



Fruit breeding (backyard scale)

Posted by [gloria bell](#)

[Forum List](#) [Message List](#) [New Topic](#)

[gloria bell](#)

[Fruit breeding \(backyard scale\)](#)

July 20, 2019 09:57PM

Registered: 5 years ago

Posts: 20

I've taken the path of creating some new crosses (over the years) and looking for others also doing the same or even planting seedlings to grow up to fruit from OP seeds.

I do have to say that this little project (which really takes a TON of time) fills me with joy.

My goal is some lovely red fleshed apples and pears we can eat and ferment and share with friends. I should have some seedlings producing within a couple years. Very excited.

Anyone else doing so? Intentionally or by accident (I love foraging for wild seedling fruit)

Zone 8:

Vancouver Island, BC

CANADA

[Reply](#) [Quote](#)

[Todd Parlo](#)

[Re: Fruit breeding \(backyard scale\)](#)

August 16, 2019 06:37PM

Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 301

Gloria, I would like to voice some encouragement. Breeding not only can be an aid to us lowly growers, but I really feel it is a connection to culture and biology that is sadly lost on most of the populace.

We have been doing some breeding here in Walden, but only a little really was controlled pollination. Generally it has been open pollinated progeny from trees I liked. Many of the antonovka crosses, for instance are among my favorite apples, both for eating and cider, even though we have close to 600 named varieties here. I do have an opinion however, on how most regional attempts should proceed in getting new genetics in the mix. Look for the local trees first. This will be the ancient and neglected seedlings that pepper the countryside. The older the better. This will be decent insurance that some of those genetics will support your region both in terms of cold hardiness and other factors. By crossing this with something else of merit, you are marrying distant traits with locally adapted ones. For instance mating a wild bittersweet with a niedzwetzkyana, you may have something dazzling for a rose cider.

The other thing I will mention is patience. You mentioned a few years for results. My experience has been more on the order of 10 years or more. Yes, sometimes it is much quicker from seed to harvest, but sometimes it is even longer than a decade.

Finally, when the time comes, and the now sampled fruit shows promise, be careful what material you will be taking. There is a strong juvenile phase in the seedling. This simply describes the wait previously mentioned. It also includes a juvenile portion of that tree. The area in question is the trunk and proximal sections of those larger branches. The point I am getting to is that if you use scionwood in a juvenile section of a seedling, you will have grafted trees that may take that decade or longer to produce. Grafted trees are essentially all mature wood (aside from the rootstock), so you can take wood from anywhere. Those wild trees, and now your new seedlings, will need more care in propagating. This means an older stock tree with scionwood being selected at the periphery.

[Walden Heights Nursery & Orchard](#)

Zone 3 in Vermont

[Reply](#) [Quote](#)

[Newer Topic](#) [Older Topic](#)

[Print View](#) [RSS](#)

Sorry, only registered users may post in this forum.

[Click here to login](#)

This [forum](#) is powered by [Phorum](#).