

45TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

INTERNATIONAL DWARF FRUIT TREE ASSOCIATION

GRAND HOTEL, KELOWNA, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

FEBRUARY 16 TO 20, 2002



CONFERENCE AGENDA

Saturday, February 16

8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Pre-conference Tour. Depart by bus from the Grand Hotel, Kelowna, for an all-day tour, traveling north, visiting orchards between Kelowna and Vernon.

Jamie Kidston Orchard, Vernon. Jamie is a third generation grower on the same land. He planted his first super spindle in 1992, and his standard spacing is now 2 x 10 ft. He buys bench grafts and plants them in their final location (rather than in a nursery). We will look at part of the 1992 planting as well as his 2001 planting.

Kalamalka Forestry Centre Research and Seed Orchards, Vernon. Approximately 250 million seedlings are planted in B.C. forests each year. Research into various forestry-related matters, including the improvement of the genetics of these seedlings, is carried out at the Centre. As well, seed orchards have been established to provide material for the replant program. Larch trees have been trained on a trellis to improve cone production. Research is also carried out with hybrid poplars and other broadleaf species. Our host at the Centre will be Dr. Mike Carlson, Forest Geneticist.

Jack Shore/Ron Patterman Orchard, Vernon. Jack is a grower with a proverbial green thumb. He retired from farming in 1990 but could not stay away and started a new orchard in 1993. This 22-acre orchard is completely super spindle (mostly 2 x 9 ft) and varieties include Gala, Fuji and other modern cultivars. New plantings have consistently produced over 50 bins/acre in the third leaf. Year 2000 production totaled 1000 bins from 16 producing acres with trees from 2 to 8 years in age. Jack re-retired in 2000 and the orchard is now operated by his son-in-law, Ron.

Wyatt Laing Orchard, Okanagan Centre. Wyatt retired from a former occupation in

1985 and started farming with no preconceived ideas of "the right way" of doing things. He has replanted his 20-acre orchard since 1990 with spindle and super spindle trees. Varieties include Gala, Spartan and Ambrosia. In fact, he was the first in the north Okanagan to plant Gala. He is an innovative grower.

Gray Monk Estate Winery, Okanagan Centre. Located above Okanagan Lake, this establishment has a spectacular view up and down the lake. This area has a microclimate particularly suited to grape production. The winery has been producing award-winning wines (especially whites) for many years. We will tour the operation and taste their latest products.

Sunday Evening, February 17

5:00 - 8:00 p.m. Registration

Monday Morning, February 18

8:20 a.m. President's Welcome

Jim Hughes, Picton, Ontario, Canada

8:25 a.m. Education Director Announcements. Dr. Bruce Barritt, IDFTA Education Director, Washington State University Tree Fruit Research and Extension Center, Wenatchee, Washington.

8:30 a.m.

**ROBERT F. CARLSON
DISTINGUISHED LECTURE
Dwarfing Rootstocks:
Past, Present and Future
Dr. Tony Webster
Horticultural Research
International,
East Malling, UK**

9:20 a.m. Orchard Hail Nets—Australian Experience. Dr. Simon Middleton, Queensland Horticulture Institute, Stanthorpe, Queensland, Australia.

10:10 a.m. Super Spindle Orchard Management in British Columbia. Panel discussion with Okanagan Valley orchardists.

Moderator: Hank Markgraft, Tony Di-Maria: Pruning and Thinning for Size and Grade. Russell Husch: Nutrient Requirements for Tree Growth and Fruit Quality. Bill Sandher: Growth Regulators.

11:10 a.m. European Trends in Organic Fruit Production. Dr. Franco Weibel, Research Institute for Organic Farming, Frick, Switzerland.

Noon: Lunch

Monday Afternoon, February 18

1:30 p.m. Organic Apples—North American Trends. David Granatstein, Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources, Washington State University, Wenatchee, WA.

2:00 p.m. Success, Challenges and Opportunities in Organic Fruit Production—Panel Discussion. Moderator: David

Granatstein, Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources, Washington State University, Wenatchee, WA. Gavin Young, Westbank Packers, Westbank, B.C. Dain Craver, Crave Organic Orchard, Royal City, WA. Linda Edwards, Mennell Orchards, Cawston, B.C. Tye Fleming, Orondo, WA.

3:30 p.m. New Techniques in Organic Apple Production. Dr. Franco Weibel, Research Institute for Organic Farming, Frick, Switzerland.

4:30 p.m. Marketing Organic Apples. Matthew Jarmin, Stemilt Growers, Wenatchee, WA.

Monday Evening, February 18 Annual IDFTA Banquet

Featuring the presentation of awards for Outstanding Researcher, Grower and Extension/Educator, Dr. Steve Blizzard, Master of Ceremonies.

6:00 p.m. Social Hour

7:00 p.m. Dinner

Tuesday, February 19

8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. All-day Orchard Tours. Depart from Grand Hotel, Kelowna.

Mike Melinchuk Orchard, North Kelowna. Mike was 18 when he took over the orchard from his dad. He currently farms 70 acres in the Ellison region of north Kelowna with his spouse Priscilla. Mike does not limit himself to one style of planting, preferring to match the density and training system to the variety and site. He has been planting super spindle since 1992. The blocks we will visit are 2 x 9 ft and 2 x 10 ft super spindle plantings of Gala and Honeycrisp.

