

January 13, 2007 MATACF Quarterly Meeting

Morning orchard meeting

11:20 am

Present: Bruce Spencer, Frank Howard, John Mirick, Jamie Donalds, Mike Novack, John Emery, Brad Smith, Leila Pinchot, Denis Melican, Lois Breault-Melican, Yvonne Federowicz, Kathy Desjardin, Mike Meixsell

Brad - Soil testing: good to do. Had done. Didn't get info about where soil was taken from.

Mike – need to do involved sample to be sure get entire field.

We should learn how to do these things ourselves. Can get kits. State will do analysis.

Leila – UMass probably does.

Yvonne – URI does in RI.

Bruce Spencer – Ph is big issue. Can get probe. Pastureland wasn't tilled because of rocks; much of MA was pasture.

John – soil color will shift at depth of plow, if plowed.

Leila – CT does soil tests before each orchard. One had Ph 7 – too high for chestnut. Put iron sulfate in. Chestnut likes 4.5 to 5.5.

Mountain laurel, blueberries, oaks, pines, hemlocks.

Ph probes are inexpensive and not difficult to use.

Brad – would hardpan have been obvious?

Disturbance – manmade vs. natural

Mycorrhizae is another issue

Conclusion: More soil testing

Yvonne: get everyone a probe (research the best type)

Leila will run a soil testing session along with the inoculation session

Nut storage: going well

John Mirick - Peat moss has some antifungal properties

F1s can often germinate but don't grow; some don't germinate at all.

Last year didn't even get 10%.

Mike – his F1s last year didn't get correct part outside the nut

-not a viable cross

Yvonne's F1 cross produced only 1 nut

What about unusually warm winter?

Mike N. – most trees count total time below freezing.

Normal years freezes down to several feet

Winter is not over

Apple growers are worrying because insufficient cold

Plan for additional nuts next autumn to try a fall planting

Mike N. – experience in chestnuts in pots – roots don't tangle – get easily separated plants

Fall planting – raised frame

Brad – need another 6 orchards? – will need bluex, etc. Charlotte out sick. Will get info. Late April- early May bluexes etc.

*Need to figure out our nuts and number of orchards needed.

Jamie – have been doing a 11-inch high, 3-inch wide bluex. Then tried 18-in. – some grew out of the 18 inch in 1 season, weren't spindly. If redoing would try 18in. again. Everyone almost has some spare bluex. We could gather those up, or else Jamie can order and deliver to site. Jamie usually has a spare set sitting at his house for spring emergencies.

Fertilizing: Osmocote – ordered about that time. Gary has been using liquid thru irrigation system though. Other orchard managers get about 1 bag each spring.

Bruce: 1st two years are most important, then roots should be down and ok without any help. Jamie – 1 row without is doing as well as every other row.

Can get material out fairly quickly.

Brad – higher bluex may help against deer pressure for a bit longer.

West Boyleston had to put large cages around trees. MA Fish & Wildlife.

At Tower Hill – deer keep eating down the horse chestnut.

If anyone needs anything specific, call Jamie. Otherwise he is going by his standard approach.

Jamie – we should make it as easy as possible for new orchard managers.

Bluex planters can be redistributed to new orchard managers – (like heavy bulb managers).

People should bring theirs to the April Meeting.

Forest Planting Experiments

Brad – what do we do with our extra nuts – our forest experimenting.

Jamie is chairing. Rufin has sent a letter down to Bob Paris. Charlotte has discussed too.

Is working on a proposal for something more structured for planting in a forest setting.

We would like to find out what has been done at National with this.

Fred Hebard who reads these minutes may have ideas.

Mike – we can introduce additional tree resistance sources later; can bring genes in later. Bigger black holes.

Yvonne – where was that orchard that the Paragon chestnut was planted in? (In PA. Is in Blight Commission report, Yvonne will look up.)

Jamie – what is the main question?

Mike – how well do they grow in the absence of predation?

What percentage germinate under various conditions?

Our genes are more northern.

Brad asked Leila what research has been done with planting nuts.

Bruce plants acorns about an acorn-length down or less. Predators are issue.

Bruce has lined up forest spots to plant.

Someone in PA is doing forest planting testing. We need to get their info too.

They put a metal rod with a colored flag in it so they can find them again.

Mike Novack puts bamboo with ribbon.

John Mirick – metal flag – put in, various types of tags on top. Wetland flags.

Optimum balance – depth.

