group

We are working with a group of concerned local people gathered by Supervisors Rabbit and Hopkins to find a solution. The group includes: Slow Food Russian River, Sonoma County Agriculture Commissioner, the Economical Development Bureau, UC Ext. Services, Farm Trails, Community Affiliation With Family Farmers (CAFF), North Bay Jobs with Justice, the Farm Bureau, and the Teamsters Local Union 665 in addition to local growers and cideries.

For information about the progress of this group go to [Sonoma Apple Orchards](#). Your comments and ideas are welcome on the Forum, please join us to save our orchards.

Have questions? Write to applecore@slowfoodrr.org.

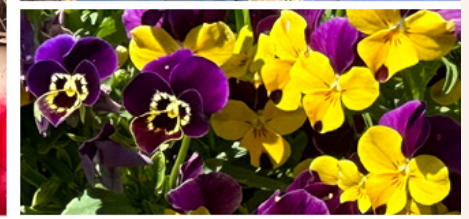
Need help with your apple trees?

The UCCE North Bay [Specialty Crops YouTube Channel](#) has many webinars on orchard maintenance including one about Codling Moths (those nasty worms in the apples). We are currently working with the Master Gardeners to produce a series of webinars geared toward backyard orchards, large and small, next year starting with one on how to prune apple trees. Watch for the announcement in our newsletter.

By Carole Flaherty

EVENT REPORT WITH LYNDIA





Deep Roots Farm Tour

Big goals. Chris Herrera has big goals for Deep Roots Farm -- an 11-acre, regenerative, biodynamic, organic farm. He took over an existing farm a year ago and has made huge improvements: hauling out tons of trash, trucking in semis full of compost, planting, weeding, harvesting, and managing.

Chris is from generations of farmers in both Sonoma County and the Midwest. His degree from Sonoma State is in wine. He relocated to busy Petaluma Hill

Road so that more people will come to the Farm. He wants us to interact with our food and to know where it is from.

At our tour on May 11, he told us about plans for the Farm, inspired by Joel Salatin and others, to make it even more diverse. It will eventually raise a lot more livestock, for example. We learned a lot and there was much to see, even though Deep Roots Farm is still young.

By Lynda Banks

More Info:

- [Deep Roots Farm website](#)
- [Chris Herrera received a 2024 Northern California Food and Wine Award for ad biodiversity and regeneration](#)

CATHERINE'S TURKEY TALK





[Click to watch a short video of our project turkeys in July \(30 seconds\).](#)

Heritage turkeys are growing up

After the turkeys have been brooded (under controlled temperatures) for 6 weeks in outbuildings, we release them into our lower field. The smallest ones in the video have just been introduced into the pen, meeting some older siblings from earlier hatches. We've been hatching nearly every week since early April.

Our project families have had their turkeys since mid spring and we've begun to make the rounds to their properties to wingband the young birds. Stay tuned for more turkey news!

More Info:

- [Heritage Turkey Project of Sonoma County](#) website



TASTING WITH RICK



Top row: 2-month-old potato starts flourishing in July; bag of seed potatoes, at Badger Ranch Farm Stand for distribution. Bottom: Seed potatoes.

All Hail the (Tomales) Queen!

Over 6,000 pounds of seed potatoes for the storied "Tomales Queen" potato unexpectedly became available for local farmers and others at the end of April. Thanks to some quick work over 30 SFRR members and supporters (including members of the Rare Fruit Growers Association) were able to snag some for home gardening!

As you may have seen in a follow-up email, this variety – reportedly fantastic for baking and mashed potatoes – came to California in the mid-1800s. It arrived as the British Queen potato and was so extensively farmed in the Fallon/Tomales area that it became known as the Tomales Queen, or the “Queenie”. But as crops changed in the next century it disappeared.

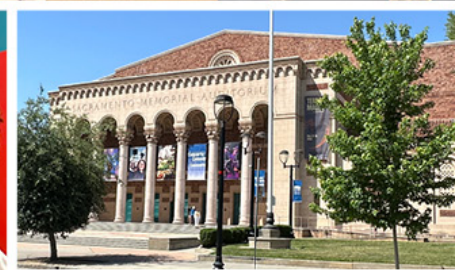
Melissa Poncia, from the Fallon farming area, knows that her great-grandparents farmed the Queenie starting around 1896. She wanted to bring it back and use it to distill boutique or luxury vodka, and arranged for the development and distribution of seed potatoes; but ultimately she and her family had too many starts for their own farm.

Badger Ranch Farm Stand, on Gravenstein Hwy (across from Hardcore Coffee), turned out to be an ideal location for our one-day potato distribution. Two months later, all these starts are about three feet high! Stay tuned for post-harvest culinary reviews, probably in late August or September...

By Rick Mead

EVENT REPORT WITH LYNDA





Terra Madre Americas

The first Terra Madre Americas was held May 17-19 in Sacramento. Slow Food Russian River Board Members attended the general event and also the Leaders' Meetings.

