

**THE KENTUCKY COLONELS ‘KERNEL’**

“Scion” of the Kentucky Nut Growers Association

Kirk W. Pomper – Editor/Publisher

(502) 597-5942

.....  
Volume 2-52 Number 1

Spring 2022  
.....

**OFFICERS**

Ken LaVere Upton, KY – President (270) 369-8764  
Fred Blankenship, Rhodelia, KY – Vice President (270) 272-7670  
David Spainhoward, Spottsville, KY – Vice President  
Harold Upton, Waynesburg, KY – Vice President  
Larry Daulton, Nicholasville, KY - Vice President  
Blake Cothron, Stanford, KY – Secretary  
Douglas Hines, Paris, KY-Treasurer (859) 953-0053  
Dr. Kirk W. Pomper and Sheri Crabtree, Frankfort, KY,  
Editor/Publisher

**DIRECTORS (from KY):**

Kenny Beard, E’town, KY  
Dr. John Strang, Lexington, KY  
Clifford England, McKee, KY  
Karl Klein, Crestwood, KY  
Chairman of Hickories Fred Blankenship

**OTHER STATES**

Danny Vessels, Chandler, IN

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Three Years – Doug Hines, Paris, KY - Expires 2019  
Three Years – Danny Ganno, Henderson, KY- Expires 2019  
Three Years – Fred Blankenship, Rhodelia, KY - Expires 2019

**KENTUCKY NUT GROWERS ASSOCIATION**

**FALL MEETING**  
**OCTOBER 15, 2022**  
**FRANKFORT, KY**

**Save the Date:** The Kentucky Nut Growers Association will be returning to in-person meetings in Fall 2022! The KNGA Fall 2022 meeting will be held at the Kentucky State University Research and Demonstration Farm, 1525 Mills Lane, Frankfort, KY, 40601, on **October 15, 2022**, 10:00 a.m. ET. Full agenda to come in the Fall 2022 newsletter.

**Inside This Issue**

In Memory: Hugh Ligon.....2  
In Memory: Carl Ray.....3  
Ploidy Level in American  
Persimmon Cultivars.....4  
Your Daily Dose of Nuts.....4  
A History of Pecans.....5  
KNGA Electronic Resources...6  
Upcoming Meetings.....7

## In Memory

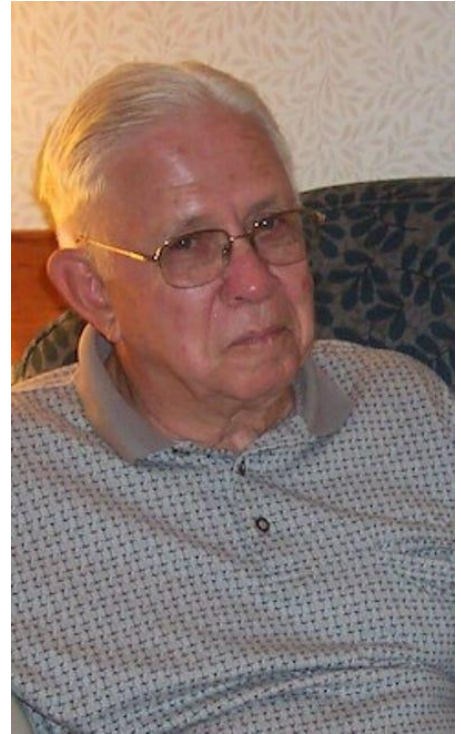
### *Hugh Ligon, 1933-2021*

Hugh Ligon, age 88, of Henderson, KY, passed away at 8:50 p.m., Saturday, December 25, 2021, at his home under the care of St. Anthony's Hospice. In addition to his parents, Lynn and Rena Mae Ligon, Hugh was preceded in death by his siblings: James Ligon, Carrie Ligon, Joyce Pugh, Frank Ligon, and William Ligon.

Hugh retired from Dana Corp, f/k/a Eaton Axcel, after many years of loyal service to the company. He was a member of the Jerusalem Masonic Lodge #9. He was a faithful member of the Kentucky Nutgrowers Association. During Hugh's 40 year membership he served in many offices including president and vice president. Hugh loved the Lord and attended New Hope Baptist Church.

