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January
2019

SONGNEWS

*The Newsletter of the Society of Ontario Nut Growers and
Eastern Chapter of the Society of Ontario Nut Growers*

Happy New Year!



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NUTS ABOUT HEARTNUT COOKING

This unique cookbook is the only book dedicated solely to the heartnut. The book is priced at \$12. Please add \$3.50 for mailing. For special quantity price, contact: **Gordon Chinnick, Treasurer, 722 6th Concession Rd, Walsingham, ON N0E 1X0**

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Library Corner - Gord Wilkinson

This part of the page is now open to members who would like reference information or articles written by NNGA or SONG/ECSONG members. Gordon has a nearly complete set of NNGA Annual Reports and a complete set of SONG News issues to research.

SONG/ECSONG Archive

Have you visited ECSONG? Click the tab at the bottom of the SONG website to see the work that was done there? If you click on the SONGNEWS tab, you will be impressed to find all of the SONGNEWS issues from the beginning of SONG in 1972. Enthusiastic members of ECSONG did this for all members and visitors alike. There is plenty of reading there for the new as well as old members. Enjoy!

The SONGNEWS is published 3 - 4 times per year by: SONG/ECSONG.
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SONG Website: www.songonline.ca

Check it for updates on meetings, read about nut farming, post your nuts or nut products to sell on line.

Send your free online posting to:
Nut.trees@grimonut.com

If you Haven't Renewed

Its time for your annual membership. Check your envelope for the year you are paid up. You can renew for 2019 now! Please renew now.

Coming Events

ECSONG WINTER MEETING& AGM

ATTENDANCE: It's **FREE**. All are welcome.

WHEN: Saturday, January 19, 2019 from 2 to 5 pm.

WHERE: Headquarters of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, 3889 Rideau Valley Drive, Ottawa, which runs east of Prince of Wales Drive.

WHAT: Four presentations related to nut trees, including the butternut recovery program and chestnut hypovirulence, samples of nut cookery, networking, displays, and a brief ECSONG AGM.

SONG ANNUAL MEETING

Featuring: A select group of speakers both professionals and novices. Plan ahead to be at this technical meeting of SONG. This is our best attended event where researchers and novices provide insight into nut growing. It promises to be a fulfilling event. Contact Bruce Thurston, our event coordinator, if you would like to be on the program. b.thurston@silomail.com or call 519-740-6220.

Agenda: Our election of officers will be held as part of the business meeting. If there are volunteers for the offices of Vice President, or Secretary, please respond to our Past President, Bruce Thurston who will be conducting the election. If current officers do not respond to him, he will assume that you will continue to hold office.

Date: Wednesday, March 6, 2019.

Time: 9:30 a.m. Registration, 10:00 a.m. meeting start.

Lunch at 12:00 to 1:00. 3:30 p.m. meeting ends.

Location: The Simcoe Experiment Station Hall, on Blue Line Rd at Highway 3, Simcoe, Ontario. From Hwy 3 on the east side of Simcoe, drive north to the open gate turn left to the parking area and side entrance.

SPRING AUCTION MEETING

Our meeting has not been well attended at the Simcoe Experiment Station Hall. Better attendance seemed to be in or near Toronto. We are open to suggestions for a suitable location for a tentative Saturday May 4 or Sunday, May 5, 2019 date. Please contact Ernie Grimo or John Flys if you have a good location in mind.

ECSONG BUS TOUR 2018

By Shelley Adams

ECSONG had another successful bus tour this year. The tour took place on Saturday, September 15th with 29 participants braving unseasonably hot weather to learn more about nut trees in our region. The bus picked up some participants in Kemptville and then travelled to the parking lot of the tropical greenhouse at the Experimental Farm in Ottawa to join the remaining participants. Roman Popadiouk, who co-authored a book on the trees of the Experimental Farm Arboretum called *For the Love of Trees*, acted as our guide. In an area of the Farm called the Fletcher Wildlife Garden, the group saw a wide variety of indigenous and imported nut trees, including one that was unknown by everyone - a Japanese Wingnut (*Pterocarya rhoifolia*) with its long clusters of tiny nuts hanging down like ribbons. Participants were also taken to a windbreak of black walnuts on the west side of the Farm where the Late Neil Thomas sourced nut seed for his plantation of 2,000 black walnut trees in Mallorytown.

