

MATAFC Quarterly Orchard and Board Meetings

Oct. 14, 2007

10:00 am Tower Hill Botanical Garden chestnut orchard, Boylston, MA

Dr. Fred Hebard and Leila Pinchot led an examination of the inoculation sites on the BC3 trees that had been inoculated in June. Each tree's status was documented. Members viewed the distinguishing characteristics of the rating system for tree blight resistance that we will be using in all our orchards.

1:15 Afternoon Board Meeting – National Grid, Northboro, MA

Board Members Present:

Frank Howard, Rufin Van Bossuyt, Yvonne Federowicz, Jamie Donalds, Mike Novack, John Emery, Charlotte Zampini, Kathy Desjardin, Gary Jacobs, Denis Melican, Lois Breault-Melican, Jim Garland, John Mirick, Kathy Desjardin,

Others Present:

Leila Pinchot, Brian Clark (Holly-Ashfield Orchards) – brought apples

Treasurer's Report

We have replacement insurance; as we buy equipment such as new computers, be sure to tell Mike N. – we may get reimbursed for the difference between the old and the new. (Fire loss and similar issues; insurance recovery of fixed assets.)

We have reserved a room at Tower Hill for the Annual Meeting.

We are now using an open source program called "New Cash". It's in HTML. Scheme reports are created. Mike can write his own special reports.

John M. felt that the format is improved.

Motion to accept treasurer's report: Gary. Seconded John M. Passed unanimously.

Secretary's Report.

As of end of September, Membership is 381. Down about 75. We haven't been getting a lot of new members, and memberships are expiring.

There have been numerous emails and phone calls re. fruiting trees. Kathy has been contacted by teachers who would like demo plantings at their schools, etc.

Getting a subcommittee would be good for plantings at schools, etc.

Leila: our bordering states are still looking for trees to pollinate, so please send them their way if they're close enough to CT, VT or NH etc.

Also, we may be asked to incorporate additional sources of resistance into our trees so we'll need to keep more mother trees in mind.

Do we want people who call to take initiative on education in their communities?

A worker at Blissful Meadows would like speakers for students.

Virtually all of us have given presentations and would like to do more.

Nuts for schools: should we use our orchard nuts?

Yes, but recipients should sign a germplasm agreement – some of those nuts might work out well.

They could also do a science project and select among them for resistance.

Frank: in Newton, got 5 bare-root trees. However 4/5 were cut down by mowers. Therefore schools need to work on protection of the trees.

We can hand schools a free science project.

We can create loci of interested people.

We could pilot a program for schools, involve some science, handling data etc.

Arbor Day is another good tie-in for us. They have students involved in trees planted, often at schools, etc.

Homeschoolers are another excellent resource. (Gary.)

Charlotte: we often don't say we need money for things.

Adopt-an-orchard: contribute to the foundation so you can support the local orchard.

Requests for talks: could incorporate a short visit to a local orchard.

Kathy can ask whoever is closest to give a talk when a request comes in; virtually all of us have given talks.

Grange presentations are open to everyone in the town.

Gary to Yvonne: Some organizations have monthly calendars.

Yvonne needs the info in advance though so it can be posted.

Kathy and Yvonne need to get together to get the lists for the new email listserves

How is National doing on followup letters?

Pollination Report:

4 backcrosses

375 nuts from Upton, Ridge

5 nuts from school in Upton

250 nuts from Newton tree (Frank Howard's famous SQUIRREL TREE)

Nipmuc tree had bad pollen

John Emery tree 30 nuts – to fill in a line.

F1 crosses: Upton – 129

Aldrich Upton – 113

Northboro – 42 nuts

F1s – 400 nuts

We also now have one Nanking line; we will need a new orchard for that.

Bad mortality this summer for all non-irrigated esp. new places.

Irrigation systems: Jamie is willing to put together systems, but he needs to know the data on the orchard first to order things.

We need the correct filters for water drawn from ponds etc.

Rufin has had a request for an orchard on town-owned property

Gary suggested 1-inch hose, has less pressure drop over 500 or so feet.

Seedlings:

Summer issue is turning into a fall issue.

Brad would like people to send him info.

Big E: (Lois)

We had nice signs

Good educational interactions.

Numerous people wanted blight-resistant trees.

Annual Meeting Nov. 18th

Reforestation: we would like to figure out what we can do with direct seeding, bare root, etc.

We need to experiment with lower-value nuts now, before we get our first highly resistant ones.

Forest plantings with seedlings that are 1-2 years old?

Mike N: try with nuts smeared with red pepper?

Quabbin reforestation:

18 total in August. 10% of original.

A pocket in moist area had been trimmed down by deer.

How do we get them above deer height?

An old encyclopedia mentioned that chestnut is very sensitive to low moisture in its first two years.

Depths of slash is another question.

Rodents get more cover under slash, but deer have a harder time with it...

Annual meeting: should vice president

Rufin is interested in continuing as a Board member.

National meeting: if you missed more than 2 meetings without a valid reason, you were considered to have resigned.

Nominations: made Brad– seconded -Gary and approved:

President: Jamie

VP: Yvonne

Secretary: Kathy

Treasurer: Mike N

Board members as on email list, no changes from current expiration slate

Yvonne will send nomination slate out via masschestnutorchards; also on website; Board membership too

Gary and Jamie will help Yvonne call people to see who is

Board can designate people to go in Jamie's place. Rufin will investigate how that works.

Jim Garland is thinking about a column in Seedlings and will talk to Brad about it.

January: we will work on the Chairpersonships that Brad had in mind.

Conference call software is available – people could attend virtually?

Large publicity events:

Chestnut Anthology – will be released at the Annual Meeting

Susan Freinkel will be at Walden Woods just before the Annual Meeting

25th Anniversary Appalachian Trail Walk – Mike M.

Top of Greylock is closed while they're rebuilding roads. Trail goes through Dalton.

Mike N. might be able to get something for Upper Goose Cabin. There are sprouts all around that cabin. AT people will be able to report on chestnuts they see.

We would need to have something for the through hikers. We can do ID right there at the cabin. Food always goes over well.

National will tell us more about this at the Annual Meeting. Early June, etc.

Appalachian Mountain Club: excellent partner for restoration down the road.

AMC has some bad feelings from AT hikers for various reasons.

They have Conservation committees that could help with reforestation etc.

We should have a partners list on the website.

Yvonne will put this on the website.

Putting the list in Seedlings would be good.

Comments on MOU: Can NRCS pass on Germplasm agreement to NRCS etc.

Jamie: we need to work on our seed orchards first.

What are our seed orchards going to look like? Can we partner with someone who has the capability of doing that?

We need a model agreement for a landowner who has a seed orchard. It would be a thirty-year commitment.

E.g. Grafton Orchard is owned by 95-year old man. Things in families can change very fast.

State Park, Conservation Trust land, municipal open space, etc.

Charitable donations – giving conservation restrictions

Permanent seed orchards – we as a group would own; then wouldn't have to worry

Meadowview area – 30-yr lease – family wants to be able to sell the land for development as land value has increased for that

How many seed orchards will we need?

Several?

Seed orchard committee will be one for January.
We should ask this at the Annual Meeting. We also need to maintain ownership of the nuts.

Sat. Jan. 12, 2008 Next Quarterly Meeting.