Hugh is survived by his wife of 69 years Pat Ligon; daughter Susan Spainhoward and her husband David of Spottsville, KY; son Brian Ligon and his wife Lisa of Reed, KY; sisters Wanda Skaggs of Spottsville, KY and Linda "Susie" Ligon of Owensboro, KY; grandchildren: Mark Spainhoward and his wife Brandy, Cari Chrostowski and her husband Chris, and Callie Hope and her husband Matt; great-grandchildren: Sydney and Bentley Spainhoward, Cecelia Chrostowski, and Lexi, Ian, and Landon Hope; step grandchildren Michael and Matt Scherretz; step great grandchildren: Cameron, Sophia, and Carter Scherretz; many nieces and nephews.

Burial was at Roselawn Memorial Gardens in Henderson, KY. Expressions of sympathy may take the form of contributions to St. Anthony's Hospice, 2410 S. Green Street, Henderson, KY.



## **In Memory**

### ***Carl Ray, 1940-2022***

Carl Edward Ray, 81, of Philpot, passed away on Sunday, April 10, 2022 at Owensboro Health Regional Hospital. He was born June 23, 1940 in Union County to the late Morton Franklin Ray and Pauline Shelton Ray. He graduated from Morganfield High School and later attended Brescia College.

Carl began his career with Chevron Oil Company before eventually starting his own business. He owned and operated his company, Petroleum Contractors, for many years until his retirement in 1998. After retirement, he became interested in growing and grafting pecan trees and served as President of the Kentucky Nut Growers Association for five years. He also completed the Master Gardener program. Carl spent most of his days outdoors and was an animal lover. In his leisure, he enjoyed reading, gardening and operating his backhoe, but his greatest joy was spending time at his lake and feeding his fish every day.



In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his sister, Joyce Ray. Those who remain to cherish his memory include his wife of 63 years, Pat Johnson Ray; his daughter, Kellie Hamilton (Jeff); grandson, Cole Hamilton; granddaughter, Rachel Gaddis (Josh); two great-grandchildren, Wyatt Gaddis and Weston Gaddis; brother, James Ray (Nadine); sister, Brenda Green (Frank); and several nieces and nephews.

Carl was of the Christian faith and attended Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church. His family asks that expressions of sympathy may take the form of donations to the church or a charity of your choice. There will be no services. James H. Davis Funeral Home and Crematory is in charge of arrangements.

## **Ploidy Level in American Persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*) Cultivars**

HortScience Volume 55, Issue 1.

Kirk W. Pomper, Jeremiah D. Lowe, Sheri B. Crabtree, Jacob Vincent,  
Andrew Berry, Clifford England, and Krit Raemakers.

### **Abstract**

The American persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*) is a slow-growing, moderately sized tree fruit native to the forests of Kentucky. This tree fruit is in the early stages of commercial production with many cultivars selected from the wild. Small orchards of commercially available cultivars are planted in Kentucky. Persimmons are normally dioecious, and female trees require cross-pollination to produce fruit.

There are two races of persimmon: the tetraploid (60-chromosome) race is centered in the southern Appalachian region, while the hexaploid (90-chromosome) race generally occupies a range north and west of the tetraploid range. These ranges overlap in Kentucky. Because the ranges overlap, cross-pollination may cause sexual incompatibility, resulting in pollination without fertilization, and therefore seedless fruits of poor quality.

The objective of this study was to assess the ploidy level of commercially available American persimmon cultivars and native Kentucky persimmon populations. Leaf samples were collected from 45 cultivars and advanced selections, as well as 45 trees from native populations in Bullitt, Barren, and Franklin Counties. Flow cytometer analysis showed that only four of the selected cultivars were from the tetraploid race: Ennis Seedless, Weeping, Sugar Bear, and SFES; the remaining cultivars were from the hexaploid race.

Both hexaploid and tetraploid American persimmon trees were identified in the populations sampled in the Bullitt County locations, but only tetraploid races were found in Franklin and Barren Counties. Because pollen from native trees could result in seedless fruit formation of poor quality when native seedlings are used as pollinizers in commercial production of American persimmon, ploidy level of seedlings needs to be considered.

