



Action in Agroforestry

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Michael Gold and Hannah Hemmelgarn, editors

Grafting is grafting, whether in Rural Missouri or Rural Asia

By Andrew L. Thomas

During my 22 years with the University of Missouri's Southwest Research Center at Mt. Vernon, I have grafted thousands of fruit and nut trees of every sort, grapes, ornamentals, and even "vegetables" such as tomatoes and watermelons. While it is a rewarding, interesting, and useful skill, grafting is reserved for very specific horticultural purposes and has limited applications around the farm. However, this unconventional skill became the basis for a fascinating trip for me to Myanmar (Burma) this past November.

While Myanmar still struggles with internal conflicts, it has recently moved toward a more stable democracy and has opened its doors to the world. As Myanmar opened up over the last few years, Winrock International, a non-profit international agricultural development agency based in Little Rock, received funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development for numerous agricultural projects under a program called "Farmer to Farmer". One of Winrock's specialized, small-scale projects is to develop and improve macadamia nut production in Myanmar's famous coffee-growing regions. Turns out, they needed someone with specialized expertise in nut tree grafting to teach and encourage current and potential macadamia farmers in Myanmar to graft. I answered Winrock's call, and they sent me to rural Myanmar to teach grafting to macadamia farmers and nurserymen there. I was pleased to represent University of Missouri and CAFNR on this project.



There was great interest in learning how to graft macadamia trees, because the producers understand how potentially lucrative growing these nuts can be. Also, without skilled grafters, the industry will never be able to meet its potential. Those who develop this valued skill will be in great demand as the industry develops and expands.

Left, Dr. Andrew Thomas celebrates (with locally grown coffee) after a successful grafting workshop; Above, Dr. Andrew Thomas visited numerous macadamia farms and nurseries while in Myanmar, some already producing macadamia nuts, with processing and packaging machinery in place, while others had just planted their first seedling in the field – perfect for grafting.

KUDOS

Congratulations to Center for Agroforestry long-time collaborator Dr. Rob Myers who was recognized as the “Missouri Conservationist of the Year” at the Missouri Natural Resources Conference in February. The award was presented by president of the Missouri Soil and Water Conservation Society, Dr. Todd Higgins.

UPCOMING EVENTS

USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Conference: Our Farms Our Future

April 3 - 5, 2018 | Hyatt Regency in Downtown St. Louis, MO | USDA SARE and ATTRA

Once each decade, the USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program hosts a national sustainable agriculture conference. This national event brings together our diverse agricultural community to look at the progress of sustainability in agriculture and to understand our trajectory for the future. This conference is open to anyone involved with agriculture, and a wide range of topics on food, farming, land management, and environmental issues will be covered. See more details at: <https://ofof.sare.org>

Missouri Chapter, Walnut Council Field Day, Business Meeting, and Woodland Forum

April 13 - 14, 2018 | New Franklin, Fayette, and Columbia, MO | Missouri Walnut Council

This is an opportunity to learn and discuss the management of black walnut and other fine hardwoods with landowners, foresters, and industry representatives. The event also includes informative trips to the University of Missouri Horticultural and Agricultural Research Center (HARC), Missouri-Pacific Lumber Co., and one privately managed black walnut plantation. RSVP by April 9th to Fred Crouse, fcrous@centurytel.net or call (573)449-1950. See more details at: <http://www.walnutcouncil.org/state-chapters/missouri.htm>

Savanna Institute “Nutshell” Discussions: 23+ Years of Lessons Learned, Pasture Pigs + Tree Crops

Free Online Discussions starting at 6:00pm | Mar. 27 and April 10, 2018 | Savanna Institute

Live, online discussions with experts on practical topics in agroforestry and perennial agriculture: Each topic will include a 30-40 minute focused presentation followed by a ~30 minute discussion period. More details and registration at <http://www.savannainstitute.org/events.html>.

Agroforestry in Action Webinar with John Fike “Silvopasture Research and Outreach in Virginia”

Free Online Webinar at 11:00am CDT | Mar. 21, 2018 | University of Missouri Center for Agroforestry

Presentations in this webinar series explore topics in agroforestry from North America and around the globe, showcasing examples of excellence in practice and research. Live webinars are presented monthly. Please register at <https://agroforestryinaction.wixsite.com/agroforestryinaction>.

UMCA Agroforestry Field Day at the Doug Allen Research and Education Site

8:30am – 4:30pm | April 7, 2018 | Doug Allen Research Site, 30118 Old Eight Rd., Gravois Mill, MO 65037-3876

Tour the highly diverse Doug Allen Research and Education site, attend demonstrations by local growers, brewers, and chefs, enjoy a lunch prepared using locally harvested ingredients, and learn from workshops including “Entrepreneurship with native plants, specialty crops, and non-timber forest products” and “Permaculture and agroforestry for sustainable land use”.

More details at http://www.centerforagroforestry.org/events/2018_DougAllenFieldDay.pdf

Forest Farming and Growing Edible Mushrooms Workshop

9:00am – 3:00pm | April 14, 2018 | Horticulture and Agroforestry Research Center, New Franklin, MO

Learn the fungi-mentals of growing edible mushrooms, including shiitake, oyster (and other species on totems and stumps), winecaps on wood chips and straw, and how to source materials, set up a growing area, manage and market mushrooms. Cost of the workshop (\$20) includes lunch and an inoculated log to take home.

More details at http://www.centerforagroforestry.org/events/ForestFarmingandEdibleMushrooms_2018.pdf