



The Chestnut Grower

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Summer 2009

Great Weather, Hosts, Conversation: CGA '09 in Ohio

*submitted by Carolyn Young, Allen Creek Farms
& Mike Gold, University of Missouri Center for Agroforestry*

The Chestnut Growers headed north to Carrollton, Ohio, for the annual meeting June 26-28, 2009. Friday night attendees gathered at Greg Miller's home where they were treated to a great Mexican dinner prepared by his wife, Diane. In addition, growers sipped sweet chestnut wine provided by Dale and Linda Black. Thirty-six people attended this year, one of the largest groups in a number of years.

Greg Miller arranged for the group to use the local FFA camp for the business meeting Saturday morning. The facilities there were outstanding.

Speakers included Jozsef Racsko, Ohio State University pomologist; Sandy Anagnostakis from the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station; Ken Hunt and Mike Gold from the University of Missouri Center for Agroforestry; and Bob Stehli, grower from Mantua, Ohio.

Saturday afternoon was spent at two of Greg Miller's orchards. He talked about what he's tried, what worked, what didn't and what he'd do differently if he were doing it over. Capping off the day Greg showed the group his chestnut processing facility. On Saturday evening the Millers treated the attendees to a catered pig roast.

Sunday morning the group visited Bob Stehli's orchard in Mantua about 70 miles north of the Millers. He also discussed what has worked and what hasn't. People were interested in hearing what other growers have been through and how they've handled it. Both Greg and Bob hand-harvest their orchards using labor from the local Amish population. CGA

Gall wasp has found its way to Ohio and attendees saw what it looks like and what it does to the trees (see pg. 8). See photos of the meeting on pg. 9.

Getting Growers Going

by Michelle Hall, University of Missouri Center for Agroforestry

Interest in chestnuts in the Midwest is growing, and the University of Missouri Center for Agroforestry is happy to feed the need for information.

The Center is hosting a series of workshops for current and prospective growers, extension agents and FFA instructors and students, taking attendees through a year of growing, harvesting and marketing chestnuts.

"We originally thought we'd be happy with 30 participants," said Mike Gold, associate director, Center for Agroforestry and president, Chestnut Growers of America. "The series filled up almost (cont. pg. 6)



Bill Reid, center, gives a field grafting demonstration for attendees of MU Center for Agroforestry's chestnut workshop.

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A Message from the President

MIKE GOLD
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
CENTER FOR AGROFORESTRY

CGA Annual Meeting - Outstanding!

Having participated in CGA activities for the past 7 years or so, I remain humbled by the dedication and enthusiasm of U.S. chestnut growers. We face many obstacles and members generously share both their successes and failures with one another during our annual meetings. To succeed in the neophyte business of chestnut production in the USA you need to be a jack-of-all-trades and a diehard optimist. The list of unanswered questions is daunting and relates to every facet of production and sales. Support from U.S. Land Grant universities will grow once the economic value of U.S. chestnut production grows into a multi-million dollar industry. Meanwhile, growers remain optimistic, determined and convinced that U.S. chestnut production has a bright future. I happen to agree with their optimism.

Greg and Diane Miller hosted our recent CGA Annual Meeting in Carrollton, Ohio. In addition to the Miller's generosity and hospitality, we had very informative tours at the Miller's many chestnut plantings. The Saturday morning meeting was held at a beautiful lakeside resort and the presentations were informative with lively discussion throughout the morning. Everyone enjoyed the great summer weather on Friday night and Saturday with mild temperatures and cool breezes. Sunday brought a rain-shortened visit to Bob Stehli's orchards, but before we got soaked, we had ample opportunity to see what Bob is doing. As always, the CGA meeting allowed for lots of time for members to visit with each other and share valuable tips and tricks.

During the Annual Meeting I handed out the results of our Annual Member Survey. If you were not able to attend and would like a copy, just let me know. I was disappointed we only received 18 responses from our CGA membership. Realistically, this number is too small to provide meaningful insights into our industry. Given the openness with which members communicate during annual meetings, I am surprised to find our membership seems reluctant (perhaps just too busy?) to anonymously share information for the benefit of the overall membership. I feel strongly the data collected in our annual survey would be valuable to everyone in CGA. We will try again next January and see if we can obtain a better response rate from members. If you have suggestions to improve the survey, please send them along.