### **Your Daily Dose of Nuts**

Reprinted from Sara Gottfried, MD @saragottfriedmd

Nuts mostly consist of fat (about 50-75%), with a moderate amount of protein, making them an ideal satisfying food on the run. Nuts are also dense in calories, so we need to get the dose right: high enough to reduce your risk of disease, but low enough that you aren't getting too many calories or irritating your gut. Research shows that people who eat their daily ounce of nuts (28 grams) minimize certain health risks: a 29% reduced risk of heart disease, a 24% lower likelihood of death from respiratory disease, and an 11% lower likelihood of death from cancer, according to the New England Journal of Medicine. What does 1 ounce of nuts look like: Here is a rough guideline for that daily ounce: 30 pistachios, 20 almonds, 20 hazelnuts, 15 macadamias, 15 pecans, 9 walnuts, or 2 tablespoons of pine nuts.

## **The History of Pecans, A Pecan Timeline and Fun Facts**

Reprinted from <https://www.hudsonpecan.com/>

### **Pecans Were Popular From the Start**

The history of pecans can be traced back to the 16th century. The only major tree nut that grows naturally in North America, the pecan is considered one of the most valuable North American nut species. The name “pecan” is a Native American word of Algonquin origin that was used to describe “all nuts requiring a stone to crack.”

Originating in central and eastern North America and the river valleys of Mexico, pecans were widely used by pre-colonial residents. Pecans were favored because they were accessible to waterways, easier to shell than other North American nut species and of course, for their great taste.

Because wild pecans were readily available, many Native American tribes in the U.S. and Mexico used the wild pecan as a major food source during autumn. It is speculated that pecans were used to produce a fermented intoxicating drink called “Powcohicora” (where the word “hickory” comes from). It also is said that Native Americans first cultivated the pecan tree.

One of the first known cultivated pecan tree plantings, by Spanish colonists and Franciscans in northern Mexico, appears to have taken place in the late 1600’s or early 1700’s. These plantings are documented to around 1711—about 60 years before the first recorded planting by U.S. colonists.

The first U.S. pecan planting took place in Long Island, NY in 1772. By the late 1700’s, pecans from the northern range reached the English portion of the Atlantic Seaboard and were planted in the gardens of easterners such as George Washington (1775) and Thomas Jefferson (1779). Settlers were also planting pecans in community gardens along the Gulf Coast at this time.

In the late 1770’s, the economic potential of pecans was realized by French and Spanish colonists settling along the Gulf of Mexico. By 1802, the French were exporting pecans to the West Indies—although it is speculated that pecans were exported to the West Indies and Spain earlier by Spanish colonists in northern Mexico. By 1805, advertisements in London said that the pecan was “...a tree meriting attention as a cultivated crop.”

### **The Birth of an Industry**

New Orleans, located near the mouth of the Mississippi River, became very important to the marketing of pecans. The city had a natural market as well as an avenue for redistributing pecans to other parts of the U.S. and the world. The New Orleans market gained local interest in planting orchards, which stimulated the adaptation of vegetative propagation techniques and led to the demand for trees that produce superior nuts.

During the 1700’s and the early 1800’s, the pecan became an item of commerce for the American colonists and the pecan industry was born. (In San Antonio, the wild pecan harvest was more valuable than popular row crops like cotton!)

Pecan groves (trees established by natural forces) and orchards (trees planted by man) consisted of diverse nuts with various sizes, shapes, shell characteristics, flavor, fruiting ages and ripening dates. In the midst of this variability, there was the occasional discovery of a wild tree with unusually large, thin-shelled nuts, which were in high demand by customers.

In 1822, Abner Landrum of South Carolina discovered a pecan budding technique, which provided a way to graft plants derived from superior wild selections (or, in other words, to unite with a growing plant by placing in close contact). However, this invention was lost or overlooked until 1876 when an African-American slave gardener from Louisiana named Antoine successfully propagated pecans by grafting a superior wild pecan to seedling pecan stocks. Antoine's clone was named "Centennial" because it won the Best Pecan Exhibited award at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876. His 1876 planting, which eventually became 126 Centennial trees, was the first official planting of improved pecans.

The successful use of grafting techniques led to grafted orchards of superior genotypes and proved to be a milestone for the pecan industry. The adoption of these techniques was slow and had little commercial impact—until the 1880's when Louisiana and Texas nurserymen learned of pecan grafting and began propagation on a commercial level. Thus was the start of a booming pecan growing and shelling industry!

