



**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA ≈ COOPERATIVE EXTENSION**  
**SUTTER/YUBA COUNTIES**  
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<http://cesutter.ucdavis.edu>

# ORCHARD NOTES



## Peach Mechanical Thinning Trial Pre-Harvest Meeting

Friday June 29, 2007,  
 10:00 a.m., Lomo Crossing

orchard is located east of cold storage facilities

Labor is scarce and peach thinning costs are higher than ever. We conducted mechanical thinning trials in 2005 and again this year as part of a study on labor-saving technologies in cling peaches funded by the California Cling Peach Board. At this meeting you can compare fruit that was mechanically thinned with a sidemount shaker one or two times in mid-April versus hand thinning late April on Loadel extra early variety.

UC Farm Advisor Janine Hasey, the grower Justin Micheli, and Erick Nielsen of ENE, Inc. who has the shaker, will discuss the results so far and considerations when mechanically thinning. All peach growers are encouraged to attend. Peach harvest is predicted to start earlier than usual this year but not as early as 2004, so this meeting date should precede the beginning of peach harvest.

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## BACK FROM SABBATICAL LEAVE

I returned the beginning of June from my sabbatical leave and am available to take your calls and have scheduled the field meetings in this newsletter. I will not be doing the pest tracker this summer since I'm returning mid-season. Some of my sabbatical crown gall research projects will be ongoing during the summer. You will be updated on the work I did through later newsletter editions or winter meetings.

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 UC FARM ADVISOR  
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**Directions:**  
 The Loadel Orchard is located North East of the Lomo Cold Storage office. Follow the yellow UC signs.

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# Field Meeting

## Avoiding Water Stress in Walnuts and New UC Walnut Variety Releases

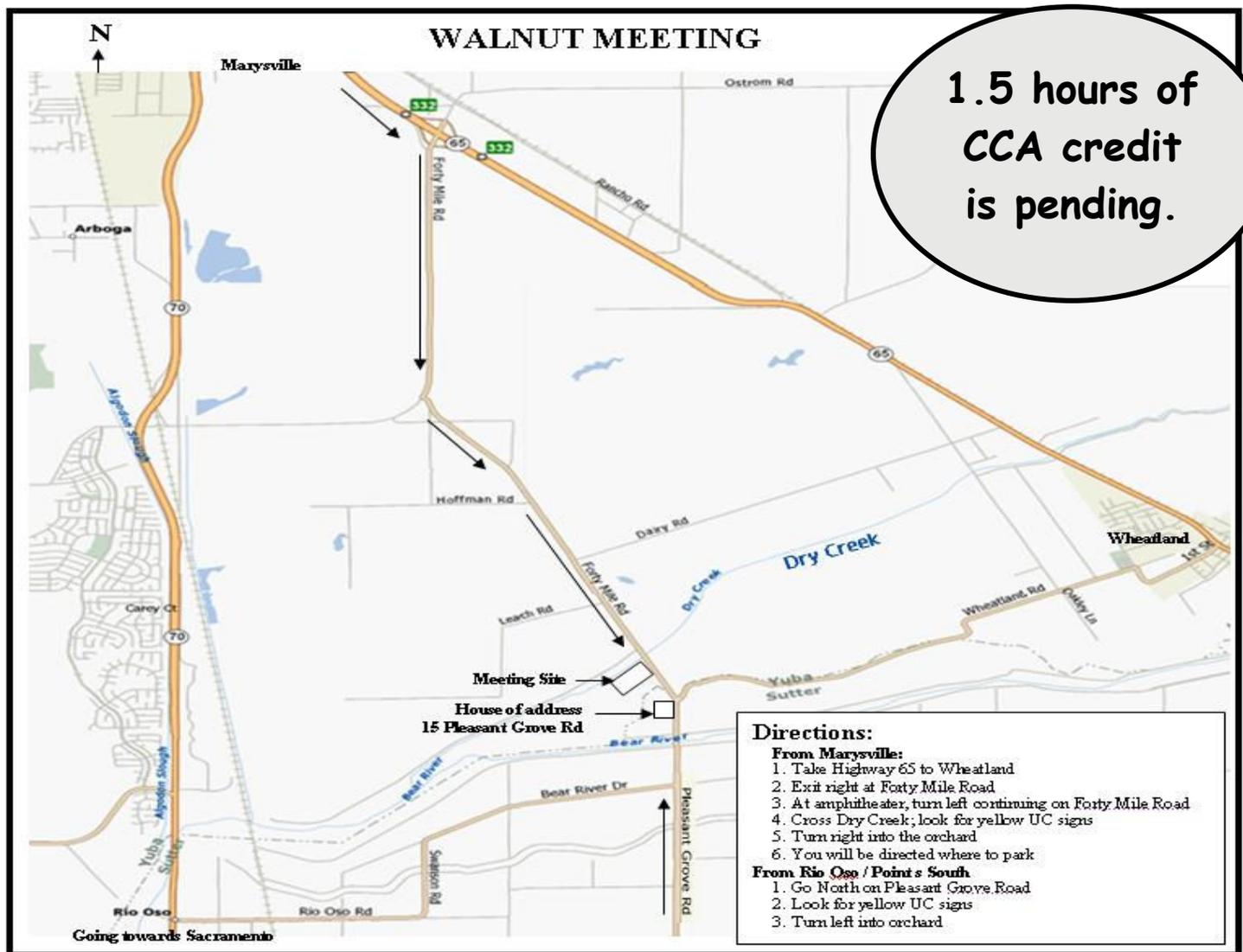
Friday, July 6, 2007, 10:00 a.m.  
Rio Oso Groves, 15 Pleasant Grove Road