Best wishes for a fruitful summer and bountiful 2009 crop.

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Fall issue deadline 9/15 mailed 10/15
Winter issue deadline 12/15 mailed 1/15
Spring issue deadline 3/15 mailed 4/15
Summer issue deadline 6/15 mailed 7/15

Australian Chestnut Industry: Co-op, Cultivars & Cultural Practices

by Dennis Fulbright, Michigan State University

Dennis' recap of his recent trip to Australia is being featured in two parts; the first was in the Spring '09 issue, and the second is below.



Tweenhills Chestnut Farm near Canberra, owned by John and Heather Kane. A dryland chestnut farm, each tree receives microsprinkle irrigation less than once a week.

I was at the meeting. Chestnuts Australia, Inc. helps develop grower communication and serves as a source of information that all growers can use. It does not market chestnuts, but it does promote chestnuts and their use. My impression is that Chestnuts Australia, Inc. is similar to Chestnut Growers of America. The volunteer board of directors of Chestnuts Australia, Inc. finds ways to work with the government to help find solutions to problems beleaguering the industry; however, the governmental jurisdiction changes every so often. What at one time could be a state-supported issue may need to become a national issue as state support for that type of research dries up. It is volunteers of Chestnuts Australia, Inc. that makes this type of focus possible. They have at least one, half-time paid employee working for them.

While I was told there are a few growers with seedling trees (by seedling I mean non-grafted trees), almost all chestnut growers plant and maintain grafted trees. The grafted trees are purchased from chestnut farms that produce trees for this purpose and I was not made aware of any nurseries that catered to this need. It was apparently no trouble getting young grafted trees for new plantings. Something I found amazing is the number of chestnut trees that have been re-grafted to new cultivars. Some trees (and I don't mean 10 or 20; I mean hundreds) have been grafted twice or three times. That is, they were top worked to new cultivars. Reasons for this would be: since

The chestnut industry in Australia appears to be loosely organized. There are issues and problems that relate to all growers and these are the types of issues with which the national group tries to find solutions. Phomopsis nut rot caused by the fungal pathogen is one of these problems and that was why

the industry was new, they did not know the best cultivars at the time the industry was started; they needed more pollen and had heard that another cultivar produced more pollen; nuts were better tasting or peeled easier. In other words, they had reasons to change the cultivars. What this left were orchards with rows representing various cultivars, much like we commonly do with apple cultivars. It was obvious that the grafting technique had changed in time as some top working was performed on smaller branches high up in the tree. Currently most grafting appears to be done by cutting the top of the tree off on the main trunk and placing 5 or 6 scion sticks between the bark and the cambium.

It should be noted that there are few, if any, Chinese chestnut trees planted in Australia. The growers who had tried Chinese chestnut had found them to be woefully inadequate for the industry. It is said they did not grow well on their farms and took too long to get into production while producing small nuts. Some motivated growers are trying them again, but do not hold out much hope. Now that they are in production with their trees, they feel they have more time to test new ideas or re-visit old ones.

Since most of the trees are grafted, what species are they grafted to? Most are grafted to European or European X Japanese cultivars. I found out the cultivars 'Colossal' and 'Bouche de Betizac' do not have a strong following. 'Colossal' apparently takes too long to drop all its nuts (more than two weeks), and 'Bouche de Betizac' drops its nuts free from the burs, leaving the burs attached to the branches of the trees. This is a problem because Phomopsis nut rot is managed by sanitation techniques and removing old burs from the orchard is part of that management program. Cultivars with nut-less burs attached to branches complicate that management scheme. So as I mentioned earlier, cultivars are placed in the orchard (cont. pg. 10)



Above: A year-old grafted tree.



Right: Chestnut tree with grafts trained to a vase shape with central leader for maximum sun exposure.