Jim Elliot Orchard, Oyama. Jim and his wife Julie have been farming since 1983 and run a total of 50 acres in Oyama. Jim planted his first super spindle block in 1995. His orchard includes many apple varieties, the main ones being Spartan, Gala and McIntosh. Jim has recently planted his first high density cherry block of Lapins and Sweetheart at a spacing of 4 x 15 ft. He has grown his own nursery trees for replanting his orchard.

Tony DiMaria Orchard, Winfield. Tony and his wife Maria farm 23 acres in Winfield planted to d'Anjou pears, table grapes and a number of apple cultivars. They purchased a slender spindle orchard in 1989 and are slowly converting it to super spindle. They have been progressive in growing their own nursery, planting bench grafts and grafting trees. In their spare time, they manufacture wire clips for fastening super spindle trees to the trellis wires.

Dave and Mike Stirling Orchards, Kelowna. Dave and Mike are third generation apple and cherry growers, farming 100 acres in the south Kelowna district. They farm independently, operating on owned and leased properties. The brothers both have post-secondary education in plant science and have put their education to good use, pioneering new varieties and planting techniques. The blocks to be visited will be high density cherry and spindle apple plantings.

Brian Witzke Orchard, Kelowna. Brian took over the family farm at a young age and works with his wife Dorothy and son Shayne. Brian has been at the forefront of new varieties and high density plantings. His farming is characterized by an aggressive pruning style and close attention to detail. We will look at spindle apple plantings and also at some equipment which is particularly suitable for high density plantings.

Bill Sandher Orchard, Kelowna. Bill began operating orchards in 1989. He started replanting to super spindle in 1995 and continues to do so today. Bill runs a total of 51 acres in Kelowna. Gala is the main variety on his farm, with some plantings of Fuji, Jonagold and Ambrosia. Bill has grown his orchards from sleeping eyes, bench grafts and nursery trees. He is a progressive grower who continues to change growing technique in order to produce quality fruit.

Tuesday Evening, February 19

7:30 p.m. Ambrosia—A New Home-grown British Columbia Apple. Wilfrid Mennell, Cawston, B.C.

7:45 p.m. Managing the Self-fruitful Lapins and Sweetheart Sweet Cherries in High Density Systems. Dr. Frank Kappel, Pacific Agri-Food Research Centre, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Summerland, B.C.

8:15 p.m. High Density Sweet Cherry Management—Point Counterpoint. Dr. Greg Lang and Dr. Ron Perry, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.

8:55 p.m. New Summerland Sweet Cherry Varieties. Dr. Frank Kappel, Pacific Agri-Food Research Centre, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Summerland, B.C.

Wednesday Morning, February 20

8:30 a.m. Apple Orchard Management System—Australian Comparisons. Dr. Simon Middleton, Queensland Horticulture Institute, Stanthorpe, Queensland, Australia.

9:20 a.m. Tree Density or Training System—What is Important with Apple Orchards? Dr. Cheryl Hampson, Pacific Agri-Food Research Centre, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Summerland, B.C.

9:50 a.m. What We Have Learned from High Density Orchard System Trials. Dr. Terence Robinson, New York Agricultural Experiment Station, Geneva, NY.

10:20 a.m. Early Management Issues for Developing High Density Apple Plantings. Dr. Ron Perry and Dario Stefanelli, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.

10:50 a.m. Management of Nitrogen and Water in High Density Apple Orchards. Dr. Denise Neilsen, Dr. Gerald H. Neilsen and Dr. Sunghye Guak, Pacific Agri-Food Research Centre, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Summerland, B.C.

11:15 a.m. Nutrient and Irrigation Management of Lapins Sweet Cherry on Gisela 5. Dr. Gerald H. Neilsen, Dr. Denise Neilsen and Dr. Frank Kappel, Pacific Agri-Food Research Centre, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Summerland, B.C.

11:35 a.m. Nova Scotia—Site of the 2002 Summer Tour. Larry Lutz, Scotian Gold, Kentville, Nova Scotia, Canada.

12:00 p.m. Lunch

Wednesday Afternoon, February 20

1:30 p.m. Fire Blight: Improving Disease Management. Tim Smith, Washington State University Cooperative Extension, Wenatchee, WA.

2:00 p.m. European Study Tour 2001 Highlights. Moderator, Jon Clements, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA. Deborah Breth, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Albion, NY, IPM and IFP. Dain Craver, Crave Organic Orchard, Royal City, WA, Organic Initiative. Charlie de la Chapelle, Yakima, WA, Marketing and "Club" Varieties.

3:00 p.m. Current Approved Thinning Strategies for Apples and Pears and Recent Thinning Research Trials in Europe. Dr. Tony Webster, Horticultural Research International, East Malling, UK.

3:50 p.m. Size Really Does Matter—What Controls Fruit Growth in Apple. Dr. Peter M. Hirst, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN.

4:20 p.m. Cornell-Geneva Apple Rootstock Performance in NC-140 National Trials. Dr. Terence Robinson, New York Agricultural Experiment Station, Geneva, NY.

Adjourn