

WCGA's First Press Release Goes Out to California Newspaper Food Editors

In its ongoing efforts to support member growers and promote chestnuts the following press release was sent to 68 California newspaper food editors and to numerous food magazines across the U.S. A second, and similar press release will go out on or about Oct. 1 to newspapers in Oregon, Washington and Idaho when those crops are closer to harvest time. The initial press release follows:

Fresh US Chestnuts to Hit Local Markets by Mid-September

Portland, Ore., Sept. 3, 2002: Locally grown chestnuts are due to reach markets throughout the West Coast within the next few weeks. With the bulk of the crop available between mid-September and late October, now is the time to start planning fall menus to use the fresh, U.S.-grown nuts.

Fresh chestnuts offer a range of advantages over the imported nuts that are most commonly found in grocery stores around Thanksgiving. Unlike most nuts, chestnuts are highly perishable in their fresh form, making them vulnerable to mold and insect damage during overseas shipments. Local nuts avoid those problems by reaching stores within days of the harvest, often with better temperature controls during handling. When choosing local produce, consumers also have the option of choosing chestnuts grown under organic or sustainable agricultural practices.

Local nuts can be purchased in many specialty food stores, some large grocers or, best

See Press Release, p. 6

NNGA Annual Meeting in Virginia Proves Valuable for Chestnut Growers

by Carolyn Young

Emory and Henry College in the westernmost tip of Virginia was the scene of the 93rd Annual Meeting of the Northern Nut Growers Assn. August 4 – 7. In the heart of American Chestnut country there were many opportunities to see just what is happening with the reestablishment of this magnificent tree. As was the case in 2001, the majority of presentations had to do with chestnuts and the majority of those attending grew chestnuts.

Show 'n' Tell

Following the board meeting on Sunday, members were treated to a barbecue at the Wagner Chestnut Farm nearby. Later in the evening was devoted to Show 'n' Tell with lots of interesting information for chestnut growers including the following:

Ken Hunt described how to tell when a condition of ingrained bark is present. If there's a ridge in the crotch the branches are strong. Otherwise there's ingrained bark and the branches will break.

Dennis Fulbright described the grafting workshop that was held in Michigan earlier this year. It was a day-long event intended to provide hands-on practice in grafting. He said that it is very difficult to propagate chestnuts through the use of tissue culture and that everyone should know how to graft.

Lucienne Grunder talked about the desirability of chestnut honey by gourmet restaurants. She also noted that she will be chip budding 1000 trees in August.

Hector Black, an organic chestnut grower, said he interplanted chestnuts and

honeylocust and autumn olives as nitrogen fixers. He did no fertilizing.

Doug Campbell described a unique method for keeping young trees warmer in winter. He uses 2-liter pop bottles filled with water like spokes around a tree.

Charles Feldhake talked about the benefits of a pine cover to shelter the crop from the open sky. He claims it keeps the ground temperature up to 10 degrees warmer.



The American Chestnut Foundation maintains three farms. The Wagner farm shown here, is in Emory, Virginia.

Speakers

Following are highlights of those presentations that were of particular interest to chestnut growers.

Sandy Anagnostakis talked about an experiment with hybrids planted in an open field vs. trees planted in a clear cut without amendments. Nitrogen levels were higher in the clear cut. The pH there was 3.6 and 4.5, while the field was 5.7. She talked about the importance of doing leaf analysis and compiling results and cited Anthony Boutard's leadership in starting this for WCGA. She said that one researcher felt that the Ca:N levels are more important than boron levels, and that when those levels are high nutrition is best. She concluded by saying that, "If we don't work together we'll never get anything done."

Gary Pandetti, of McMinnville, TN,

See NNGA, p. 4

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

With the fall harvest and sales season upon us, there's a few happenings and thoughts I would like to share with you.

In an effort to support our established growers, the WCGA Directors have initiated a fall press release campaign publicizing the availability of domestically grown chestnuts. A copy is included in this issue. By October 1st, it will have been sent to over 200 news,

magazine, and trade publication sources. Our aim is to leave the marketing aspect to individual grower-members, but back them with a bit of promotion and serve as a source for information. This is a new direction for the WCGA. Its a modest beginning, but a start on fulfilling the organization's mission and a rounding out of the benefits of membership. Many thanks to the volunteers that toiled over the mailing list develop-

ment.

