



**CHESTNUT CHAT – Q & A**  
**CHAT # 27: PARTICIPATORY CHESTNUT BREEDING**  
**DATE: FRIDAY, AUGUST 20, 2021**

QUESTION	ASKER NAME	ANSWER(S)
I have two Dunstons, 8 years old, in great shape, broducng abundant burrs -- available if they'd be of use. (Silver Spring, MD)	Bruce	live answered
What are you all using for fencing?	John Kiernan	live answered
I am able to see and hear you but am not visible on video and don't know if you will be able to hear me.	Jim	Hi Jim -- we cannot see or hear you. Only the 5 presenters can share video and audio.
What do you mean by "three populations?"	Hill	live answered
What is it about Illinois and Missouri that makes them good places for commercial chestnut operations. They seem to be very concentrated there.	Tyler Payne	live answered
Do they work to preserve any pure American Chestnut cultivars?	Matthew Hecht	live answered
Based on the understanding that all chestnut species evolved from Mollissima, do you think it's possible that timber-type growth habit is a recessive characteristic?	Mike Aucott	live answered
Do you think North Alabama is a good location. Cumberland plateau area.	Tony Glover	live answered
Is there an oppportunity for individual homeowners to try to grow an American Chestnut? Where can we find young trees to plant?	alice cisternino	TACF offers wild-type American chestnut seedlings once/year, usually in late-winter or early spring. They sell fast so the best way to be in the loop is to be a member and look for the annoucement in our magazine. Your local TACF chapter may have seedlings as well. You can find those here: <a href="https://acf.org/">https://acf.org/</a> - use the "Find a Chapter" drop-down
Does having a non-native chestnut orchard in proximity to a research center for native chestnuts affect the research?	Jim Creasman	live answered



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I have a 140 ac farm in east central Alabama. American chestnuts grew there in the past. How do I get seedlings to fully participate and what is the cost/seedling?	Mr. Sims	TACF offers wild-type American chestnut seedlings once/year, usually in late-winter or early spring. They sell fast so the best way to be in the loop is to be a member and look for the announcement in our magazine. Your local TACF chapter may have seedlings as well. You can find those here: <a href="https://acf.org/">https://acf.org/</a> - use the "Find a Chapter" drop-down to find the Alabama chapter.
Have any researchers tried growing one American Chestnut in close proximity to a resistant Chinese and then grafting both living trees together to test to see if the resistance of the Chinese might carry over to the American?	Anonymous Attendee	Crossing American chestnut with Chinese chestnut will produce F1 offspring that, on average, have partial resistance from Chinese chestnut. Grafting does to transfer resistance from one tree to another. Each retains the resistance they have inherently (American blight-susceptible, Chinese blight-resistant).
why does Greg think that people don't want genetically modified trees? Humanity has been genetically modifying through the centuries. Look at cattle. All of today's breeds are derived from the now extinct aurochs. To me that argument is inaccurate.	Brad Johnson	Hi Brad -- Unfortunately, there are quite a few people who don't want GMO trees, and the public comment period for Darling 58 revealed the logic of those critical to the technology. While we don't agree or subscribe to that logic, the fact is some people do. Luckily, I've found that more people than not agree with the application of transgenics for forest health purposes, and there is more support for GMO chestnut than not. But the critics and opposition does still exist.
Does the Dunstan fit anywhere in your activities?	Laurence Grossman	live answered
Do we know if Chinese Chestnut has the oxalic acid oxidase gene? Do Chinese Chestnut vary in blight resistance?	Carl & Wendy Good	live answered
I bought Am. Chestnut seedlings last year from 4 sources. ACF had the best quality.	John	Great! That's good to know. And happy to hear it!
will commercial chesnut groves have a negative impact on the transgenic chestnut program?	Ben Pinti	This is unlikely. The goals of these types of plantings are different so they would not be in competition. Chestnut pollen travels best in close proximity and prefers to cross with its own species. You might see some outcrossing if plantings were side-by-side, but most would be within-planting.



