



April 7, 2010.

Dear Colleagues

Back In 2007 I submitted a grant proposal to the UC Elvenia J. Slosson Endowment and the Rockwell Collins Foundations for funding of a project entitled “International Rare Fruit Orchard Restoration and Revitalization”. It was approved and the work was completed as of March 2010. This International Rare Fruit Orchard, located at the 43-acre Emma Prusch Farm Park in San Jose (647 South King Road), contains over 125 varieties of trees and is known region-wide for its rare and international fruit varieties, including bananas, citrus and other sub-tropicals. Some of the more unusual varieties are the raisin tree (*Hovenia dulcis*), white sapote (*Casimiroa edulis*), jaboticaba (*Myrciaria* spp.), Surinam cherry (*Eugenia uniflora*), Cherry of the Rio Grande (*Eugenia aggregate*) and Shipova (*Sorbopyrus auricularis*). It was founded by the Local Chapter of the California Rare Fruit Growers and the UCCE Santa Clara County Master Gardener program in 1982 under the leadership of Nancy Garrison (now retired). Over its 25-year life, the Orchard has been maintained by a partnership of stakeholders –Santa Clara County Master Gardeners (UCCE SCC MG), the City of San Jose -Emma Prusch Farm Park, and the California Rare Fruit Growers.

Restoration plans included selective tree replacement, structural updates for irrigation repair, plant identification and the development of interpretive signage to promote multicultural and sustainable horticultural practices for the backyard orchard gardener. This project offers an excellent opportunity for outreach to underserved, culturally diverse audiences in this large urban location. Through self-guided tours, interpretive signs and multi-lingual brochures, the restored Orchard offers expanded educational opportunities for adults and children.

For the UCCE Master Gardener Program in Santa Clara County, this rare orchard has been a source of pride for more than 20 years, since its foundation, and has also provided significant and meaningful opportunities for volunteer work for the membership of the Master Gardener Program.

We are planning to have an inauguration field and educational day, where we will unveil the interpretive signs. We are inviting you to attend such event, and as part of the international Earth Day’s Celebration (April 22nd), we are conducting this event **Wednesday April 21st, 2010**, so PLEASE SAVE THE DATE! Together with the tour through the orchard, we are presenting a comprehensive educational program (tentative agenda attached).

I am thankful to the UC Elvenia J. Slosson and the Rockwell Collins Foundations for their grants that afforded us the opportunity for its renewal and revitalization but most importantly to the group of Master Gardener volunteers that made this possible through their hard work and initiative.

Should you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to seeing you.

Sincerely,

María de la Fuente, Ph. D.
Farm Advisor San Benito and Santa Clara Counties



*Parks, Recreation and
Neighborhood Services*



INTERNATIONAL FRUIT ORCHARD

Signage Inauguration and Educational Program

April 21st, 2010

Tentative Agenda

- 9:30 – 10:00 AM COFFEE AND REGISTRATION**
- 10:00 – 10:15** Welcome and Presentation.
Dr. Maria de la Fuente, UCCE San Benito & Santa Clara, Farm Advisor.
- 10:15 – 10:30** History of the Orchard.
Nancy Garrison, UCCE Master Gardener and California Rare Fruit Growers.
- 10:30 – 11:15** Unveiling of Interpretive Sign and Tour of the Orchard.
- 11:15 – 12:00** Spotted Wing *Drosophila* and its management in the backyards.
William Coates, UCCE San Benito, Fruit & Nuts Advisor.
- 12:00 – 1:00PM LUNCH**
- 1:00 – 1:45** *Title pending*
Dr. Mary Lu Arpaia, CE Subtropical Horticulturalist
- 1:45 – 2:30** Clean Stock Program
Aaron Dillon, Four Winds Growers.
- 2:30 – 3:00** Closing Remarks and Adjourn
Alex Pearson, Emma Prusch Farm & Park

Wednesday April 21st, 2010
9:30 AM to 3:00 PM
Emma Prusch Farm & Park
647 South King Rd.
San Jose, CA 95116

For Additional Information Contact
Maria de la Fuente, UCCE Farm Advisor
(831) 637-5346

Lunch sponsored by:
California Rare Fruit Growers, Dave Wilson
Nursery, Target Specialty Products, Crop
Production Services, NH3 Service Co.,
(others pending confirmation)

RSVP by Sunday April 18 at (408) 282-3116
with Maribel Gonzalez.

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Emma Prusch Farm Park

Please note:

Emma Prusch Park will be closing one day per week in order to accommodate the City of San Jose budget for 2009-2010.

Due to the close, Emma Prusch Farm Park and the project areas will not be accessible on any Monday beginning November 30, 2009.

Overview



Emma Prusch Farm Park is located at 647 South King Road, San Jose, near the intersections of Highways 101 and 280/680. Master Gardeners are involved with five projects at the park including a High Density Orchard, Rare Fruit Orchard, Heritage Orchard, California Native Color Wheel and Children's Tunnel Garden. Santa Clara County 4H volunteers keep farm animals in the large wooden barn located within the Park. In 1994, the Master Composter volunteers established a composting demonstration area which has become an important part of the educational needs of the community. Free composting classes are held at the Park: for more information visit [ReduceWaste](#) website.

High Density Fruit Orchard

Originally planted in the mid-1990s the Prusch Farm [High Density Fruit Orchard](#) provides a public demonstration of pomme fruit gardening, showing local gardeners how to maintain reasonably sized trees and how several varieties can be grown in a small garden space by planting several trees in one planting hole. The orchard consists of 85 trees of 57 known varieties (some trees are unmarked). Types of trees are primarily apple (almost 70%), pear and quince.



Heritage Orchard

Master Gardeners maintain a large Heritage Orchard that includes many different varieties of fruit trees including figs, grapes, plums, apricots and apples. Many educational opportunities are supported by the year round orchard operations including winter and summer pruning, building water basins, mulching and weeding as needed. A drip irrigation system was installed to reduce water use in the Orchard.

Children's Tunnel Garden

Surrounded by Emma's German Heirloom Garden, two 10' x 5' tunnel gardens have been planted by Master Gardeners. The Prusch Farm Park Foundation ([PruschFarmPark.org](#)) designed, maintains and works the 17 bed demonstration garden, with a focus on German variety vegetables and flowers. The two tunnel gardens were planted in 2007 and incorporate the use of trellising structures to provide support for many vining plants including pole beans, cherry tomatoes, gourds and grapes. Children walk under the garden canopy and can see first hand how food is produced.



Emma's German Hierloom Garden with chicken protection



Squash on Children's Tunnel



One of the vegetable tunnels covered with squash vines

California Native Color Wheel



The focus at the main entrance to the Park includes a newly planted California Native Garden. Master Gardeners have worked diligently to create a unique and flourishing demonstration garden, rich with California native plants. Because chickens free range throughout the park, it is sometimes difficult to establish plants, so we are learning to garden with chickens. As it matures, this new garden theme will continue to be an example of how California native plants can grace our home gardens with color and beautiful foliage.

Rare Fruit Orchard



The California Rare Fruit Growers (www.CRFG.org) originally planted this eclectic variety of rare fruits and trees from around the world in the early 1980s. The orchard includes over 125 rare and exotic fruit trees, including bananas, citrus and other sub-tropicals. Master Gardeners work with the Rare Fruit Growers to maintain the orchard and replant as needed. Monthly CRFG meetings are held in the Park's meeting room.



Pistachio tree with fruit



Pathway through the orchard



Stand of Banana trees

For more information about Emma Prusch Regional Park visit [Prusch Farm Park](#).

Tags: [emma](#) [field project](#) [prusch park](#) [san jose](#)