The tour then moved on to the Filmore R. Park Nut Grove at the Baxter Conservation Area. John Adams, the ECSONG Co-ordinator for the nut grove, led the group around the nut grove which features butternuts, black and Japanese walnuts, shagbark and shellbark hickories, hazelnuts, northern pecans, and various oak and bean trees. After the tour, there was a seed exchange with a wide variety of nut seed provided by John Adams that participants were free to take home for planting. John also gave away some nut tree seedlings. These were snapped up like hot cakes!

Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

After lunch the tour arrived at the Ferguson Forestry Centre in Kemptville. Ed Patchell, the Chief Operating Officer, guided participants through their cold storage rooms, including their new long-term seed storage facility, which is a giant freezer. This new unit will allow the Centre to store as much as 150 million seeds at -18C for up to 20 years. Currently they have about two million seeds in cold storage. Ed then took the group to their greenhouses where young saplings are stored and overwintered. He also gave the group a number of excellent tips for storing seed and preparing them to grow, for example, placing black walnut seed in a heavy (3 mil) polyethylene bag with some peat moss to prevent mold. The peat moss acts as an anti-bacterial/anti-fungal agent for the seeds.

Ed then handed the group over to Virginia Gordon, a researcher with the Butternut Recovery Program. She guided the group to the final stop on the bus tour - one of two butternut archives within the Ferguson Forestry Centre where scions from butternut trees showing signs of canker resistance are grafted on to black walnut stock. The goal is to breed canker resistant butternut trees from the seed produced by this canker resistant tree population. The Program has four archives in total: two at the Centre, one in southern Ontario and one in central Ontario. This Program is still in its early stages, but the hope is to develop canker resistant butternut trees so that this endangered tree species will survive in Eastern Ontario.

Judging by the large number of questions asked by participants throughout the day, it is clear that people enjoyed the tour immensely.

Our Visit to the Black Walnut Plantation of the Late Neil Thomas in Mallorytown

By: Gordon Wilkinson

ECSONG members John Adams, Michel Auclair, Jim Ronson, Ted McDonald and myself went to Mallorytown on Sunday afternoon, September 16th to see the black walnut plantation of the late Neil Thomas. The new owners of the property, Tom and Mia Moore, graciously permitted us to roam through this black walnut plantation.

Neil Thomas' black walnut plantation was essentially intact. Neil had more than 2,000 black walnut trees, but the new owners estimated that the black walnut plantation now numbers about 1,500 trees because the youngest black walnut trees in one section were removed so the land could be put to a different use.

The plantation consists of two sections - a section with older, taller trees, and another section with younger, shorter trees. It is our understanding that all trees were grown from seed sourced from the northwest end of the Ottawa Central Experimental Farm. There were individual trees in either section with nuts, however, most trees had no nuts and the owner said that this has been the case every year since they purchased the property about 5 years ago. They are not sure why so few trees produce nuts from year to year and commented that it's a good thing that they didn't rely on nut production for their livelihood! We were able to find enough nuts to fill the bags that we brought for this purpose. Nut size varied by tree and was generally on the smaller size. The smaller nut size could perhaps be attributed to this summer's drought. Based upon my experience with heartnut, I suggested to the owners that they experiment with fertilizing a row of nut trees to see whether this would encourage more trees to produce nuts.

Black walnut trees in the lower part of the more mature section have started to die this year. The owner attributed this decline to a breakdown in the tile drainage system and suggested that this may have been due to nut tree roots infiltrating these drains. The death of more mature black walnut trees well illustrated the need to plant black walnut in soils with good drainage.

The new owners said that Neil Thomas' black walnut cracking and sorting machine was given to the University of Guelph.

The new owners kindly offered us tea and cookies at the end of our tour. They were open to ongoing communication and future visits.

Orangeville Nut Planting – 2018 Part 1 By Roy Metcalfe

On May 7, 2018 an inventory of the trees was made at SONG's nut planting in the Island Lake Conservation area at Orangeville. Since 2016, several visits were made to the site. Time was insufficient to survey the entire site on any one visit. The May 7th trip just focused on counting trees.

