



Action in Agroforestry

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Michael Gold and
Savannah Kannberg, editors

HARC Field Day 2014

Chestnuts, biofuels, vineyards and tours at this annual field day at the Horticulture and Agroforestry Research Center.

This year's HARC Field Day was either unseasonably cold or seasonably cold (it is hard to tell with Missouri's weather). Gloves were on for participants for the first couple hours of the tours on the property. Along the tour, stops were made at different locations to get a fuller picture of the kinds of research MU conducts at the HARC farm in New Franklin, Mo.

There was time to learn about biofuel trials that are occurring on-site, the production of specialty crops (e.g. northern pecan, black walnut, chestnut) and flood tolerance trials. HARC also has ongoing MU research on grape production with quite a few rows of grapes in a fenced-in (to keep interested critters out) area. The MU Grape and Wine Institute maintains about 30 different varieties, as the search continues for the next great varietal for the state of Missouri.

Chestnuts also had some time in the spotlight. UMCA researchers are looking for trees that produce their chestnuts early, bear heavily and have high quality, tasty chestnuts. Currently, the best cultivars are spaced out in 30' by 30' plots and produce about 2,000 pounds per acre. With funds from a Specialty Crop Block Grant from MDA, UMCA demonstrated the FACMA model C300T commercial chestnut harvester. It sweeps and vacuums chestnuts from the ground and separates the nuts from their burs.

After lunch, Gene Garrett led tours of the 1819 Thomas Hickman house. Over a million dollars of restoration brought one of the oldest brick homes in the state back to its former glory.



Dr. Mark Coggeshall explaining the eastern black walnut nut breeding program.



The FACMA commercial harvester ready to gather chestnuts before a demonstration.



A chestnut research orchard with nuts and burs ready for harvest.

Photos by Savannah Kannberg

Calling all chestnut lovers

Another October, another National Chestnut Week is upon us. Held the second full week in October each year, the 2014 week is October 12 through October 18. To celebrate the week, there is the Great River Road Chestnut Roast on the Saturday (Oct. 18). This is the fourth year that Forrest Keeling Nursery in Elsberry, Mo., has hosted this event. It will last from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Even if you cannot make it up to Elsberry, you can still enjoy National Chestnut Week. Both the Chestnut Growers of America and Center for Agroforestry have links to chestnut-related recipes on their websites (<http://www.wcga.net/recipes.htm>; <http://www.centerforagroforestry.org/pubs/recipes.php>).

Sauteed Apples + Chestnuts

Recipe courtesy of Linda Black and The Chestnut Grower

1 pound fresh chestnuts
6 medium apples
1 tbsp. olive oil
1 tsp. cinnamon
¼ cup brown sugar
¼ tsp nutmeg

Remove chestnuts from their shell and chop. Remove stem and core from apples. Slice the apples and put them in a large mixing bowl. Add cinnamon, brown sugar, and nutmeg to the apple slices and mix well.

Add olive oil to non-stick skillet. Add apple mixture and chopped chestnuts to skillet. Saute over medium heat for 20-30 minutes until desired doneness.

Upcoming Events

Oct. 16, 2014—
Fall Forestry Field Day;
Buchanan's Tree Farm,
Valley Falls, Kan.
See full details on
kansasforests.org

Oct. 15 - 16, 2014—
MOSAF + MCFA
Fall Meeting; Ozark
Underground
Laboratory, Protem, Mo.
Head to mosaf.net

Oct. 18, 2014—
Great River Road
Chestnut Roast; Forrest
Keeling Nursery,
Elsberry, Mo.
More info at fknursery.com

Fall 2014 HARC chestnut harvest

The 2014 chestnut harvest at the MU Horticulture and Agroforestry Research Center (HARC) is winding down.

In addition to harvesting with the new FACMA commercial harvester, collections were also made by hand for especially desirable chestnut cultivars. Many perfect fall days in late September and early October resulted in the hand harvest of over 1,500 pounds of selected chestnuts. Observations included some cultivars still actively flowering in October, attracting butterflies, orchard floors covered in chestnuts and the discovery of some exceptionally large-sized chestnuts in about 12 of the 60 cultivars growing at HARC.



Chestnuts waiting for harvest at the Horticulture and Agroforestry Research Center in New Franklin, Mo.



The Center for Agroforestry
University of Missouri

A Global Center for Agroforestry, Entrepreneurship and the Environment

203 Anheuser-Busch Natural Resources
(573) 882-0240
centerforagroforestry.org
Shibu Jose, Ph.D., Director