According to USDA statistics, over 97% of the US chestnut consumption in the year 2000 was imported product. Our hope is that our growers will capture some of that market. If you have product to sell, I would encourage you to sign up for the Grower's Directory. An application form is included in this issue. A simple listing is free. If your listing meets with marketing success, we'd like to hear from you.

I would also like to remind everyone of the required diligence in maintaining high nut quality through good handling and storage techniques. Most of you know by now that chestnuts require a fair amount of careful babysitting. While the best practices are an evolving science, every effort should be made to deliver product in good condition. Poor quality and spoiled product is the enemy to us all. In an expanding market, it kills, rather than builds our common future.

Finally, if you did leaf tissue analysis this year, I want to remind you that Harvey Correia has volunteered to collect and compile the data. Please send him a copy of your test results, so that through a co-operative effort, we can learn more about the peculiarities of chestnut orcharding. If you would like to remain anonymous, you may remove your name and address. A regional location is all that is necessary. Harvey will share the results in the next publication. His address is 16779 Hwy. 160, Isleton CA. 95641. By fax; 916-777-4152.

Thanks, and best wishes for a prosperous fall season.

Christopher H. Foster

EDITOR'S NOTES

A number of WCGA members were in attendance at August's annual meeting of the Northern Nutgrowers Assn., and I think all would agree with me that WCGA is being seen as THE organization representing chestnut growers around the country -- not just the west. Several speakers talked of the leadership being shown in gathering leaf analysis data. This fall's project of distributing press releases around the country is evidence of further support of growers.

We are now seeing more and more members taking advantage of the growers' directory on the association's website. Check it out at <http://www.wcga.net>. If you haven't taken time to add your name to the list, do so today.

Carolyn

WESTERN CHESTNUT GROWERS ASSN., INC.

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NOTICE

The Western Chestnut is published quarterly by the Western Chestnut Growers Assn., Inc. at PO Box 841, Ridgefield, WA 98642.

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POSTMASTER

Send Address changes to WCGA, c/o PO Box 841, Ridgefield, WA 98642.

ADVERTISING RATES

Full page, camera ready (w/1 photo) .. \$20.00
Half page, camera ready (w/1 photo) ... 15.00
Quarter page 10.00
Business card (4 issues) 15.00

One classified ad per member per year is free (max 6 lines, \$2.50 ea add'l 6 lines). Ad space may be reserved with full payment but must meet established deadlines. If ad is cancelled, money may be refunded if space is resold. Make checks payable to Western Chestnut Growers Assn., Inc.

All ads and other copy preferred in PC format on disk or e-mail to Carolyn@ChestnutsOnLine.com. Ads must adhere to published ad sizes for space purchased. Call for specifics. Otherwise for best results, submit original photographs. Layout of ads will not be done until payment is received. **Send materials to P.O. Box 841, Ridgefield, WA 98642, or Fedex/Express Mail to 29112 NW 41st Ave., Ridgefield, WA 98642.** Call for further info.

PUBLICATION AND DEADLINES

Fall issue	deadline 9/10	mailed 10/1
Winter issue	deadline 12/10	mailed 1/1
Spring issue	deadline 3/10	mailed 4/1
Summer issue	deadline 6/10	mailed 7/1

EDITORIAL OPINION

The views, articles and advertising appearing in The Western Chestnut Quarterly do not necessarily reflect the attitude nor policy of the Western Chestnut Growers Assn., its members, officers, Board of Directors or Editor. The Western Chestnut Growers Assn. Inc., and this publication are not responsible for errors and/or misrepresentations in advertising. The Editor reserves the right to reject or edit all material submitted for publication.

Phytophthora

Research in

New Zealand

*David Klinac, Ruakura Research Centre,
Hamilton, New Zealand
reprinted with permission of the author*



Here's a brief summary of some of the research projects undertaken over the years:

1. Selection and propagation of Phytophthora-resistant (or hopefully tolerant at least) rootstocks: This work was started in the mid 1980's using test seed (and seedlings) supplied by MAF and Jim Peele, of Peele's Propagation Nurseries, Te Aroha. Jim had propagated a range of cutting-grown chestnuts. These were 'tested' against a high level of *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (Pc) infection and the survivors (maybe 5% of the total) returned to Jim. These then became part of the Roy Hart/NZ Tree Crops Association trial blocks now planted around the country.

