

NEWS RELEASE
January 24, 2002

APPLES FOR HOME GARDENERS

BACKYARD HORTICULTURE

By Gary W. Hickman, Horticulture Advisor
University of California Cooperative Extension, Mariposa County

Now is a good time to work on your home orchard apple trees. While we are in the winter dormant season, the new University of California apple leaflet suggests:

- Plant new trees during the dormant season.
- With few exceptions, areas with adequate chilling for apples also have sufficient winter rainfall to maintain adequate soil moisture. However, if rainfall is below normal, irrigate the trees once during the winter, allowing the water to soak to a depth of 2 to 3 feet to encourage deep rooting.
- Prune out 15 to 20 percent of last year's growth to let light into the tree center. Remove broken, drooping, crossed, or diseased limbs, as well as water sprouts and root suckers.
- If scale insects, aphids, or mites cause recurring problems, follow the label instructions to apply a dormant oil spray to control these pests.
- Paint trunks and lower branches of young or non-vigorous trees with a 1:1 mixture of white interior latex paint and water to prevent sunburn injury during summer. Apply the paint mixture from two inches below the soil surface to two feet above.
- Rake and remove all fallen leaves to help control apple scab and powdery mildew.

There are dozens of good apple varieties for Mariposa, many available at local nurseries. A few recommended varieties include:

- Red Delicious
- Golden Delicious
- Empire
- Granny Smith
- Fuji
- Many others

Although some varieties are self-fruitful, such as Golden Delicious, most require a pollinizer tree nearby. Golden Delicious is a good pollinizer for most varieties. For a free copy of the new U. C. apple and pear tree care leaflet, call 966-2417.

The University of California prohibits discrimination against or harassment of any person employed by or seeking employment with the University on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics), ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, or status as a covered veteran (special disabled veteran, Vietnam-era veteran or any other veteran who served on active duty during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized). University Policy is intended to be consistent with the provisions of applicable State and Federal laws. Inquiries regarding the University's nondiscrimination policies may be directed to the Affirmative Action/Staff Personnel Services Director, University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources, 1111 Franklin, 6th Floor, Oakland, CA 94607-5200, (510) 987-0096.