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THE FLATHEAD LAKE
CHERRY GROWERS, INC

A MONTANA AGRICULTURAL
COOPERATIVE SINCE 1935

The Flathead Lake Cherry Growers®

"Quickview Review"

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER 4TH QUARTER 2015

2015

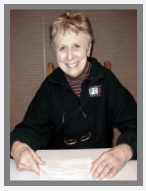
IMPORTANT DATES

FLCG
Spring Grower Meeting
Saturday March 28

Yellow Bay
Cherry
Blossom Festival
Saturday, May 16

FLCG
Pre-Harvest
Grower Meeting
Saturday, June 27

Polson
Main Street
Flathead Lake
Cherry Festival
Sat. & Sun July 18-19



FLCG
Administrator
Barb Hammons

Editor /Publisher
Ken Edgington

From The President

By Bruce Johnson

Growers,

Your Board of Directors is continuing to work on the addition of Tabletree Juice to the Finley Point facility. We have applied for a Montana Growth Through Agriculture grant to help pay for our updates to make the building ready for lease to Tabletree. We should know about the grant's status during the month of October. Table Tree is working on their business end of the agreement in preparation for the move to Montana. We are still shooting for a working juicing plant by the 2016 harvest.

We have a vacant position on the Board of Directors. This position will have temporary status until it's due for membership election in a couple of years. This is a good opportunity for you to get more involved in the Coop. If interested, please give me or one of your directors a call.

Bruce

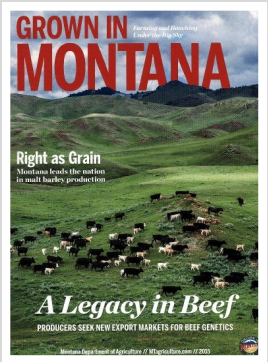
Montana Cherry Industry Covered In

"Grown In Montana Magazine"

Montana Flathead cherries received excellent coverage in the 2015 "Grown In Montana" Magazine.

If you would like to read the complete article, you can access it at the below website link.

http://farmflavor.com/magazine/grown-in-montana-2015/



FLCG Website Seen Around The World

As of This Newsletter, FLCG's website has had visitors from the following 123 countries.

Afganistan	Cambodia	Georgia	Latvia	Peru	Sudan
Algeria	Cameroon	Germany	Laos	Philippines	Sweden
Angola	Canada	Greece	Lebanon	Poland	Switzerland
Argentina	Cayman Islands	Guatemala	Lesotho	Portugal	Syria
Armenia	Czeck Republic	Hungary	Lithuania	Puerto Rico	Tanzania
Australia	Chile	Hong Kong	Macedonia	Qatar	Taiwan
Austria	China	Iceland	Malaysia	Réunion	Thailand
Bahamas	Columbia	India	Maldives	Romania	Trinadad/Tobago
Bangladesh	Croatia	Indonesia	Mauritius	Russia	Tunisia
Barbados	Cyprus	Iran	Mexico	Rwanda	Turkey
Belarus	Denmark	Ireland	Moldova	Saudi Arabia	Turks/Caicos Isl.
Belgium	Djibouti	Israel	Mongolia	Serbia	Ukraine
Belize	Dominican Rep	Italy	Morocco	Singapore	U. A. Emirates
Bolivia	Ecuador	Japan	Mozambique	Slovakia	U.K.
Bosnia	Egypt	Jamaica	Netherlands	Slovenia	USA
Brazil	El Salvador	Jordan	New Zealand	South Africa	Uruguay
British Virgin Isl.	Estonia	Kazakhstan	Norway	South Korea	Venezuela
Bulgaria	France	Kyrgyzstan	Oman	Spain	Vietnam
Burma	Frenc Guiana	Kenya	Pakistan	St. Lucia	
Brunei	Finland	Kosovo	Panama	South Africa	
Burundi	Gabon	Kuwait	Paraguay	Sri Lanka	

Charlie's Produce Of Spokane, Washington
Tours FLCG Orchards

Prior to the 2015 harvest of FLCG Flathead cherries, Alex Plummer, General Manager for Charlie's Produce located in Spokane, Washington traveled to the Flathead for a tour of FLCG Director, Mitch Jones', new hi-density cherry orchard currently under construction. The tour also included member Joe Hurst's new trestle planting system. Joe is researching the results this type system offers compared to older cherry tree planting systems currently used throughout the Flathead Valley.