## **A PECAN TIMELINE**

### **1500's**

- Native Americans utilized and cultivated wild pecans

### **1600's – 1700's**

- Spanish colonists cultivated orchards (late 1600's – early 1700's)
- English settlers planted pecan trees (1700's)
- George Washington planted pecan trees (1775)
- Thomas Jefferson planted pecan trees (1779)
- Economic potential for pecans realized (late 1700's)

### **1800's**

- Pecans exported by French to the West Indies (1802)
- Pecan budding technique discovered (1822)
- Successful grafting of the pecan tree (1846)
- First planting of improved pecans (1876)
- Commercial propagation of pecans begins (1880's)

## **KNGA ELECTRONIC RESOURCES**

**Would you like to receive the KNGA Newsletter electronically?** This would enable you to see photos in color, easily follow internet links, and save paper. If you would like to receive the newsletter via email, please send your name and email address to [sheri.crabtree@kysu.edu](mailto:sheri.crabtree@kysu.edu).

The Northern Nut Growers Association has a podcast: Find the **NNGA podcast, Go Nuts** on the NNGA website at <https://nutgrowing.org/go-nuts/>

Please check out the **Kentucky Nut Growers Association Facebook Page** at: <https://www.facebook.com/Kentucky-Nut-Growers-Association-1599224510355036/>

The **Fruit and Nut Cultivar Nursery Sources List** has been revised and is available at [https://www.uky.edu/hort/sites/www.uky.edu.hort/files/documents/HortFact\\_3002\\_2020.pdf](https://www.uky.edu/hort/sites/www.uky.edu.hort/files/documents/HortFact_3002_2020.pdf) , or ask your county extension office to print a hard copy.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**August 7–10, 2022: Northern Nut Growers Association /Chestnut Growers of America 2022 Joint meeting.** Penn State Berks Campus in Reading, PA. Registration, program, and schedule at <https://nutgrowing.org/annual-conference-2022/> , or call Sara Fern Fitzsimmons (814-404-6013; sara@acf.org) or Debbie Milks (785-766-8849; NNGACGA2022@gmail.com) and send a check or money order payable to “Northern Nut Growers Association” to Debbie Milks, PO Box 1166, Lawrence, KS 66044. Registration is \$135 members/\$175 non-members on or before May 31, 2022; \$150 members/\$190 non-members after June 1, 2022; or \$40 for virtual attendance.

**September 15, 2022, 10am – 3pm ET: Third Thursday Thing: Pawpaws and Horticulture.** Kentucky State University Harold R. Benson Research and Demonstration Farm, Frankfort, KY 40601. Free of charge. Contact [sheri.crabtree@kysu.edu](mailto:sheri.crabtree@kysu.edu) 502-597-6375.

**Jan. 3-4, 2023: Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference.** Schedule TBD. Sloan Convention Center, 1021 Wilkinson Trace, Bowling Green, KY 42103. Contact Kentucky Horticulture Council, (859) 490-0889, [info@kyhortcouncil.org](mailto:info@kyhortcouncil.org).

## Annual Dues Information

**NOTICE:** the year listed immediately after your address label indicates the year through which your membership dues are paid. **Please note** that dates highlighted in pink indicate that your KNGA membership is past due. Please renew your membership. Thanks!



**England's  
Orchard  
& Nursery**

Specializing in exotic fruit and nut trees for alternative crops. *Other products include:*

- Grafting knives • Nut cracking equipment
- Tree protectors • And much more!

**606-965-2228**  
[www.nuttrees.net](http://www.nuttrees.net) | [nuttrees@prtcnet.org](mailto:nuttrees@prtcnet.org)

KENTUCKY NUT GROWERS ASSOCIATION  
Douglas Hines  
679 Townsend Valley Road  
Paris, KY 40361

**FIRST CLASS**

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION  
KENTUCKY NUT GROWERS ASSOCIATION**

**TO: Douglas Hines  
679 Townsend Valley Road  
Paris, KY 40361**

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

**NEW MEMBER**

**RENEWAL**

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**ST OR RFD** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**OCCUPATION** \_\_\_\_\_ **COUNTY** \_\_\_\_\_

**AMT. ENCLOSED FOR DUES \$** \_\_\_\_\_ **FOR YEAR(S)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues are \$5.00 for one year. Annual membership begins January 1<sup>st</sup>. New members joining after July 1<sup>st</sup> shall be credited as paid in full for the next calendar year.) For additional information about joining KNGA, please contact Ken LaVere, 270-369-8764.**