There are two tables (see page 6) which are keyed to the planting diagram, one listing the seed by the location in a row and the other is ordered by the tree name. Each row is numbered and the position within a row given a letter. For example, B7 is the second item in row 7.

Table Characteristics

1. The tree count only included single stemmed specimens.
2. Filberts and hazels, being shrubby, are shown with a zero count. No time was available evaluate individual specimens. Sometime in the spring would provide a better gauge of the viability these plants.
3. Trees that were cut and have sprouted from the roots also have a zero count. There appears to be no data available showing why trees were cut – whether for thinning, disease, physical damage, or to make room for paths etc.
4. All distances are measured in feet.
5. The seed names are as listed by Bob Baker, forest technician, with the Conservation Authority at the time of planting. E. Grimo provided a few name corrections.
6. Three batches of seed consisted of two or three different seed sources. The tree count is followed by a question mark showing uncertainty regarding the type of tree.

General Observations

1. Google, Bing, Yahoo, and Mapquest all provide satellite/aerial views of the site. My opinion is that Google provides the most useful image.
2. The site is generally higher on the west than the east. For most rows the north and south ends are lower than the centre. For several seed lots performance seems to correlate with the lower elevation, even where the slope is very gentle.
3. The Persian walnuts have no single stem specimens. Location A12, Korn, shows significant growth but poor form.
4. Row 15 might have a distance error as it would be crossing the access road at the listed 473 feet.

Part 2 of this report will provide additional observations and photographs gathered from several trips to the site.

(Continued on page 5)

SONG Librarian's Corner

Gordon Wilkinson

Given that this year's NNGA annual meeting at St. Paulin, Quebec, was the most northerly in this organization's 108-year history (46.4177°N) and given that many SONG members like myself grow nut trees in locations with severe winter cold, I decided to use my inaugural Librarian's column to post articles from the NNGA annual reports on the subject of cold tolerance, cold injury and cold hardy selections. I limited my search to the table of contents of the NNGA Annual Reports of the last 45 years. Titles, volume and page number are provided. If you are interested in reading any of these articles and don't have access to any of these volumes, please send your request to me via email at gwilkinson001@gmail.com and I will email you a scan of the requested document. If you have requests for articles on other subjects, please let me know.

Happy Reading!

