

ALASKA NAFEX NEWSLETTER

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A Publication of the Alaska Chapter, North American Fruit Explorers (NAFEX)

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MEETING DATES

Jan 10. Tuesday, 7 p.m. NBA lunchroom. Woody perennials for Anchorage, lecture and slides of shade trees, ornamentals, some fruit trees and berry bushes. Doug Tryck of Tryck Nursery, Anchorage, Speaker.

Feb 9. Thursday, 7 p.m. NBA lunchroom. All about hardy kiwis--panel discussion, moderator to be announced.

Mar 9 Thurs., 7 p.m. NBA lunchroom. Tomatoes and greenhouses. Speakers: Julie Riley and Ruth Edmondson.

Apr. 13 Thurs., 7 p.m. NBA lunchroom. Grafting workshop.

May 11 Thurs., 7 p.m. NBA lunchroom. Topics and speakers to be announced.

June 8 Thurs. 7 p.m. NBA lunchroom. Topics and speakers to be announced.

1989 DUES ARE DUE

Please pay your 1989 dues as soon as possible. Make checks of \$7.00 payable to Robert Purvis and mail to his home address listed above. Members not paying dues by March 1 will no longer be on the mailing list.

1988 BIG DELTA ALASKA FRUIT EXPLORATIONS

This is a summary of activities and observations pertaining to a small fruit tree effort at Dufendach/Moser's at Big Delta, Alaska, in cooperation with NAFEX.

During the winter of 1987-88, a 200 ft x 200 ft. plot was cleared from predominantly black spruce forest, with good drainage. The moss and topsoil were retained as much as possible, the ground was plowed and disced to a depth of about 8 inches, and the roots were removed by hand. A peripheral fence was built using treated wooden posts on 10 ft centers and 5 ft 8x8 concrete reinforcing mesh was stapled to the posts. A 2 x 6 was nailed along the top and 2x2x30 inch chicken wire was stapled along the bottom. Hopefully, this will discourage moose, rabbits, etc. A berm was left near the middle of the plot to help as a windbreak.

NAFEX sponsored a grafting workshop at the University of Alaska Fairbanks on April 9, 1988. Rootstocks purchased through NAFEX at that time included 10 'Ranetka', 20 Malus baccata, 10 'Antonovka', 5 Manchurian plum, and one Ussurian pear. During and immediately following the workshop, one pear, two plums, and 12 apple grafts were made using scionwood similarly obtained. Four 3/4 to 1 inch trees were purchased including 2 'Rescue', one 'Norda', and one 'Norland'. All grafts were whip grafts.

Potting soil was made using a mix of 15 cu. ft. of screened topsoil from the intended planting area, 4 cu. ft. of perlite, 4 cu. ft. of peat, 4 cu. ft. of vermiculite, 11 lb of lime, 15 lb of superphosphate, 8 oz. of potassium and 1.5 lb of 34% ammonium nitrate. All trees were potted on April 12 and 16, and placed in a heated greenhouse, except for 1 'Ranetka', 11 'Antonovka', and 2 Malus baccata which were dead. The trees were placed outside with a western exposure under a visqueen UV barrier on May 23. The barrier was used to prevent scald.

The farm was visited by Dan Whitney of Whitney Orchards in Washington on July 9 and 10. He placed 6 bud grafts on 2 each of 'Antonovka', 'Ranetka', and Malus baccata. The trees were transplanted on July 18 in east-west rows on 8 ft centers. Holes were 18 inches to 24 inches deep and backfilled with a mixture of half decomposed rabbit manure and half native soil, a few ounces of 10-20-20, and a treatment of "Upstart". They were planted in the southern part of the plot.

A growth survey was made on August 31, with the following results: All rootstocks were alive, 11 of 15 whip grafts were successful, and all the bud grafts had callused over, although none of the buds had broken dormancy. Two Malus baccata rootstocks did not break dormancy. The 'Bradshaw' plum and one 'Antonovka' demonstrated the greatest new growth at 30 inches. The average growth of 40 apple trees was 11.2 inches and of 5 plums was 17.2 inches. Powdery mildew was noted in varying degrees on all 'Antonovkas', 2 'Ranetkas', and one 'Nor-' series on an 'Antonovka'. Leaf hoppers showed up on the larger 'Norland'.