'Cheznuts' Processing Re-Visited

Jennifer Wilkinson asks Jane and Brian Casey for an update on their chestnut processing operation

from *The Australian Nutgrower*, March 2009

The chestnut processing venture, 'Cheznuts', developed in north-east Victoria by chestnut growers, Jane and Brian Casey, was outlined in an article published in the March 2002 issue of *Australian Nutgrower*. At that time the Caseys were roasting fresh chestnuts in Myrtleford and exporting the frozen roasted nuts to Japan. They were also sending several tonnes of fresh chestnuts to China for peeling and processing as whole frozen chestnuts.

The frozen roasted chestnut product continued until 2005 but was suspended due to adverse exchange rates and stiff competition from a large Italian company. However the peeled frozen product has gone from strength to strength and 23 tonne of fresh chestnuts were shipped to China for hand peeling in 2008. Brian explained that the processing in China takes between 3-4 weeks and because there is always a hitch or delay somewhere along the line, Brian travels to China and stays for the duration. It is not unusual for a container of chestnuts to be held up for residue testing on arrival or for testing as the frozen product enters Japan, and it's crucial to ensure storage requirements are maintained during such delays.

Although the processor in China hand peels a huge volume of Chinese chestnuts every year (15,000 tonne) and the staff is skilled, Jane and Brian have found that there are new issues which arise each year and supervision is needed to ensure the product meets Cheznuts requirements. Brian meets with the production manager and export manager before processing commences to discuss and review the processing manual which they have had written in Chinese, to ensure peeling quality is consistent from year to year.

In the factory each chestnut is hand peeled using a knife to peel off the outer shell and the nuts are then blanched to slip off the pellicle and belt frozen at -30°C. The frozen nuts are sealed in one kilo plastic bags and packed in cartons. From the factory, approximately half the frozen peeled product is shipped to Japan and half is shipped back to Australia. The product exported to Japan is mainly L1, L2 and L3 A Grade (whole nuts) and these receive a premium. Jane and Brian have investigated other export markets but establishing new export customers is a very expensive exercise.

The Medium and Standard A Grade frozen peeled product returned to Australia is distributed to chefs, restaurants... and other outlets.

Brian said that while the Japanese market has been constant, demand hasn't increased there in part due to the strong Aussie dollar which has put pressure on price. Nonetheless, in the seven years Cheznuts has been selling in Japan, they have developed a trusting export relationship in that country. Japanese buyers have been to China to inspect the processing facilities and they have also visited the chestnut growers in Australia. While Jane and Brian grow some of the tonnage, the bulk is produced by other growers nearby in north-east Victoria and they appreciate the excellent support of these growers, especially Gif Thompson and Nightingales who also provide their cool store for consolidating shipments and packing the container. All nuts shipped for peeling are Purton's Pride as it is an easy peeling variety with minimal pellicle intrusion.

Jane recalls that six years ago the Australian market for frozen peeled chestnuts was small but it has steadily increased since they extended their promotion work especially to restaurants. She says Chestnuts Australia Inc. has continued excellent market promotion to consumers while Cheznuts promotion has been directed to the Food Service industry. As well as attending trade exhibitions and meeting distributors, Jane and Brian attend Food Shows in Australia and overseas and Jane has produced a slide show to screen at these shows. They have also worked hard on logistics establishing a reliable distribution, storage and transport network because to maintain quality, the frozen chestnut product must be frozen at -18 to -20°C and not rise above -10°C or the product deteriorates. Jane said they have considered chemically treating the peeled nuts before freezing to prevent oxidation but they prefer to stick to producing a natural product.

Another reason for the increase in domestic demand has been due to improved peeling method. Originally the chestnuts were peeled in Vietnam and the peel and pellicle was cut off with a knife producing a smooth cut surface on the nuts. Jane said that sales weren't (cont. pg. 5)

What I *Wouldn't* Do Again

“**T**he weed-eater. When I began planting lots of trees in the 1980s, I had the problem of grass and weeds growing around them that I couldn't get with the brush hog mower. So, I bought what was then a top-of-the line Echo trimmer, both with string head and steel blades. The string didn't do much with the big weeds and woody weeds (brambles, multiflora rose, etc), so I resorted to the steel brush blade. It was really good at zinging off weeds. And no matter how careful I was, it was also good at zinging off chestnut trees. The trimmer is now enjoying

a comfortable retirement hanging in my shop. I now use herbicides to control vegetation around my planted trees – but this is a topic for “What I *would* do again.” CGA

Thanks to the grower who contributed this issue's “What I Wouldn't Do Again.” We encourage everyone to pass along their stories to Michelle Hall at hallmich@missouri.edu or mail to 203 ABNR, Columbia, MO 65211. Contributions are anonymous.