Bruce prefers spring planting. Have long winter predation season.

Dug hole, put rodent-proof screening on top.

Chestnut will compete well with anything in the forest.

Bruce can contact Jamie Donalds for anything he'd like for forest planting this spring.

Bruce is filling holes where have taken out hemlocks.

Should we plant lots of nuts, or fewer 2-year-olds?

Bruce – smaller trees better. Roots adapt quicker. With oaks, cut any taproot to promote fibrous root system. Source for chestnut was UMass or Wisconsin. They got beautiful seedlings but were not blight-resistant.

If taproot long, difficult to get down in too. With seedlings, need to get roots spread out.

Commercial planters often do not do this well.

Frank – passed out info about a new product: graphics about chestnuts

Afternoon Board Meeting

Board Members Present: Bruce Spencer, Frank Howard, John Mirick, Jamie Donalds, Mike Novack, John Emery, Brad Smith, Denis Melican, Lois Breault-Melican, Yvonne Federowicz, Kathy Desjardin, Mike Meixsell, Dave Ugucioni

Others Present: Leila Pinchot

1:10 pm

Treasurer's Report

Mike passed out Profit & Loss for 2006

We do have the permanent 501-C-3 status

Jamie: would it be good to add a new category for planting supplies for the forest research? Mike – it can go under “research”

Replacing software from fire losses: Quickbooks also does donations accounting, but National does that for us. Not sure if separates “qualified” from “non-qualified” donors; restricted funds from unrestricted

Quickbooks is \$400. Not much harder to do paper and pencil. Volume is low, Mike feels computerized system is unnecessary. Quickbooks nonprofit does not come with Donor accounting.

Lost in fire: old computer, printer, softer. Compaq was old computer. Had been carried as an asset so has been written off.

(Fire in room of Mike Novack’s house destroyed a variety of documents and equipment.)

Data backup plans: Mike is getting a large fire safe.

Yvonne encouraged offsite locations for backups. For instance, people can transfer copies of computer files to our website server using the sFTP accounts that numerous Board members have.

John Mirick: this accounting sheet good for us, but we might need to look at a bigger picture. We want something presentable for an audit. Also, a clean concise system that could be moved to any treasurer.

The books are in standard accounting form, Mike says.

John says this method of presentation not what an accountant would be looking for under general accounting principles.

Depreciation is an issue.

If applying for a grant, need 3 years of financial statements in proper form.

Therefore may want to put more effort into annual effort on this.

Mike Meixsell – would like to see the Form 990EZ. Is submitted to state. Would like to see this for a meeting each year.

Mike N.: our assets are difficult to depreciate; our computers are older now.

John N.: computers after 3 years are worthless. Ought to be looking at our Educational Equipment total because has depreciated.

John M. agrees that Quickbooks does not help with the small number of transactions that we have.

John M. wonders what we mean by “chestnut inventory”. Mike N. has been carrying forward some assets such as this. **Brad will investigate with Anne Myers, the old treasurer.**

Included are orchard ladders.

Also, who owns certain equipment like bluexes? From accounting viewpoint, need a particular logic and it needs to be consistent.

We should clean up our accounting categories and make sure we are clear on what was meant by them.

Motion: approve Treasurer's report: Brad, John.
Passed unanimously

Secretary's Report – Kathy

Membership is at 454. Up slightly.

A veterinarian who is looking to retire owns 90 acres. Kathy will put him in touch with Charlotte. Chestnut history on the land? Kathy encouraged him to become involved. Potential mother tree. In Montgomery, MA.

Is in southern part of Berkshires. Has a 5" diameter 40' tree. Also, off Rte. 20 is a grove of chestnut on a hill. Russell, MA. Dave says there had been a Russell tree that was good.

Mike N. can get us an orchard site out near there if necessary.

Rufin doing a talk in Stockbridge soon. 30-40 people. Also is publishing article in "Arborist News", February issue. Has 20,000 members in 46 countries.

Motion: approve minutes of October Meeting. Brad, seconded Mike. All approved.

Motion: approve minutes of November Annual Meeting. Brad. Seconded, Mike N.

Mike M.: should get biographies of new people (Board Members). Also, we need to get Bruce a big packet of the Bylaws, Charter, Etc.

Leila passed out the document, "Inoculating Chestnuts with Blight". Went over briefly. Frank Howard: in medicine, takes time for alcohol to sterilize surfaces – around 2 minutes.