The following charts list the trees in the orchard as of August 31:

- 1 'Ure' pear on Ussurian
- 1 'Norde', unknown rootstock

- 2 'Rescue' (1 bore 2 apples)
- 1 'Noran' on baccata
- 1 'Bradshaw' on Manchurian plum
- 1 'Nor?' on baccata
- 7 'Antonovka'
- 1 'Norland', unknown rootstock
- 11 baccata
- 1 'Norson' on baccata
- 9 'Ranetka'
- 4 Manchurian plum
- 1 'Battleford' on baccata
- 1 'Norland' on baccata

The trees were staked and tied with baler twine for the winter. In addition, they were enclosed with metal cylinders about 14-16 inches high and 12 inches in diameter and filled with sawdust. Let's hope we see lots of green next spring when we get our REAL score card!!!

Many thanks to all who have helped get this project started, especially Bob Purvis, Dan Whitney, Pt Holloway, and above all, "He who giveth the increase". -Jon Dufendach

UAA OFFERS HORTICULTURE COURSE

The spring semester catalog of University of Alaska Anchorage lists a course, Biology 194, Introduction to Horticulture, which may be of interest to some NAFEX members. It covers the following topics: elementary plant classification; soils, fertilizers and watering; pests and diseases; tools and equipment; care, selection and propagation of indoor plants, hardy trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals, including vegetables; lawns; and practical applications for local conditions. The course meets Mon and Wed 7-8:15 p.m. The credit fee is \$114.00; special fee is \$15.00, and our January speaker, Doug Tryck, is the instructor. The course runs from Jan 16 to May 6, 1989.

GRAFTING WORKSHOP FOR FAIRBANKS

Bob Purvis is making tentative plans to conduct a grafting workshop in Fairbanks on April 8. At this time he will also distribute trees ordered from Whitney's Nursery and from Lawyer's Nursery. 'Antonovka', Malus baccata, M. ranetka and 'Wien' crabapple rootstocks will be available for grafting, in addition to limited quantities of hardy pears and plums, and apple, pear and plum scions for possible trial in the Interior. Anyone having comments or suggestions regarding this workshop should contact Bob as soon as possible.

NURSERY NOTES

Ed Fackler of Rocky Meadow Orchard and Nursery recently mentioned that he has trees of 'Sweet 16' on the hardy Polish rootstocks P.22 (a mini-dwarf) and P.18 (which produces a full-sized tree). This may be of interest to those living in the warmer microclimates of Anchorage. At Dale Hall's orchard in south Anchorage, 'Sweet 16' was nearly ripe Oct 4, 1988, and ripe enough to be good eating. Ed Fackler's address is Rt 1 Box 104, New Salisbury, IN 47161 (812) 347-2213.

Northwoods Nursery, 28696 S Cramer Rd. Molalla, OR 97038, phone (503) 651-3737, is offering two early season pears this year, both on OH x F.333 rootstocks. 'Peter's Sugar Pear' ripens in Portland OR in early to mid July, producing small, very sweet yellow fruit. The other, a new cultivar named 'Argenche', is described as bearing small to medium size, round yellow fruit with a very tasty flavor, great for fresh eating. It ripens in mid-July in Portland. Trees of either pear are \$14.50 each plus shipping. Northwoods is also offering the new apricot 'Puget Gold' on St Julian A plum

rootstocks. The St. Julian A is adaptable to a wide range of soils and is hardy. 'Puget Gold' blooms later than most apricots and ripens in early August in the Portland area, which suggests early September in Anchorage. The fruit is large, elongated, orange and freestone, with good flavor. The original tree was a seedling apricot which grew and cropped regularly for a number of years in Anacortes, WA which has a cool Pacific Northwest maritime climate. The trees are \$17.50.

Raintree Nursery again is offering the 'Jhonker Van Tets red current, a variety which is larger, sweeter and earlier ripening than 'Red Lake', for \$7.50 per bush. They are also offering 'Meteor' pie cherries on the new GM 61 semidwarfing cherry rootstock which is rated as hardy to at least -20 F and is much more tolerant of heavy soils than Prunus Mahaleb rootstocks. Their address is 391 Butts Road, Morton, WA 98356, phone (206) 496-6400, and their catalog contains a wealth of useful information.

Erik Simpson and I currently have a joint order in at Raintree. Contact either of us at 243-3058 or 345-7117, respectively if you want to add to our order.

A few NAFEX members have expressed interest in obtaining 'Westland' apple trees and 'Toka' and 'Superior' plums (the plums on hardy Prunus salicina mandshurica rootstocks) from Lawyer Nursery. There are still a few 'Westlands and one "toka' available on the first 5-tree bundle. Contact Erik or Bob at the numbers listed above if you want one. Prunifolia is the rootstock for 'Westland' -R Purvis

HAPPY 1989 !