FLCG And Tabletree Project Update

By Bob Sandman

In February of 2015, Flathead Lake Cherry Growers association Board began discussions with a company called Tabletree Juice. Tabletree is a company that since 2010 has developed a unique process that produces cherry and apple juices and culinary sauces in Creston, British Columbia, Canada.

Tabletree Juice is owned by Gary and Susan Snow. Gary is from Kansas City and Susan is from Creston, BC. Until 1996, they lived in the Flathead Valley with Gary being a local musician and Susan working at Kalispell Regional Medical Center. In 1996, they moved up to Creston to take over Susan's family orchard from her aging father. But, they have always called the Flathead home, so they recently sold their orchard in Creston and are in the process of moving back to Flathead Lake.

Tabletree's current juicing facility in Creston can produce about 22,000 bottles of juice per year. Their cherry juice is 100% pure juice with a touch of cinnamon and honey to act as a natural anti-bacterial agent and natural preservative. There is one pound of cherries in each 8.5 ounce bottle of juice.

In 2012 Tabletree's cherry juice won the international juice competition in Barcelona, Spain.

In 2013, Tabletree's Red Apple Juice won 2nd place at the World Juice Conference, held in Cologne, Germany.

Tabletree Juice Company is Globally Accepted Practices (GAP) certified and only takes GAP certified fruit.

After meeting with Tabletree, the Flathead Lake Cherry Growers association Board entered into a Letter of Intent, Non-Disclosure Agreement, and Trade Secret Agreement to have Tabletree Juice lease space in the association's Finley Point Warehouse to establish an expansion Juice plant facility. This new plant at full capacity may be able to produce up to 5 million bottles of cherry, apple, and other fruit juices.

Monson has met with the Flathead Lake Cherry Growers and Tabletree and fully supports this project. Flathead Cherry Growers will continue to send our cherries to Monson. They will continue to sort, package and sell our fresh pack cherries. However, with this venture, Monson will then send back the culled fruit in our return refrigerated semi-trucks to Tabletree. Monson has said that they can supply all of the volume of production-ready culled fruit necessary to meet Tabletree's needs.

Flathead Lake Cherry Growers association Board's objectives are to improve the following:

Value Added Products - Establish a value-added secondary product for Montana cherries that will provide significantly higher returns to the growers from both local and northwest-area culled fruit.

Economic Development - Increase the utilization and revenue of the warehouse facility at Finley Point, by establishing a vibrant business that will operate approximately 9 months of the year. The Plant will employ up to 30 workers with good paying jobs.

Sustained Local Fruit Production – Increase returns to local grower's for culled fruit. This will reduce or eliminate the fees members pay to the association each year for the association's operational expenses and increase revenues to local grower's for fruit where they are currently losing money. This will help to offset or eliminate the impact felt by the 25% increase in costs borne by local growers over the last 10 years.

Tabletree is currently designing the expansion plant to fit in the warehouse and is working to secure construction funding and permitting. The Board is currently determining modifications that will need to be made to the warehouse to accommodate the plant and is working with Tabletree with some of the permitting. We have received Conditional Use Permit approval from Lake County, and we are currently negotiating the Lease Agreement and discussing marketing strategies.

Our goal is to have the new plant constructed and operational by next year (2016).

To help make this goal possible, the Cherry Grower's Board has applied for a Growth through Agriculture Grant (GTA) in the amount of $60,000. Jan Tusick with the Community Development Center was a tremendous help to the association in writing the grant request. The Grant requires a 50% match and the association has agreed to provide the $60,000 of matching funds. This will provide $120,000 to the association for needed warehouse renovations, improvements, and equity in Tabletree. The association will make a presentations for funds to the GTA Board in October and should know shortly after that if we have secured the funds.

If you have any questions, contact FLCG Board Member - Bob Sandman.