Proper irrigation is extremely important to maintaining tree vigor and producing quality nuts. The orchard, a second leaf Chandler on Paradox rootstock planting, has some soil/ water relation issues in certain areas. Bruce Lampinen, Orchard Systems Specialist from UC Davis and UC Farm Advisor Janine Hasey, will discuss walnut irrigation management and how to determine water related problems using plant and soil based measurements. There will be demonstrations using a pressure chamber and soil moisture blocks for scheduling irrigations and measuring water penetration.

The grower also planted some rows of the three new UC walnut varieties that were released in 2004 – Forde, Gillet, and Sexton. Walnut breeder Gale McGranahan from UC Davis will discuss their characteristics, leafing and harvest timing, growth habit, and nut quality as you view trees. Walnut growers are encouraged to come and become better acquainted with these new varieties.

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## NEW PUBLICATIONS

The Home Orchard Growing Your Own Deciduous Fruit and Nut Trees, authored by *Chuck Ingels, Pamela Geisel & Maxwell Norton*. Pub #3485, \$25.00

This book was developed especially for use by backyard orchardists, rare fruit growers, and small-scale growers. It offers a fairly comprehensive look at standard growing methods, as well as some unique practices that enthusiasts have developed in recent years, some of which are not practical for the commercial grower.

## COST STUDIES

UC Cooperative Extension has completed two new cost-of-production studies for growing conventional walnuts in the Sacramento Valley and organic walnuts in Lake County. Cost studies are available at the Sutter/Yuba website <http://cesutter.ucdavis.edu>, or <http://coststudies.ucdavis.edu>, or a hard copy for the Sacramento Valley cost study can be picked up at the UCCE Office.

## NEW FUMIGATION REGULATIONS

California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) will begin allocating fumigant use in areas with poor air quality January 1, 2008. Part of Sutter County is included in the proposed regulations to reduce smog-producing emissions (volatile organic compounds) from field fumigant use. There will be a public hearing July 12, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. at the University of California Kearney Agricultural Center, Nectarine Room, 9240 S. Riverbend Avenue, Parlier CA 93648. The comment period closes 7/31/07.

Information on DPR's proposed '2007 Control Measures for Fumigant Pesticides for Field Soil Treatments' can be accessed online. For rules, informational handouts, public hearing dates and more visit <http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/>. Go to the "Latest News and Information" in the middle of the home page

## WALNUT PEST NOTES

Hang unbaited yellow sticky traps charged with ammonium carbonate for monitoring walnut husk populations in walnut orchards in mid-June in our area. Place traps in the orchard as high as possible within an area of dense foliage on the north side of trees and in "hot spots" where husk fly has been a problem in the past.

## JULY LEAF SAMPLING AND NUTRITION ANALYSIS

Plan now to take leaf samples in July for nutrient analysis that could potentially save on your fertilizer costs. By sampling all your orchard blocks, you can determine if the nutrients are adequate, excessive or deficient. There are still many tree crop growers not using this test annually and they are missing out on maximizing their production efficiency. When sampling an orchard, keep in mind that trees with root problems may exhibit certain nutrient deficiencies because the tree is unable to extract some nutrients due to a limited root system. It is important to sample properly so the values you obtain can be compared to critical nutrient levels.

*Below are points to consider when sampling:*

- Sample in July (August for pistachio) when nutrient levels in leaves are relatively stable
- Test annually for nitrogen, potassium and zinc
- Check for any other suspected deficiencies or toxicities
- Each sample should be of the same variety, age, rootstock and soil
- Take comparison samples between poor vs. good trees

*Peach* ~ select 60-80 mid-shoot leaves from moderately vigorous fruiting shoots

*Walnuts* ~ select about 50 terminal leaflets from fully expanded spur leaves 6 to 8 feet above the ground

*Kiwifruit* ~ select 25-30 mature leaves, just past the fruit on the shoot

Put leaves in paper bags and keep them cool until they are delivered to the lab. We have a list of laboratories that do plant, soil and water testing in our office.