The MAF seedlings were similarly treated then grown on and grafted at Waikato Research Orchard, Hamilton, to further test for rootstock/scion incompatibility problems. Several instances of rootstock incompatibility have been detected over the years (and removed). We hope the remainder will make a good source of potentially both Pc and incompatibility-free rootstock material.

2. Tree injection (with Phosphorus acid or similar chemicals): This is a very popular method for Phytophthora control in Australia and is widely used on avocados in

NZ. Tested on several NZ grower properties however, it has rather proven less useful. We don't really know why. Murray Kestle imported a high powered, motorized tree injection machine from Australia especially for chestnut use. It worked, but there was sometimes tree damage. More recently, improved tree injection technology and new chemical formulations have lead to renewed interest and hope for this approach. Good results have been obtained with a new HortResearch injection system from Adrian Spiers.

3. Foliar spraying (again with phosphorous acid): This has proven remarkably effective on several young orchards where I think all the trees would otherwise have died by now.
4. Soil amendments, and other cultural or tree management practices: A whole range of different approaches to chemical-free Phytophthora control have been tried and trials are still continuing. Possibly still too early to know if they've really worked or not, though they're certainly all beneficial to tree health, generally.

There was also a brief Waikato 'fad' a few years ago for 'SC-27' which is a mixture of live soil microbes that are beneficial to tree growth. Like other similar products, however, it has been hard to distinguish any specific 'anti-Phytophthora' effects.

Upcoming research at Waikato Research Orchard includes:

1. Selecting a Phytophthora-free rootstock.
2. Selecting an incompatibility-free rootstock.

In the Phytophthora trials, we would like to develop and extend further the original screening program carried out in the mid 1980's. There's been a lot of progress since the 1980's. There's now a much broader germplasm base to select from, and much better techniques for screening and assessment.

In particular, we would like to test and compare the wide range of chestnut rootstocks and cultivars now available from nurseries throughout NZ, as well as some of the more 'exotic' imports that have arrived in NZ over the years.

The other key chestnut rootstock issue is rootstock/scion incompatibility and the extent to which this may possibly even be associated with Phytophthora damage (each disorder aggravating the other). Rootstock incompatibility is a little understood but is an important problem for NZ chestnuts. What we would like to do is compare a range of NZ varieties on a range of different rootstock types, both in the presence and absence of Phytophthora, and see which rootstock/scion combinations prove the most durable. To do all these trials successfully, we need test material (seed, seedlings, grafted plants) from nurseries and growers around NZ.

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NNGA, cont'd from p. 1

gave us a grammar lesson and said that the plural of y'all is all y'all.

Charlie NovoGradac talked about the difficulties in organic farming of chestnuts. He described the legal requirements for organic certification and the 3 year rule. He described the challenges involved.

Greg Miller had a slide presentation from his recent visit to China in which he was a guest of Dr. Zang Kai Ching of the Institute of Pomology and Forestry. In general he described the country's chestnut orchards as having very close spacing, using very labor intensive harvest methods and with many of the trees being planted on hand-dug terraces. He said that he saw few trees more than 20 years old and the Chinese were planting chestnuts as fast as they could, increasing about 10% a year. He said that once the nuts are harvested they are stored in a controlled environment and can be kept until May. They are stored in plastic feed bags with holes punched in them. He mentioned that roasted chestnuts are a hot deli item for sale in the supermarkets and that they are some of the best tasting nuts he's ever had. They use a roaster that looks like a cement mixer.

nuts are kept moist. If he doesn't see water in the cooler he may spray.

Michael Gold and Ken Hunt, of the University of Missouri talked about how they're trying to encourage the establishment of chestnut orchards in their area. They are experimenting with orchard establishment and have a goal of greater than 1 ton per acre, using Araki's pruning methods. Spacing is at 13' x 26'. Gold mentioned that Asia produces 64% of the world's production currently and that the U.S. is less than 1%. Current consumption levels are 4 lb. per person in Korea, 1 lb. per person in Japan and Europe, 0.5 lb. per person in China and 0.1 lb in the U.S.