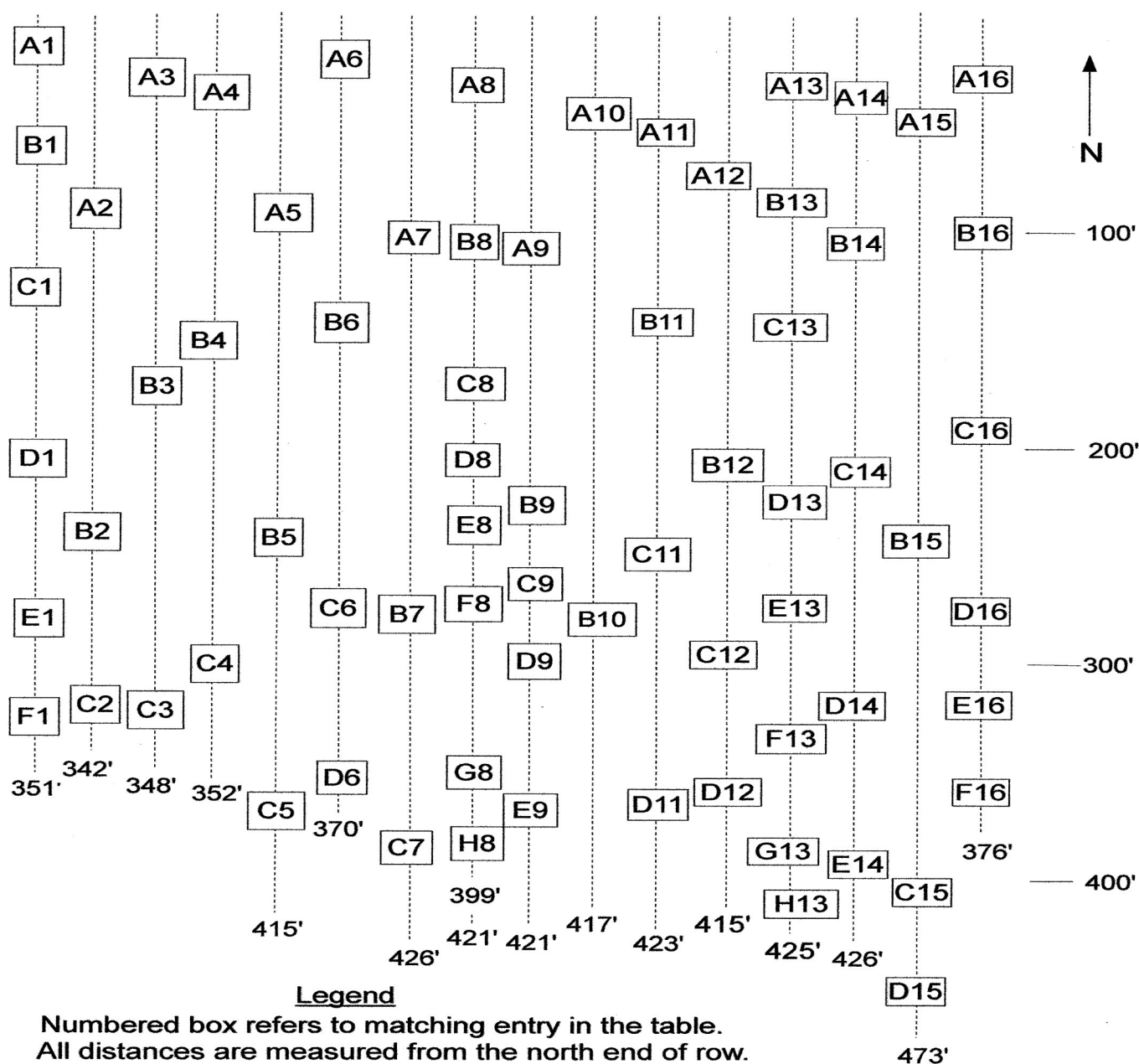
Freeze Injury to Black Walnut Plantations in Minnesota During the Winter of 1993-1994, 86:21

Winter Hardiness of Nut Trees and Buds, 77:5

Selecting Carpathian Walnuts for Cold Hardiness, 77:21

(Continued on page 5)

Key for the Orangeville Nut Tree Planting – Latitude 43.9316 Longitude -80.0784



Legend

Numbered box refers to matching entry in the table.
 All distances are measured from the north end of row.
 Distance between rows is 20' to 23' with total of 16 rows.
 Total row length at south end of the row.

(Continued from page 4)

