

# action in AGROFORESTRY

 The Center for Agroforestry  
University of Missouri

*A Global Center for Agroforestry, Entrepreneurship and the Environment*

Michael Gold and Calder Cleavelin, editors  
Volume 3, No. 11

## Chestnut roast draws over 1,000

Elsberry, Mo. – Forrest Keeling Nursery saw over 1,000 guests turn out for crafts, demonstrations and freshly roasted chestnuts at its Third Annual Great River Chestnut Roast held on October 20th.

Among the attractions were tours of the nursery, free samples of Urban Chestnut Brewing Company's "Winged Nut" chestnut craft beer, and a chestnut recipe demonstration (complete with samples) by Jina Yoo of Jina Yoo's Asian Bistro in Columbia, Mo.

Ina Cernusca, Tricia Oswald, Mike Gold and Cade Cleavelin of the MU Center for Agroforestry roasted batches of chestnuts, handed out free samples to guests, and answered a variety of chestnut-related questions. UMCA works closely with Forrest Keeling Nursery to promote the chestnut and nut tree industry in Missouri.

Forrest Keeling President Wayne Lovelace said he was surprised at the turnout, and optimistic that it would help stimulate the growing interest in chestnuts.

"We're very committed to native plants, and we feel this is a growing interest area for the future. We've staked a lot of our interests in that future," Lovelace said.

In addition to natives, he says he has seen chestnut cultivation develop steadily, especially among those who consider themselves part time farmers. Many people who came to the chestnut roast took the opportunity to buy chestnut trees.

"Two of the most common questions I get are about site selection and soil conditions, and how long is it going to take before I get any meaningful production," Lovelace said.

The latter question is what Sara Jean Peters says is a signifi-

cant barrier for nut cultivation. Peters represented the Missouri Nut Growers Association at the roast.

"It's that lead time to produce that makes it difficult for some people," Peters said. "You're talking 6-10 years before you're commercially harvesting chestnuts."

Peters said nut trees are treated as more of a companion crop now, and growers aren't typically planting trees on their most fertile ground. Matching nut trees with proper soil and soil moisture conditions is a prerequisite for commercial success.

"As for the chestnut industry, there's going to be a tipping point somewhere along the line," Peters said.

Linda Black, for one, has a good start. Her stand at the roast featured baskets of large and extra-large chestnuts for \$5 and \$6, complete with packaging and labels that read "Chestnut Ridge of Pike County, IL".

"We have a relatively young orchard and we harvested over 14,000 pounds of chestnuts this year," Black said, noting that those numbers were in spite of the crippling drought.

Her family farm in Pike County, Ill. has 30 acres of chestnuts in production, which her family sells to supermarkets and individual buyers in the area.

"They've increased their order this year, and they've been really patient with us as we get started," Black said. "There's definitely a market, and we're seeing interest in chestnuts grow."



## Kudos

Undergraduate researcher Che-Min Sue was honored with the “Research Excellence Award” at the 2012 Missouri Informatics Symposium in October. His project took a bioinformatics approach to identifying new ways of targeting Diterpenoid-A (an antimicrobial compound isolated from Eastern redcedar) against MRSA (staph infection). Che-Min Su was mentored by Chung-Ho Lin of the Center for Agroforestry, and George Stewart of the Department for Veterinary Pathobiology.

Chung-Ho Lin gave an invited presentation at the International Conference on Medicinal Plants & Herbal Products in September at Johns Hopkins University. His talk, titled “Exploring the Health Benefits and Economic Opportunities of Bioactive Phytochemicals,” provided an overview of phytochemical research at the MU Center for Agroforestry.



## Crash course in winemaking for elderberry enthusiasts

Columbia, Mo. – From sugar to tannin, acid to alcohol, and all the tricks of the trade, Dr. John Brewer knows wine. He’s the president of the Kansas-based winery Wyldewood Cellars, and the main speaker at the Center for Agroforestry Elderberry Winemaking Workshop held on October 26th.

The workshop was hosted at Bleu Restaurant & Bar in Columbia, Mo. Forty elderberry enthusiasts registered for the workshop, ate food prepared with elderberry garnishes, tasted a variety of elderberry wines and learned both general and specific techniques Brewer employs in his winemaking.

Brewer began with a small elderberry winery in 1994 near Mulvane, Kan., but now produces over 40 types of wine (from dry to sweet), including concord grape, blackberry, peach and their flagship elderberry and

elderflower wines. With elderberries alone, Brewer makes over 2,000 gallons of wine every three weeks.

“If it tastes good, that’s the key. All you have to care about is making your wine taste good,” Brewer said, outlining the five basic taste profiles present in wine: tannin, sugar, acid, alcohol and fruit flavor.

The workshop was a crash course in winemaking in general, but Brewer emphasized points specific to elderberry wines, such as the sugar needed to produce a sweet, semi-sweet or dry elderberry wine.

Terry Durham runs Eridu Farm in Hartsburg, Mo., an organic farming operation where he’s established a large elderberry planting over 30 acres in size. He attended the workshop as a means of expanding value-added uses for his elderberry production.

“It’s a fruit native to America and Missouri, but we currently import 95 percent of it from Europe. Since there’s all this growing demand, why not try to meet it with domestic production,” Durham said.

“That right there is the future of small farms.”

Durham currently bottles his crop as elderberry juice, but wants to expand into wine production. He says the US consumes 60 percent of the world’s elderberry crop – largely imported – and demand is rising for healthy, artisanal products made from the fruit.

## Impact

On September 24, an invention disclosure, “Super Enzymes’ for Conversion of Cellulose to Advanced Biofuel”, was filed by the research team of Kattesh V. Katti, Chung-Ho Lin, Shibu Jose, Ajit Zambre, Raghuraman Kannan and Kavita Katti.

## Events:

### 4th Annual Symposium

*Floods and Droughts: Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources in a Changing Climate*

–January 9th, 2013 | 9:00 a.m - 5:00 p.m.

–Jesse Wrench Auditorium, MU Memorial Union

–No admission charge, open to the public

–RSVP at 573-884-2874 or by email at [elliottl@missouri.edu](mailto:elliottl@missouri.edu) by Jan 5, 2013.

–See [flyer](#) for more details.

The Center for Agroforestry  
University of Missouri  
203 Anheuser-Busch Natural Resources  
(573) 884-2874  
[centerforagroforestry.org](http://centerforagroforestry.org)  
Shibu Jose, Ph.D., Director



College of  
Agriculture,  
Food and  
Natural  
Resources

Find us on Facebook.