Jim Stegman talked about the development of NNGA's web-based cultivar registry that can be updated by growers. It will ultimately where every nut cultivar is grown in the country. It's not available on-line yet but should prove to be extremely valuable once it is.

Dennis Fulbright reported on the USDA

He feels they should have 90-100 lbs per tree at 10 years of age.

Meadowview Research Farm

A highlight of the annual meeting was the visit to the American Chestnut Foundation's research farms, where the purpose is to breed American chestnut trees



Fred Hebbard, Staff Pathologist at the Meadowview Research Farms explains how trees are backcrossed.

for resistance to the blight disease, so that they might be grown again in the mountains to provide a reliable source of nuts for wildlife and nuts and timber for people.

Researchers there are using the backcross method that requires 4 backcrosses to produce a 15/16 American chestnut tree. They screen these for blight resistance by inoculating them with blight fungus at 3-4 years of age and measuring canker size, picking the trees with the smallest cankers.

They have begun intercrossing 15/16 American, 1/16 Chinese backcross chestnut trees in one plot at the Price farm and are planting them at a third farm recently acquired. They expect to select highly blight-resistant progeny from these beginning two years from now, and those highly blight-resistant progeny should begin bearing nuts in 2005 or 2006. After trees from those nuts have grown for 50 years in the forest, they tell us our children will be able to see whether they have succeeded in producing trees that grow like the American chestnut tree of old.

Summary

This was our second NNGA meeting and both were extremely valuable. Hopefully next year's meeting will be in the Northwest and more WCGA members will be able to attend. It's definitely worth the trip.

p p p

The Western Chestnut



Visitors to the farm were transported via wagons through the property.

Greg also talked about how he harvests and processes his nuts. He uses high school students to harvest the nuts. They are working to earn money for their graduation party and their "pay" is a donation to the school for this purpose. He said he does a hot water treatment for weevils and the nuts spend 1-3 days on the floor drying. Then they are graded, bagged and sold. He does no additional curing. Those that don't sell immediately are put into storage at 0-2° C. He has a humidifier in the cooler and the

grant proposal that was received by MSU. They formed a team of people from the various related disciplines to do what was necessary to help make chestnuts an industry. Growers in the area formed a co-op and with the grant purchased a Boema machine that peels the nuts. They participated in the Cadillac festival last year and sold soup and roasted chestnuts, as well as chestnut chili. He mentioned that they are getting 5 lbs of nuts per tree at 3 years of age and 10 lbs per tree at 5 years.



Application for WCGA On-Line Growers' Directory Listing for 2002

Select only **ONE** of the following types of listings and fill in the appropriate information.

p	I want a FREE listing in the WCGA Growers' Directory for 2002. The following information will be posted. Please PRINT legibly.
Name Business Name Address City State Zip Phone Fax Email	

p	I want an EXTENDED listing with a link to my web page. Cost is \$25 per year, \$15 for the remainder of 2002. The following information will be posted to the site. Please PRINT legibly.			
Name Business Name Address City State Zip Phone Fax Email URL for your personal web page:				
<p>If you do not have your own web page, you may design a single page using Word or any other word processing program that allows you to save a file in .HTM or .HTML format. Please save your file as "yourbusinessname.htm", or as "yourlastname.htm". As an example, Chris Foster would have a file named "cascadia.htm" or if he had no business name as "foster.htm". You can attach the file to an email and send it to the Webmaster at Carolyn@ChestnutsOnLine.com. If you do not have email you can save the file on a floppy disk (IBM formatted) and mail it to Webmaster, PO Box 841, Ridgefield, WA 98642. If there are included graphics files make sure to save them as well with names that identify them as yours, e.g., cascadiapix.jpg. Note: Microsoft Extensions are not supported on the website. Very large files will take a long time to load and may lose customers for you.</p> <p>Check the boxes you wish to appear in your extended listing:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>p Retail</p> <p>p Organic</p> <p>p Processed Products</p> <p>p Seed Nuts</p> <p>p Credit Cards</p> </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>p Wholesale</p> <p>p Sustainable Ag Practices</p> <p>p Other chestnut Items</p> <p>p Other Services & Supplies</p> </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>_____ Varieties (how many do you have?)</p> <p>p Nursery Stock</p> <p>p Farm Visits</p> </td> </tr> </table>		<p>p Retail</p> <p>p Organic</p> <p>p Processed Products</p> <p>p Seed Nuts</p> <p>p Credit Cards</p>	<p>p Wholesale</p> <p>p Sustainable Ag Practices</p> <p>p Other chestnut Items</p> <p>p Other Services & Supplies</p>	<p>_____ Varieties (how many do you have?)</p> <p>p Nursery Stock</p> <p>p Farm Visits</p>
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I agree that all information I am providing for display on the WCGA website is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the \$15.00 fee for the extended site covers the remainder of 2002. Any updates during that period will be done for a fee of \$10.