Cold Hardiness Capability of Northern Pecans: Final Results, 77:101

Performance of Pecans in the North, 77:104

Cold Hardiness Capability of Northern Pecans: Early Observations, 76:134

Cold Hardiness and Supercooling in Pecan, 76:138

Pecans which Fill in the North, 75:116

Zonal Selection of Nut Trees for Absolute Hardiness, 70:46

Tree Hardiness and Freeze Injury of Chestnuts and Carpathians, 68:107

Freeze Injury in Pecans, 68:113



Orangeville Nut Planting – Seed Listed by Name – May 2018

ID	Seed Type and Source	Length in Row	Number of Trees
A2	American Chestnut – Rudishule	174	0
B2	American Chestnut – Souber #1	138	3
B13	American Chestnut – Souber #2	54	0
B4	Black Walnut – Carpathian	174	1
D16	Black Walnut – Ashworth (Well Tree)	76	5
G8	Black Walnut – Bicentennial	122	5
D6	Black Walnut – Bowser	36	3
H8	Black Walnut – Bowser	19	1
E16	Black Walnut – Bowser	49	5?
D8	Black Walnut – Elmer Myers	16	3
C8	Black Walnut – Emma K	61	5
A1	Black Walnut – Hare	36	3
F16	Black Walnut – Helen Ashworth	49	5?
D15	Black Walnut – Lamb	58	5
G16	Black Walnut – Lamb	20	3
A16	Black Walnut – Minnesota Native	66	7
A8	Black Walnut – Nieboen local	63	4
E8	Black Walnut – OHIO	36	3
C16	Black Walnut – Patterson	81	1
F8	Black Walnut – Scringer	33	4
F13	Black Walnut – Souber & Heartnut crossed	78	4
F1	Black Walnut – Souber #1	46	4
E1	Black Walnut – Souber #2	41	3
G13	Black Walnut – Souber JUMBO	23	0
B8	Black Walnut – Sparrow	71	5
C4	Black Walnut – Stambaugh	101	3
C7	Black Walnut – Tarzwell local	68	4
C1	Black Walnut – Thomas	78	6
B1	Black Walnut – Troup	52	2
B16	Black Walnut – Weschche	84	9
B14	Butternut – Chamberlin	91	3
C15	Butternut – Souber	29	0
D1	Butternut – Van Pattern	98	7
A13	Chestnut – Douglass mixed	64	0
B9	Filbert – Bob Hambleton mixed	35	0
A9	Filbert – G.R. Hambleton B4	205	0
A10	Filbert – R.D. Campbell	92	0
E9	Hazelberts – Gordon	108	0
C14	Heartnut – Calendar	111	8

ID	Seed Type and Source	Length in Row	Number of Trees
D14..	Heartnut – Papple #1	104	3
D13	Heartnut – Papple #2	58	1
E14	Heartnut – Papple #2	50	0
B15	Heartnut – Rhodes	297	2
E13	Heartnut – Westfield	49	1
A14	Hybrid Buartnut – Corsan	70	0
A15	Hybrid Buartnut – Fioka	91	1
C6	Hybrid Buartnut Souber	97	3
A4	Hybrid Chestnut – Douglass 1A	77	4?
C13	Hybrid Chestnut – Douglass 1B	71	3
A6	Hybrid Chestnut – Souber #1	42	5
C2	Hybrid Chestnut – Souber #2	30	0
C9	Hybrid Filbert – Grimo 14E	36	0
D9	Hybrid Filbert – Grimo 180N	39	0
B11	Hybrid Filbert – Myoka	89	0
A11	Hybrid Filbert – Petoka	115	0
B10	Hybrid Filbert – Gordon	325	0
C11	Hybrid Hazelnut – Chinoka Tree	97	0
D11	Hybrid Hazelnut – Faroka Tree	122	0
B6	Japanese Chestnut	195	3?
D12	Manregian – M2	101	0
B12	Northern Pecan	113	7
H13..	Pecan – Iowa Native	28	0
A3	Persian Walnut – Ashworth	68	0
B3	Persian Walnut – B2	233	0
C5	Persian Walnut – B2	100	0
C3	Persian Walnut – Bill Hambleton JUMBO	47	0
B5	Persian Walnut – Bill Hambleton mixed	132	0
A7	Persian Walnut – D. Kernohan	218	0
C12	Persian Walnut – Hambleton	34	0
A5	Persian Walnut – Korn	183	0
A12	Persian Walnut – Korn	167	0
B7	Persian Walnut – R.B. Young	140	0
A4	Shagbark Hickory – Northumberland Cty. Mixed seed	77	4?
A4	Shagbark Hickory – Seymour Twp. Mixed seed	77	4?
B6	Shellbark Hickory	195	3?