‘Cheznuts’ Processing (cont. from page 4)

increasing as expected despite customers saying the product was good. Then one day Melbourne chef and food writer, Gabrielle Gaté, said “Jane, you're not going to sell them if you cut the wrinkles off.” So Cheznuts changed to knife peeling the outer shell and then blanching to remove the pellicle and the problem was solved.

While perfect whole chestnuts for freezing are graded A grade, cut chestnuts and pieces are separated out in the peeling process as B and C grades and Cheznuts has developed a few value-added processed products for these grades. These products include Sweetened Chestnut Puree and Chestnut Stuffing Mix packs made at Flavour Makers Pty. Ltd.

Some 12 years ago Jane did extensive desktop research into chestnut peeling machinery and concluded that the investment was not financially viable at that time. To reassess the situation, last year Jane and Brian sought part funding from Horticulture Australia Ltd. to travel to Europe and re-evaluate peeling machinery and assess whether importing and operating peeling machinery in Australia would be viable today. They believe they now have a much better understanding of the process and product requirements. As Brian explained, there are two methods of mechanical peeling. Steam peeling produces a superior product than the Brulage or flame method but it is a more expensive process. He believes there is no doubt that hand peeling is the best method and this method is preferred but Jane and Brian would rather peel in

Australia and hand peeling is out of the question here. The machinery is also very expensive to purchase and the extra set up costs required mean it is not viable at the moment. But our longterm aim is to process in Australia and once our sales increase enough to justify the investment we plan to do this. We just need to get more people eating chestnuts... CGA

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Getting Growers Going (cont. from front page)

immediately and had to finally be capped at 40." Attendees have come from Missouri, Illinois and Iowa. A waiting list for next year's workshop series is growing.



Michele Warmund speaks to a capacity crowd at the first in a series of UMCA chestnut workshops.

The workshop began with a day of presentations in late March about the history of chestnuts, site selection, planting and planning for grafting and pruning. Heavy rains kept attendees indoors all day at the first workshop, although the second installment of the series, in early May, brought them out to the field. The May workshop focused on grafting, both in the field and greenhouse.

Workshop presenters have included Gold; Ken Hunt, UMCA research scientist; Mark Coggeshall, UMCA research analyst/tree improvement specialist; Michele Warmund, MU professor of horticulture; and Bill Reid,

adjunct associate professor, Kansas State University Pecan Experiment Field. Lupe Rios, a master grafter from Forrest Keeling Nursery, also shared his grafting expertise with the participants.

Future '09 workshops include an August installment on orchard maintenance, weed control, pest management, and disease control; and a late September workshop on chestnut harvest, marketing and sales.



Mark Coggeshall demonstrates greenhouse grafting at the second UMCA chestnut workshop.

The workshop series is sponsored by Missouri Department of Agriculture's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program to help build the chestnut industry in Missouri and the Midwest. CGA

Interested in attending the 2010 chestnut workshop series?

Contact Julie Rhoads at rhoadsj@missouri.edu or 573-882-3234 to get on the waiting list.

Check it Out The University of Missouri Center for Agroforestry has recently put two documents online that may be of interest to CGA members.

The first is weevil information, including step-by-step directions for creating a hot-water bath treatment to get rid of chestnut weevils. You might recall this was included in a recent issue of *The Chestnut Grower*. Well, now it's online too!

In addition, UMCA has added a Web link to instructions for creating a drip irrigation system for one acre of chestnuts. This is based on the system UMCA's research farm has created. Supplies, steps to figure water demand and lay-out are discussed.