Stay tuned as we move this exciting venture forward.

Local Yellow Bay Montana Family Receives Article In "Homestead" Magazine

By Martha Mintz

A cherry-picked life

Trading white collars for a more simple existence

The noises of civilization are almost unknown to the Bigfork, Montana, orchard where Ron and Katya Young are raising their four children.

The hum of passing cars on Highway 35, which cuts a narrow ribbon between their home and the pristine beauty of Flathead Lake, is muted by rows of cherry, plum, pear, and every other kind of fruit tree. Instead of an upbeat urban tune, life in Good Earth Orchard skips along to a melody all its own featuring rustling leaves, chirping birds, the rat, tat, tat of impact sprinklers, and children's laughter.

It's a life Katya and Ron sampled as children, but seemed just a warm, distant memory while they jumped from big city to big city as Ron scaled the corporate ranks to CFO of an insurance company.

The pair met while at the University of Southern California. Ron was just a kid from small town Montana studying accounting. Katya, with her blonde hair and soft lilting Russian accent, hailed from Moscow and studied international relations. ▶

Large photo: Blooms that transform into every fruit and berry imaginable decorate the Young's orchard each spring. Below: Natasha, 5, takes a quick play break to pluck a sweet treat.

A beautiful 6-page photo spread and editorial was published in the July issue of Homestead magazine. This magazine is published by the John Deere company and mailed to the Agricultural community throughout the United States and Canada.

Martha Mintz, Field Editor for the magazine, visited the Flathead off and on over the course of 2014 to document what goes into growing, harvesting and marketing Flathead Cherries. During her visit to the valley to compile facts and photos of the commercial growing of Flathead cherries, she met Ron and Katya Young, who reside in the Yellow Bay area of the Flathead Valley.

Ron, Katya and family, not only grow cherries, but grow and market a variety of other fruit and vegetables in a unique setting.

Many of those living in the Yellow Bay area know Katya as a local artist, but will find interesting other things she and Ron are doing on their plot of land .

You can read the complete article at the following website link.

http://www.deere.com/en_US/docs/html/brochures/publication.html?id=2705da2c#32

From The Past

Early Photo of the Bear Dance Women's Club.

On February 24, 1934, a group of women met at the East Shore home of Blanche Walker and started what is now known as the Beardance Women's Club.

The original group rotated their meeting among the homes of members. An early program booklet, published in 1939, indicates that the ladies shared desserts and a planned program twice a month. Some of the programs included book reviews, plays, world news events, food from different lands, identification of Montana trees, and holiday social events on Christmas and the New Year.

In 1941, Dallas and Minnie Stocking donated an acre of land where the present building is now located. A building that was used as a cook house for the prisoners who helped build Highway 35 was moved to the newly acquired land. It was the first community building on the East Shore.

The Beardance title can be associated with a number of locations from Woods Bay to Yellow Bay. Many stories are still circulating, claiming to be the real reason for the unique name. There was a ranger station on the hill above the present club house location, managed by Jim Frye. It was called Beardance Ranger Station and Lookout. It is no longer there. Then there was the original Bear Dance Orchard located near Yellow Bay, where two hunters killed a grizzly and shared the meat with neighbors. They are said to have danced a happy gig for the surprise kill of an animal not usually seen in this area.

They first called their club Upper Beardance Women's Club since it was north of the orchard bearing the same name. This name was used for many years and eventually shortened to become Beardance Women's Club.

In 1967 the East Shore Lions spent many hours remodeling the building.

Today the cub continues the tradition of service to the community. Each month the club meets for a community pot luck dinner. The Club furnishes meat, potatoes and rolls and members and guests round out the menu with vegetables, salads and desserts.

The club house is available to rent and has been used for church meetings, wedding receptions, bridge and luncheon parties.

Credits and Acknowledgements

The above article was taken from the souvenir edition program for the 1985 50th Anniversary Flathead Cherry Blossom Festival. The original article was written by Garene Cochrane and Pat Bartosh.

FLATHEAD LAKE CHERRY GROWERS®
A Montana Agricultural Cooperative (since 1935)

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