Orangeville Nut Planting – Seed Listed by Row – May 2018

ID	Seed Type and Source	Length in Row	Number of Trees
A1	Black Walnut – Hare	36	3
B1	Black Walnut – Troup	52	2
C1	Black Walnut – Thomas	78	6
D1	Butternut – Van Pattern	98	7
E1	Black Walnut – Souber #2	41	3
F1	Black Walnut – Souber #1	46	4
A2	American Chestnut – Rudishule	174	0
B2	American Chestnut – Souber #1	138	3
C2	Hybrid Chestnut – Souber #2	30	0
A3	Persian Walnut – Ashworth	68	0
B3	Persian Walnut – B2	233	0
C3	Persian Walnut – Bill Hambleton JUMBO	47	0
A4	Hybrid Chestnut – Douglass 1A	Mixed Seed	4?
A4	Shagbark Hickory – Seymour Twp.	77	4?
A4	Shagbark Hickory – Northumberland Cty.	4?	
B4	Black Walnut – Carpathian	174	1
C4	Black Walnut – Stambaugh	101	3
A5	Persian Walnut – Korn	183	0
B5	Persian Walnut – Bill Hambleton mixed	132	0
C5	Persian Walnut – B2	100	0
A6	Hybrid Chestnut – Souber #1	42	5
B6	Japanese Chestnut	Mixed Seed	3?
B6	Shellbark Hickory	195	3?
C6	Hybrid Buartnut Souber	97	3
D6	Black Walnut – Bowser	36	3
A7	Persian Walnut – D. Kernohan	218	0
B7	Persian Walnut – R.B. Young	140	0
C7	Black Walnut – Tarzwell local	68	4
A8	Black Walnut – Nieboen local	63	4
B8	Black Walnut – Sparrow	71	5
C8	Black Walnut – Emma K	61	5
D8	Black Walnut – Elmer Myers	16	3
E8	Black Walnut – OHIO	36	3
F8	Black Walnut – Scringer	33	4
G8	Black Walnut – Bicentennial	122	5
H8	Black Walnut – Bowser	19	1
A9	Filbert – G.R. Hambleton B4	205	0

ID	Seed Type and Source	Length in Row	Number of Trees
B9	Filbert – Bob Hambleton mixed	35	0
C9	Hybrid Filbert – Grimo 14E	36	0
D9	Hybrid Filbert – Grimo 180N	39	0
E9	Hazelberts – Gordon	108	0
A10	Filbert – R.D. Campbell	92	0
B10	Hybrid Filbert – Gordon	325	0
A11	Hybrid Filbert – Petoka	115	0
B11	Hybrid Filbert – Myoka	89	0
C11	Hybrid Hazelnut – Chinoka Tree	97	0
D11	Hybrid Hazelnut – Faroka Tree	122	0
A12	Persian Walnut – Korn	167	0
B12	Northern Pecan	113	7
C12	Persian Walnut – Hambleton	34	0
D12	Manregian – M2	101	0
A13	Chestnut – Douglass mixed	64	0
B13	American Chestnut – Souber #2	54	0
C13	Hybrid Chestnut – Douglass 1B	71	3
D13	Heartnut – Papple #2	58	1
E13	Heartnut – Westfield	49	1
F13	Black Walnut – Souber & Heartnut crossed	78	4
G13	Black Walnut – Souber JUMBO	23	0
H13..	Pecan – Iowa Native	28	0
A14	Hybrid Buartnut – Corsan	70	0
B14	Butternut – Chamberlin	91	3
C14	Heartnut – Calendar	111	8
D14..	Heartnut – Papple #1	104	3
E14	Heartnut – Papple #2	50	0
A15	Hybrid Buartnut – Fioka	91	1
B15	Heartnut – Rhodes	297	2
C15	Butternut – Souber	29	0
D15	Black Walnut – Lamb	58	5
A16	Black Walnut – Minnesota Native	66	7
B16	Black Walnut – Weschche	84	9
C16	Black Walnut – Patterson	81	1
D16	Black Walnut – Ashworth (Well Tree)	76	5
E16	Black Walnut – Bowser	Mixed Seed	5?
F16	Black Walnut – Helen Ashworth	49	5?
G16	Black Walnut – Lamb	20	3

Hazelnut Pollinizing Solutions By Ernie Grimo

I was puzzled and distressed this year when one of our hazelnut growers in Niagara-on-the-Lake reported that he had no crop of hazelnuts to sell to us this year. He suggested that perhaps a frost during bloom killed the catkins and wiped out the pollen. The female bloom can withstand these frost periods while the male catkins are less hardy when they are ready to shed pollen. His 2 acre hazelnut planting consists of Gene, Slate and seedlings as pollinizers. Alternatively, the crop at the Grimo farm was better than average. What could cause such a difference? The Grimo planting is within a kilometer of Lake Ontario while the other grower was 5 kilometers away, where frost can easily settle.