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<p>With all the talk of Covid mutations getting more virulent strains as the number of infections increase. Is there any risk that the blight will mutate to something worse as we plant more blight resistant chestnuts either Chinese or genetic modified trees.</p>	frank	<p>Blight can still grow on these trees, so this seems unlikely. Blight came from Asia, where it grows on resistant Chinese and Japanese chestnuts. The resistant trees we have in the US still allows the blight to grow on them, they just do a better job containing the fungus and preventing large, girdling cankers from developing.</p>
<p>Since you were discussing Black Walnuts, I was wondering if some Black Walnuts cause the soil to be truly toxic to surrounding plants and, if so, is that true for the California Black Walnut?</p>	Matthew Hecht	live answered
<p>On a scale of 1 to 10 where do, the B3F3 backcross chestnut trees, the European sativa chestnuts and Asian chestnuts fall with the American GMO's being at 10 and the pre blight American chestnuts at I assume lower than 1.</p>	bc	<p>Not sure I understand your question. In terms of blight-resistance, Asian chestnuts are considered resistant. European chestnuts are susceptible, but typically less-so than American. TACF's B3F3 population is still variable, with the best trees having F1 levels of resistance or higher. The TG chestnut has shown high levels of resistance in trials thus far, but we're looking forward to putting it through its paces across many environments, assuming it is de-regulated.</p>
<p>Any thoughts about future market trends? Chestnuts vs hazels vs walnuts?</p>	Mark von Holstein	live answered
<p>I have two American chestnut seedlings in the ground in their second year of growth kindly provided by TACF. I'm hoping to plant a couple of seedlings up in a sunny patch in our woods which span several acres. I was hoping that one day they would make nuts and squirrels would plant more trees all over the woods. This is not going to be an orchard but a natural woodland. I am in western NC and there are chestnut sprouts in many places in the woods but I haven't seen them in my property so not sure about the soil. May be too much clay to be optimal. White and red oaks seem to do pretty well if that</p>	Richard Lind	<p>Sounds reasonable : ) The best way to know if chestnut will do well on your site is to try them out. If you want them to reproduce and spread, they do need a lot of sun to flower and produce nuts. Light availability is usually a limiting factor to natural spread in the forest (beyond blight). Good luck! And feel free to reach out to our staff if you need further advice: <a href="https://acf.org/about-us/staff/">https://acf.org/about-us/staff/</a> Jamie Van Cleif is our science coordinator in your area. Good luck!</p>



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means anything. does this sound reasonable of me or Quixotic?		
Any comments on the Douglas hybrids	Anonymous Attendee	Hi AA -- We did address the Douglas hybrid earlier, so I'm sorry we can't discuss taht again. I hope you can get a chance to watch the recording when we get it up on YouTube to check it out here in about a week or two.
Which states have excellent programs for hazelnut production?	Brad Johnson	I'm not sure but you could check with the hazelnut program in OR: <a href="https://plantbreeding.oregonstate.edu/plantbreeding/research/hazelnut-breeding-program">https://plantbreeding.oregonstate.edu/plantbreeding/research/hazelnut-breeding-program</a>
What is the best way to keep harvested chinese chestnuts longer to maintain high edible quality?	Mr. Sims	live answered
do you shake trees like we do for pecans to harvest them.	Tony Glover	live answered
As a 501c3 organization we are most interested in the conservation of the native tree. Is the growing of hybrid or Chinese Chestnuts commercially consistent with conservation?	Jim Tate	live answered
I ate roasted European chestnuts at the Trevi Fountain in Rome in April. Can chestnuts easily be kept over time for later eating.	Doug Gillis	live answered
With all the rain in Ohio this summer. I planted some Americans and some Chinese this spring and only lost one. Has the rain been a problem?	John Caruso	live answered
what mix of fertilizer is best for small seedlings?	Charles	live answered
Spalted Wood is where fungus is grown as part of the early decay process. Is there any interest in Chestnut Spalted Wood? Depending on colors and patterns the prices for Spalted Hard Wood can be ridicules.	Michael Ronayne	Haven't seen anyone try this but neat idea - thanks!



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How do you control chestnut weevil?	Jimmie Sizemore	We have a good article from our magazine: <a href="https://acf.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Volume-XXIV-No.-3-September-2010.pdf">https://acf.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Volume-XXIV-No.-3-September-2010.pdf</a> - pg 17
Best way to treat nuts for weevils?	Michael D. Hagen, MD	Check out the article in our magazine: <a href="https://acf.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Volume-XXIV-No.-3-September-2010.pdf">https://acf.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Volume-XXIV-No.-3-September-2010.pdf</a> - pg 17
According to Bill MacDonald, the correct response from a plant pathologist is, "...for no apparent reason."	Hill	Love it...might steal it. :)
Can you talk a little bit about your chinquapin work?	Hill	live answered
Jim Tate (You): I asked earlier..."As a 501c3 organization we are most interested in the conservation of the native tree. Is the growing of hybrid or Chinese Chestnuts commercially consistent with conservation?"  I just want to emphasize I am not a hot-headed isolationist, I am just interested in your opinion as ACF. Perhaps we can discuss this offline. -	Jim Tate	live answered
So, for those who might be interested in growing chestnut trees for timber production, and not for nut production as you are doing, do you have a cultivar(s) you'd recommend? Recognizing there may be differences in different geographical locations.	Jim English	