Find both links in the UMCA Frequently Asked Question section online at <http://www.centerforagroforestry.org/faq.asp> CGA

Check it Out See a new article from Sandy Anagnostakis of the department of plant pathology and ecology, Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, at <http://www.wcga.net/germplasm.htm>

This link has information about valuable chestnut germplasm in the Experiment Station plantings.

For another article by Dr. Anagnostakis, this one on the history of chestnut introductions into North America, go to <http://www.wcga.net/history.htm> and click on "An Historical Reference for Chestnut Introductions into North America." CGA

National Chestnut Week 2009 is Sunday, Oct. 11, through Saturday, Oct. 17. What are your plans?!

Meeting Minutes and Officers

Chestnut Growers of America, Inc.
Minutes of the Annual Meeting
June 27, 2009

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by President Mike Gold at 8:40 a.m. at Carrollton, Ohio.

Reading of the Minutes: Auzzie Jackson moved and Mike LeBoeuf seconded the motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Motion passed.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report: Ray Young passed out copies of the financial report for the year to date and indicated that detailed financial information was available at the meeting if there were any questions.

Old Business: Bylaws changes Copies of the proposed bylaws changes that provided for the addition of "associate membership" and a change in the annual dues were distributed. Ballots on the measure were distributed and Ken Hunt agreed to collect and count the votes. The result was nearly unanimous in favor of the changes. The tally was 22 for and 1 against the bylaws changes. Motion passed.

New Business: What can CGA do to assist growers? Charlie Novogradac asked if CGA could/would develop and provide handout fliers to use at Farmer's Markets? Perhaps expand the concept by developing another handout for use with grocery store produce managers stressing proper handling and storage of chestnuts? Mike Gold indicated the MU Center of Agroforestry had already developed some of these materials and would pursue a generic version that would be suitable for all growers.

It was also suggested that CGA provide the materials in "camera ready" form on a CD that could be distributed to members.

Charlie Novogradac requested that CGA have produce bags printed in quantity with the CGA logo and resell them to growers as a means of providing more legitimacy to the small grower.

Mike Gold discussed the idea of providing well-written articles regarding chestnuts, i.e. the allergy-free aspects of chestnuts – Dennis Fulbright reminded the group that the

FDA has included the chestnut in with other tree nuts and their allergens...we would need to convince the FDA to take it off to promote chestnuts as non-allergenic.

Carolyn Young suggested the chestnut article(s) would be designed to show the practical uses of chestnuts not simply an allergy-free product.

Diane Miller wanted to be able to pass out proper techniques for chestnut storage when the nuts were sold.

Sandra Anagnostakis suggested that Charlie N. get more information on the size(s) and type(s) of bags that the growers might use. Greg Miller suggested a "bag committee."

Richard Teague suggested a committee be appointed to investigate and publish for growers' use post-harvest handling techniques that are effective. Those in attendance agreed that there are multiple ways of handling and storing chestnuts currently in use by a number of different growers that each feels is successful.

Bob Wallace prefers the use of tightly woven polypropylene bags often associated with rice storage bags while others prefer the open weave "onion bags."

Election of Officers for 2009-2010: According to the bylaws if no one petitions the board to challenge the Nominating Committee's slate of nominees prior to March 1st of the election year the slate shall be considered to have been elected unanimously and no balloting needs to take place.

President: Mike Gold
Vice-Pres: Bill Nash
Sec./Treas: Ray Young
Director: Sandy Bole
Director: Dennis Fulbright
Director: Bob Wallace
Director: Lee Williams

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at noon.

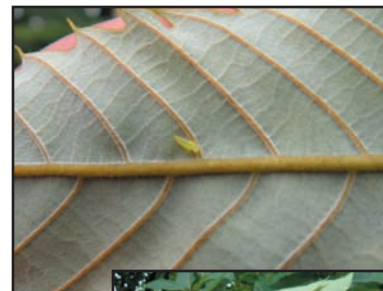
Respectfully submitted,
Ray Young,
Secretary-Treasurer

Bugging Out in Ohio

The gall wasp has found Ohio chestnut orchards; the potato leaf hopper also can be a problem.