This indicates the importance of having early and late pollinizers. However, the hazelnut grower had seedling pollinizers and among them there would likely be early and late pollen producers and yet there was no crop. Grimo has only had one crop failure in his memory, and in that year 4 trees had nearly 50% of the total crop for 200 trees. Those trees were 'Gene', 'Slate', 'Cheryl' and 'Linda', all selected trees from a major breeding project. This is a contradiction to what happened to this grower.

Hazelnuts generally bloom in March in Ontario. It is to be expected that there will be frosty conditions many years when pollen is being shed, especially in areas where March and early April frosts are common. These would ordinarily not be areas suited to growing hazelnuts. To guard against crop failure it is not likely that hardier pollinizer selections will be the answer or early and late ones some years. Other solutions will likely be the answer. There are two that need to be considered.

One solution that is used in the grape industry is the use of wind machines that move frost-killing air out of the orchard and allows warmer air from above to drop down to the orchard floor. My neighbour, whose farm surrounds mine, is a grower of vinifera grapes. He has wind machines on both sides of my farm. Since his machines went in about 15 years ago, I believe I have had better crops. This has certainly been true with heartnuts and Persian walnuts that are more sensitive to late frost than other nut trees. My hazelnut crop has been fairly regular.

One wind machine can control the temperature for up to 2 ha (5 A) or more. A supplier of a towable blower is: <http://towandblow.co.nz/international-agents-distributors-for-tow-blow-frost-protection>. Most grape growers have permanently placed wind machines.

The second solution is to have stored frozen or fresh pollen available and blow it out into the orchard when females are in full bloom. This could be an easy solution to increase pollination in any year. Pollen can be gathered with a vacuum and stored for later use. There does not seem to be a hazelnut pollen harvester in existence but pollen has been collected and used to increase other crops. Information on the length of time and the best way hazelnut pollen can be stored is available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/BF00038973>.

A good example of vacuum harvesting is from a study in New Zealand where kiwi fruit pollen was collected to increase the crop of kiwi fruit. See here...
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01140671.1991.10422881>

It is always wise to be pre-emptive, to anticipate and prevent problems before they occur. This can be considered after a planting is established and a pollinization problem is noted.



A towable wind machine for frost protection



Typical wind machine for frost protection

President's Message

By Ernie Grimo

SONG has entered its 47th year of existence and there have been a lot of accomplishments in that time. As founding President, I have seen many changes along with the addition of other nut growing groups in Eastern Canada. ECSONG formed a few years after SONG and that was followed by the Quebec Nut Growers Association in 2008, <http://www.noixduquebec.org/> and by the Maritime Nut Growers Association more recently <https://maritimen.webs.com/>.

We have reached a point in our history where we may need to re-evaluate our means of communication. There was no internet then. Meetings were well attended years ago. It was a learning experience as well as a social time. Growers brought samples of the nuts from their trees to share, sell, and a lot of give and take took place. Our winter meeting still receives fairly good support. We have eliminated our summer meeting because of low attendance. Our fall meetings are modestly attended.

Our auction meeting has recently declined in attendance as well. It is thought that our Simcoe Station Hall was too far to attract attendees and that we had better attendance when we met in Toronto. John Flys, our Secretary, is trying to find an appropriate location, since the Humber College site is no longer available to us. Sundays were best for travel and rental cost, when we used the facilities at the Toronto Botanic Gardens, but maybe a different day would increase attendance or maybe a different venue? Maybe our spring auction meeting should be every two years? I need advice on this.

Maybe we need to use social media more to keep our organization strong? I do not presently participate in these media but it might be the way to go, and others can lead. Should we update the website? Should we be involved in community projects? I value your input. Please respond to me through email at ernie.grimo@yahoo.com. We need volunteers with fresh ideas. We welcome enthusiastic leaders who will help us to grow our SONG, and we will gladly mentor and assist those who wish to be involved.