Leila: Fred hasn't been doing that. Jamie: age of tree was not brought up before; had a diameter criterion. Blight strains – vary in virulence.

Discussion of spreading rate of blight.

Yvonne – old documents indicate that 1 canker can have >1 billion spores.

Jamie – doing our inoculation this year is partly a test, learning time.

Natural infection occurs too. Dave – some trees are putting up a fight.

**Date for Tower Hill Inoculation Training: early June best for fungus.
June 9, 2007. Rain Date is June 10th. Contact Brad if weather is questionable.**

We should also get this information out to the membership, it's a signpost that we are moving forward. BRING CAMERAS. It can go into Seedlings.

Leila: 2-3 teams of people will work. About 12 people total was our thought.

We will need supplies; Jamie to coordinate that.

Frank Howard: Newton conservators have created 12 half-hour programs. We could put video on our website. Frank will get Yvonne info on the file format they are using.

Annual Meeting: Brad thanked everyone for making it a great one.

Next year's annual meeting: think of venues. Maine chapter president visited Blissful Meadows, said let's have a regional meeting.

Regional Meeting: would be a lot of work for everyone, further to travel. (New England annual meeting.) Annual National Meeting is in Vermont next year anyway.

What about having a 1-hour New England meeting during that national Meeting?

Vermont-New Hampshire will have a chapter of some sort by next autumn.

Adding more officers to the Board structure.

Brad's ideas:

- a. Webmaster (Yvonne)
- b. Newsletter Editor (Brad)
- c. MA Breeding Coordinator (Charlotte)
- d. Education/Presentation Coordinator
- e. Orchard Supply Manager (Jamie)
- f. Membership Coordinator (separate from the secretary with detailed analysis of our membership)
- g. Publicity Coordinator

Mike N.: difference between official corporation officers and roles: officers are registered with the state.

Can be official roles without getting state involved. Brad – not interested in making more work. Committee chairs? Can list people in Seedlings.

Mike N.: if change executive committee to include these other people, might get effect you want. Currently Jamie and officers are executives.

Frank Howard: having more people take care of jobs will help recruit more people. Could publicize, look for someone to be new editor etc. Members will then know things that need to be done. "Coordinators"?

Mike Meixsell: good to have annual report published by chapter each year. We are losing our history. Would like annual report to which each coordinator submits a page. Each person would submit a report about important things done each year.

Can be good information for Seedlings too.

Membership list – can get by area.

We don't use our membership as much as we could.

Emails can be sent out.

Mike N: additional people are welcome in our meetings and members might not know that. Jamie was in a lumber store and met several members who didn't know about our quarterly meetings.

Leila: CT is sending out all the planting dates etc. now so the members have a chance to plan in advance. Are doing bluxes and nuts.

Mike M: one organization he's in has an email calendar. He finds it very useful. Is updated regularly.

Yvonne: some people might not want to get the emails so we ought to have a Mailing List from our server.

- find out if can send pictures.
- Get a couple – orchard work and general informational
- Opt out for subscriptions
- People are checking our website for planting times
- Kathy will send Yvonne the email addresses

Motion: increase payment to David O'Donnell for this new service of two new mailing lists on his server. Yvonne. Mike M. seconded. Unanimously approved.

Jamie, Kathy, Yvonne and Brad will work on sending things out.
Mike N. can help people with these. 4 Moderator model.

Seeking out email addresses if we don't have one...

Presentations will be publicized through these.

Will members enjoy coming to our Board meetings? Mike N. thinks that it is a working board meeting and interested people would not be turned off.

In PA – have regional sections – Sara has set up local meetings.

Educational Opportunities:

Lois

March 7, College of the Holy Cross.

MEESE: Lois will be presenting at. All-day program. 11 other groups. 500 attendees. 1 hour session. Big session on Charlie Chestnut.

*Send to Lisa.

Needs chestnut leaves for display. Yvonne has. Jamie also has.

Americorps crew coming to Moore State Park. Will work in orchard. Would be nice to have Americorps orchard.

June 6th. Annual Festival of Flowers, Moore State Park.

Professor Michael White joined from Providence.

Lois and Kathy interested in having chestnut food at Blissful Meadows Golf Club – could add to their menu.

Inoculation – Tower Hill 10 am. June 9, 10th is rain date. Provided no plant sale there then. Need to arrange with Tower Hill.

Next meeting:

April 15th, 2007. Sunday.

Meeting adjourned, 3:55