Gall wasp infestation, including old damage, above right.



Potato leaf hopper, including leaf curl damage, above.

Finessing the Forum

The Chestnut Forum, available at <http://www.ChestnutsOnLine.com/forum>, and maintained by Carolyn Young, Allen Creek Farm, has undergone an upgrade to make it easier for growers and consumers to communicate and share information around the globe.

Young added the Forum to their farm's Web site in early 2001 – it now boasts members from all over the world – more than 1,000 registered users. The Forum is divided into different sections of discussion for growers, cooks, etc., for a wide range of interests. Forum sections include Orchard Establishment and Maintenance; Harvesting and Processing; Marketing; and Tips and Techniques in Cooking with Chestnuts.

So what's new and improved? Young says registered members will enjoy the following updates:

* *Avatar upload available to easily identify each member.*

- * *Add photos to an entry of your orchard or newest chestnut recipe.*
- * *Notification when someone responds to one of your posts.*
- * *A calendar of chestnut events around the globe.*
- * *Ability to close categories to only see ones in which you are interested.*
- * *Ease in changing user profile.*
- * *Search for any topic to see what's been discussed previously.*
- * *FAQ section about the Forum.*
- * *Display a list of all posts you've made to the Forum.*
- * *Display the most current topics being discussed.*

It's easy to sign up for the Chestnut Forum. Go to <http://www.ChestnutsOnLine.com/forum> and find out for yourself! CGA

Annual Meeting 2009 Photos



Clockwise from upper left: The hosts, Diane and Greg Miller.

- Enjoying a beautiful Friday evening of food and friends at the Millers' house.*
- Bob Stehli's budding method.*
- Greg Miller's Empire Chestnut Company processing and storage facility.*
- Bob Stehli's orchard.*
- Bob Stehli presents.*
- Greg Miller's chestnut sorter.*
- Greg Miller discussing his chestnut weevil "hot bath" method.*
- Greg Miller's orchard.*

The location of Annual Meeting 2010 is still being determined. Anyone wishing to host is invited to contact President Mike Gold at goldm@missouri.edu.

Photos courtesy Michele Warmund and Carolyn Young.

Australian Chestnut Industry (cont. from page 3)

for various reasons, not just because they are available. To emphasize this point even further, the only chestnut grower cooperative available to the approximately 300 growers in Australia is based on proprietary cultivar use. If you are a member of the cooperative, you have the right to grow cultivars that non-members are not legally allowed to grow in their orchards. These cultivars apparently provide a marketing advantage that translates into higher returns since it costs over \$10,000 to join the cooperative. There are currently about 16 growers in the cooperative.

On the farms I was shown various cultural practices. I saw grafted trees being pruned so they would take on a vase or wine glass shape, but with a central leader allowed to grow up the middle of the tree. This was done to allow more sunlight to penetrate the tree and increase yields.

I heard they applied lime to raise the pH, preventing the naturally acidic soils from dropping below 6.0. I saw growers who put fertilizer in the irrigation water (fertigation). They keep track of micronutrients and add them as needed. When I asked how they know what is needed, they indicated that was up to the lab doing the testing. Later, I was told the numbers are based on some “other” type of fruit tree, not necessarily based on what is known to be best for chestnut (since that is not necessarily known). But they do not treat it like it is an unknown; they respond to the numbers and apply the materials as “needed.”

Every grower must harvest, clean, store and market their own chestnuts; therefore, every grower must have their own equipment. In the five-farm visit, I saw the same types of equipment in the barns and packing sheds – some newer – some older, some larger – some smaller – regardless of

the size of the farm. The grower dealing with a few tons had the same type of machinery as the farm with 200 tons. I saw three different types of harvesters and someone also stated there is still nothing better than hand harvesting

(they use migrant labor primarily from Malaysia). I saw the FACMA Italian-built vacuum harvesters and various versions of finger harvesters attached to front loaders. These

were unique and the concept was being applied for smaller growers where the equipment would not be dedicated and could be attached to most front loaders.