Educational displays and seminars featured Slow Wine, Slow Coffee, and Biocultural Territories of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Info for the upcoming Terra Madre in September:

- [Terra Madre 2024 in Italy](#) on the Slow Food website
- [Terra Madre Salon de Gusto 2024](#) website in English



IN THE ORCHARD



*Top row: Apple cluster; Codling moth larva; aphid leaf curl.
Bottom: Apple tree trunks painted with white latex enamel mixed with 1/2 water.*

July in the apple orchard

Thin, thin, thin

What to do in the orchard now: Thin, thin, thin. Personally, many of my older apple trees are just too big for me to thin and I'm sure that is true for many of you. However, it helps to thin fruit anywhere you can.

The goal in thinning fruit is to end up with the apples far enough apart that they don't touch each other because the place where apples touch is the perfect place for a Codling Moth to lay eggs and for earwigs to hang out. It is recommended fruit be thinned to 8" apart.

By the beginning of July the Gravensteins are getting large and, since they have very short stems, the apples "self thin" and many, even most, of the apples fall to the ground. If you can reach the branches where the apples are hanging like grapes pick off most of the apples, heavily laden branches are in danger of breaking.

Codling Moth traps

It's still time to hang up [Codling Moth Traps](#). These traps will attract Codling Moths where they get stuck to the sticky surface.

Here are two videos showing DIY traps, with instructions:

- [Homemade apple maggot, codling moth trap](#) using molasses as an attractant
- [How to make a codling moth trap and lure](#)

Prop branches

This is the time to prop branches. Here at Quail Run Orchard we use 2x2" or 2x4" props. We have about 80 apple trees planted around 1915 and hate to lose any branches. Here is a short video on propping: [Pro tip: prop up fruit tree limbs](#)

Sunburn

Sunburn is the number one reason fruit trees die. Sunburn causes blisters that may turn into cankers and may kill the tree sooner or later, even healthy-looking 10-year-old trees can die as bacteria enter the blistered area. Paint with a light-colored or white latex enamel mixed with 1/2 water. Paint the main trunk and any horizontal branches where the hot afternoon sun is shining it. I mix in a tablespoon of neem oil to help repel trunk borers.

Heat spells

With 100-degree temperatures be sure to water young fruit trees. Several apple tree growers in Sebastopol tell me that they put 6-7 gallons of water a

week on young trees. However, during hot spells, they increase that amount.

Mature trees that have established root systems that tap into deep groundwater don't require water; they are 'dry farmed'.

Aphids

Check trees for aphids. Look for leaves that are rolled up and discolored. Remove infected leaves and discard. This is the time to get rid of the aphids before they spread.

By Carole Flaherty



PAULA'S PICKS



Thank you, Silent Auction donors

Thanks to you and the generous support of the participants, after all the expenses for our well-attended annual Members' Meeting were paid we cleared over \$1,000.

- Janet Azevedo - 3 pieces of artwork from various artists
- Rick Mead - Stoneware pottery
- Ambix Distillery - 2 tastings for 2 + bottles
- Cofield Cheese - 2 cheese baskets
- Sebastopol Cookie Co. - Gift Certificate

- Paula Shatkin - Handmade quilt
- Jizelle Albright - Cypress artwork
- Three Leaves Foods - Gift Certificate
- Farmhouse Inn - Dinner for 2
- Thode Family Farm - Gift Certificate for Tierra Vegetables, Slow Food bag, utensil kits
- Tilted Shed - Tasting certificate, products and swag
- Russian River Vineyards - Tasting & lunch for 4
- Margie Guyot - apple painting
- Dennis Bolt - Gravenstein mounted photo + gift cards
- Merry Edwards Winery - 2018 Pinot Noir magnum, tasting gift certificate
- Terrapin Creek Restaurant - Gift certificate
- Willow Wood Market Cafe - Gift certificate
- Underwood Restaurant - Gift certificate
- Rendell Hourigan - Figs painting
- Farm Trails - Farm Trails products and Market Bag



VOLUNTEER

Volunteer opportunities!

The SFRR Board can use some help with our

- Communications and Social Media (newsletter, emails, etc.)
- Event Planning (visits to farms? tours of wineries? cheese education? learning about soils?).

If you would like to support either of these activities, we would love to hear from you! Please email info@slowfoodrr.org.



SUGGESTIONS



What do you suggest for SFRR?

- What are your ideas about future SFRR events?
- About topics for this newsletter?
- Farms we should look into for possible tours?
- New food-related businesses we might support?
- Ecological challenges we should research and report on?
- People making a difference in Sonoma County agriculture and food?

Your ideas matter, so please let us know!

Email: Info@SlowFoodRR.org

We look forward to hearing from you!

COMMENTS?



d feedback on our Newsletter.

Most issues include events, reports on past events, tastings, updates, and info from both Slow Food International and Slow Food USA.

What are *your* thoughts?

Email to: Info@SlowFoodRR.org

OUR BOARD



Shari Figi



Carole Flaherty



Peggy Myers Knopp



Rick Mead



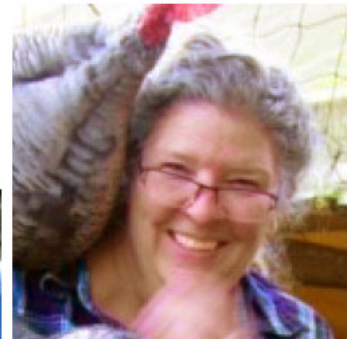
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Slow Food Russian River | P.O. Box 2746 4157176600 | Sebastopol, CA 95473 US

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