Signature

Date

Mail this application to the Treasurer, PO Box 841, Ridgefield, WA 98642. If you are requesting the extended entry make sure to include your check for \$15.00 made payable to Western Chestnut Growers' Assn., Inc. Entries will be posted upon receipt of the application and payment if required. **Don't forget to email your HTM file.** Request for free listing may be faxed to 360-887-3669.



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Press Release, cont'd from p. 1

yet, directly from the growers. The Western Chestnut Growers' Association has created a new directory of member growers that consumers can use to find the nearest orchards and the freshest products. The directory lists full contact information, as well as special features for each farm, such as organic production, chestnut-related products and the availability of farm tours.

The directory can be found at the WCGA web site, at www.wcga.net. Recipes for using fresh and dried chestnuts are also available upon request.

About the Western Chestnut Growers' Association: **WCGA** was incorporated in 1996 to promote chestnuts, disseminate information to growers and support research in the chestnut industry. The association has 100 members, representing approximately 40 growers nationwide, many of whose orchards are just beginning to

produce on a large scale. Those growers produce an estimated 65 tons of chestnuts each fall along the West Coast alone. The association welcomes new members from any part of the world.

For further information, please contact one of our officers, below, or a grower near you. Our growers are listed in the Growers' Directory, at www.wcga.net.

President Chris Foster ChrisFoster@wcga.net 503-621-3564
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Director Peggy Paul PeggyPaul@wcga.net 208-466-2953
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WCGA CLOTHING ORDER

Here's another opportunity to promote the Association. The following clothing items are available with the new logo for association members.

Please complete the order form and mail with your check payable to WCGA, or VISA/Mastercard number to Sandy Bole, Ladd Hill Orchards, 15500 SW Roberts Rd., Sherwood, OR 97140 or Fax your order to 503-625-1937.

Item No.	Description	Sizes available	Colors available	Unit price
K420	Pique Knit Short-sleeve Polo Shirt	Unisex sizes XS-4XL	White, Ivory, Oxford, Stone, Yellow Faded Blue, Red, Faded Olive, Burgundy Forest Green	\$34.00
K420P	Pique Knit Short-sleeve Polo Shirt w/Pocket	Unisex sizes XS-4XL	White, Stone, Faded Blue	\$38.00
L420	Ladies Pique Knit Short-sleeve Polo Shirt	Sizes S-XL	White, Stone, Yellow, Faded Blue, Red	\$34.00
PC61	Men's/Women's Cotton Knit T- Shirt	Sizes S-2XL	White, Ash, Yellow, Natural, Stonewashed Blue, Stonewashed Green, Violet, Colonial Blue, Red, Spruce	\$16.00
SP10	Long-sleeve Denim Shirt	Sizes XS-4XL	Faded Blue	\$31.00
SP11	Short-sleeve Denim	Sizes XS-4XL	Faded Blue	\$31.00
L600	Ladies Long-sleeve Denim Shirt	Sizes S-XL	Faded Blue	\$44.00
83062	Crewneck Sweatshirt 80/20 Cotton/Poly	Adult sizes S-2XL	Ash, Heather, Bluegrass (slate blue), Wine	\$46.00
CP82	Brushed Twill Baseball Cap adj. closure		Khaki, White, Red, Royal	\$15.00
AP34	Butchers Apron 34" long		White, Vanilla, Butter, Sage, Hunter, Red, Royal	\$19.00

Note: All items are 100% cotton, unless otherwise noted.