Left: Harvesting with a front-loader adapted with “fingers” for picking up chestnuts and burs. The fingers pick up the burs and nuts and drop them

into the attached bucket. The bucket is emptied into the hopper when full. Larger units have a belt that feeds the chestnuts out from the bucket to the hopper that is ferried along side the harvester by another tractor.

Above: Good equipment is custom built for each farm’s needs by Peter Rinauldo of Mechanism. Above, right: John Kane with the inspection belt I saw on each farm that turns the chestnuts about 30 times as it moves toward the sizer.



Once harvested, the chestnuts enter the farm’s packing shed and the chestnuts are placed into a de-husker (de-burring) unit, air cleaning (blower) unit, floating and washing unit, inspection belt and size grader. All of these actions have been nicely interconnected by the manufacturer. The inspection belt was the most amazing. As the chestnuts went down a short belt, each chestnut was turned over for the inspector several times. The cooperative members have their own equipment on their own farms – not much is shared

and equipment redundancy reigns supreme. Each farm has one, two or three walk-in coolers.

Because each farm requires equipment, there is at least one machine shop dedicated to furnishing the needs of the farms. The company called Mechanism (Myrtleford, Victoria; www.design@mechanism.com), operated by Peter Rinauldo, designs and builds the de-burring, cleaning, inspection belts and graders sold to growers. Each unit is custom made to the amount of space available in the packing shed as well as to the size of the operation. The units appear to be well designed and unique for each farm.

Most of the marketing takes place between brokers and the individual growers. Each grower is competing against all other growers for the highest price. There are no chestnuts being imported from other countries in April and May when the chestnuts go to market. **(cont. pg. 11)**

Australian Chestnut Industry (cont. from page 10)

This reduces the competition that those in the northern hemisphere experience in November and December when European, Chinese and Korean chestnut hit the market at the same time as the North American chestnuts.

I did speak with one grower who had invested in a meal (flour) processing business. He sent chestnuts to China to have them peeled. They were sent back and processed to a meal. He admitted the business has not been as lucrative as he had hoped and he blamed it on having the wrong type of grinder.

Some Australian growers are interested in developing other avenues of marketing chestnuts as they see prices dropping as chestnuts become even more available in April. At this point in time, most are still satisfied with the prices and are unwilling to change their direction even though others are adamant that chestnuts will go unsold once over-production occurs.

Overall, it was a great trip full of many lessons and learning points. I came away thinking that there really is a parallel universe. *CGA*

Enjoy Italy in October

WHAT: I European Congress on Chestnut - Castanea 2009. Food, Timber, Biomass and Energy

WHERE: Cuneo, Italy

WHEN: Oct. 13-16, 2009

WHO to contact: Prof. Dr. Giancarlo Bounous, Dipartimento di Colture Arboree, Università degli studi di Torino, Via Leonardo da Vinci 44, 10095 Grugliasco, TO, Italy.

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WHY: The Organizing Committee of "Castanea 2009: Food, Timber, Biomass & Energy in Europe" is pleased to announce that from Oct. 13-16, 2009, will be held in Cuneo (Italy) the 1st European Congress and the 5th Italian Congress on Chestnut. The event will coincide with the "Regional Fair on Chestnut," open in Cuneo from Oct. 15-18. The Piemonte Region is one of the most important areas in Italy for chestnut production and Castanea 2009 will be an excellent opportunity for scientists, professionals, technicians and students, interested in basic and applied science, to discuss their current works and to share ideas.

The scientific sessions will concern: History and Landscape, Biology and Genetic Resources, Culture, Pests and Diseases, Harvest, Post-Harvest, Quality and Processing, Economics and Marketing, Biomass and Energy.

In the frame of the event will be organised technical visits and exhibitions of machinery and equipment. It is our great pleasure to invite you to attend Castanea 2009 and we hope you mark these dates in your calendar.

ALSO IN OCTOBER...

Allen Creek Farm Chestnut Festival

Saturday, Oct. 10, 2009

11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

29112 NW 41st Ave.

Ridgefield, WA

7th Annual Missouri Chestnut Roast

Saturday, Oct. 17, 2009

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Horticulture and Agroforestry Research Center

10 Research Center Road

New Franklin, MO



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