♪...Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire...♪ by Ernie Grimo

Our favorite chestnut is the Chinese chestnut and its hybrids with the American chestnut. The Chinese chestnut was introduced in Canada, probably in the late 19th century, and has been successful as a crop in areas where peach trees will grow. The nut of this species is usually of good size, roundish in form, not pointed at the apex, and with the basal scar smaller than the lower end of the nut. The brown pellicle usually separates easily from the kernel once the nut has cured and becomes sweet. At this point it can be eaten fresh or cooked. Like potatoes, chestnuts are a starch nut, where the starch changes to sugar as the nut is cured by slightly drying for a few days to a week after harvest. They need to be refrigerated for best short term storage. For storage of 3-6 months they can be frozen. Storage can be a problem where mold can spoil the nuts for eating. Freezing is the surest way to maintain quality.

We are often asked how do you cook chestnuts. We reply with 4 methods. I like all of them but there are chestnut connoisseurs that suggest that there is only one way to cook them or that there is only one way to cut them for cooking. However, there are as many ways to utilize chestnuts in cooking as there are with potatoes. The mystique and cultural heritage surrounding the chestnut dictates how these things are done.

Chestnuts can be boiled or roasted, or cooked over an open fire or barbeque in a special frying pan, or micro-waved. Boiling is a simple way. Bring a pan of water to the boiling point and put the fresh or frozen chestnuts in the water. Cutting the nuts ahead of time is not necessary. Cook until the chestnuts become soft. Depending on the chestnut size, it could take 10-15 minutes.

For roasting, soak the chestnuts for 30 minutes to an hour in a bowl. Make a cut into the fresh or frozen chestnut skin with a sharp knife, otherwise the chestnut will explode in the oven when the moisture in the nut boils. I like to cut the chestnut across the widest side at the tassel end. The knife penetrates more easily there. When it is cooked the tassel end opens like a beak, making it easier to remove the kernel. Heat the oven to 400°F. Place the chestnuts in a single layer on a cookie sheet and cook for 20-30 minutes or until the cut shell curls back. Shake the pan to turn over the nuts once or twice in roasting. Time to cook will vary with the chestnut size.

Roasting in an open fire or barbeque is similar to the oven. Cut the chestnuts first and allow the flames to touch the pan. Shake the pan often to avoid burning. Two chestnut roasters are depicted here.

Microwave is the fastest way to cook chestnuts. Place the cut chestnuts in a shallow bowl. Add a small amount of water to cover the bottom of the bowl. Cover with a paper towel, or better, a microwave cover and cook on high for 2 minutes. This method does not have the cultural appeal but the flavor is wonderful.

Did you Know?

Many Native American Indian tribes (indigenous to the northeast) held fertility & abundance as the prime symbolic meaning of chestnuts because of its prolific production of nuts.

Native Americans may have used a tisane of chestnut leaves to treat severe coughs and heart disease, a poultice of the leaves for sores and a decoction of the bark to treat worms.



Chestnut Roasting Pan



Chestnut Roaster

Classifieds

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Our 10 page print catalogue is \$1 or two current Canadian letter stamps, but free for SONG members. Our new on-line catalogue is updated daily as items are sold out. For information or ordering:

www.grimonut.com
nut.trees@grimonut.com
phone: (905)-Yeh-nuts
(905-934-6887) Fax: 905-935-6887
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www.nuttrees.com / rhoras@nuttrees.com, phone or fax 905-899-3508, or write us: Rhora's Nut Farm & Nursery, 33083 Wills Road, R. R. #1, Wainfleet, Ontario L0S 1V0

...**MEMBERSHIP** benefits in the Society of Ontario Nut Growers (SONG) & ECSONG (Eastern Chapter of SONG) include three yearly newsletters, along with 3 annual meetings in two regions, set to satisfy the needs of both the commercial growers and the hobbyists. For an added bonus, **new members** will receive SONG'S own nut growing manual, *Nut Tree Ontario, A Practical Guide*, a \$20 value, **free**, when you take out a three-year, \$45 membership. Simply ask for your free copy when joining SONG. For added information, view the ECSONG handbook at: <http://www.songonline.ca/ecsong/>. Fill out the tear off below and send to: **SONG/ECSONG, Gordon Chinnick, Treasurer, 722 6th Concession Rd, Walsingham, ON N0E 1X0**. Your cancelled cheque is your receipt. **Dues can also be paid by e-transfer to: song.treasurer@yahoo.com**.

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