ORDER NOW! The deadline for this order is November 1 for holiday delivery. We will be ordering again at the annual meeting.

Clip the order form below.

WESTERN CHESTNUT GROWERS' ASSN. CLOTHING ORDER FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

<u>Item #</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Color</u>	<u>Unit Price</u>	<u>Total Price</u>
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Shipping	\$ 5.00
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Shipping \$ 3.00

Total Order \$

Payment Method: ☐ Check ☐ VISA ☐ Mastercard

Credit Card No: _____ Expiration Date: (Mo/Yr) _____

Signature: _____

MAIL YOUR ORDER WITH CHECK ENCLOSED **PAYABLE TO WCGA** TO SANDY BOLE, LADD HILL ORCHARDS, 15500 SW ROBERTS RD., SHERWOOD, OR 97140. OR FAX IT WITH CREDIT CARD INFO TO 503-625-1937.

1/02-10/02

The Cook's Corner



Chestnut Soup with Parsley Oil and Roasted Chestnuts.

By Michael Ryan
of the Milawa Cheese Cafe

3 1/2 Tbsp butter
1 onion, chopped
1 leek, thinly sliced
3 sticks celery, chopped
1 lb frozen peeled chestnuts
1 potato peeled and chopped
1 litre of chicken or vegetable stock
1 1/4 C pouring cream

1 1/2 tsp lemon juice, or to taste
olive oil for roasting chestnuts

Parsley Oil

2 1/2 C flat-leaf parsley
1 C olive oil

Method

Melt butter in a heavy-based saucepan, add onion, leek and celery and cook, stirring occasionally, over low heat for 8-10 minutes or until softened. Add 14 oz. chestnuts, potato and stock and season to taste with sea salt and cracked black pepper. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer, partially covered, for 20 minutes or until chestnuts are soft. Process chestnut mixture in a food processor until smooth, then strain through a sieve into the same pan. Add cream and return mixture to the boil, stirring frequently to prevent soup from

burning. Add lemon juice and adjust seasoning to taste.

For parsley oil, add parsley leaves to a large saucepan of boiling water for 10 seconds, drain and refresh in ice-cold water. Squeeze dry in a kitchen towel to remove as much moisture as possible, puree in a food processor with the oil for 2 minutes or until smooth, then strain through a fine sieve.

Place remaining chestnuts on an oven tray, toss with a little olive oil, lightly season with sea salt and cracked pepper, then roast at 350° F for 4-5 minutes. Cool slightly, then chop coarsely.

Ladle soup into bowls, drizzle with parsley oil and top with roasted chestnuts.

Have a recipe you'd like to share?

*Send it to the Editor,
PO Box 841,
Ridgefield, WA 98642.*

2002 Membership Renewal / Application

Western Chestnut Growers Assn., Inc.

(Please print)

Member
First Last

Farm/Business/Organization Name

Address

City State/Province Zip/Postal Code

Phone () Fax ()

Email: Website URL:

Date

\$25.00 individual membership
\$35.00 household membership
\$26.50 Canadian members
Ttl amount enclosed: \$

The following information is **voluntary** on your part, but will help your association better understand the growth and status of the chestnut industry. Check those boxes that apply:

☐ Commercial Grower ☐ Prospective Commercial Grower ☐ Researcher/Educator ☐ Hobbyist
☐ Nursery ☐ Consultant ☐ Vendor

Acreage in chestnuts: _____ acres Chestnuts first planted in year: _____ ☐ Not yet planted

Percentage of seedlings: _____

☐ Sell grafted trees ☐ Sell seedlings ☐ Sell scion wood ☐ Sell seed nuts ☐ Sell chestnuts retail
☐ Sell chestnuts wholesale ☐ Sell mail order ☐ Sell on-line ☐ Sell at farmers' markets
☐ Sell at farm stand

Varieties grown: _____

2001 Production: _____

Send this form with your check (\$25.000 individual membership, \$35.00 household membership) made payable to Western Chestnut Growers Assn., Inc. to Ray Young, Secy/Treas, PO Box 841, Ridgefield, WA 98642.