



Webinar Series: An Orchard is More than the sum of its Parts

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ANNOUNCING The 2022 Know Your Roots Orchardng Webinar Series: “Holistic and Biodynamic Pomology: An Orchard is More Than Just the Sum of Its Parts.” This revised 16-course series covers almost all aspects of orchard stewardship for any apple grower, but with an organic and cosmic flavor, and includes updated and new material spread throughout the year. While the focus will be primarily on apples, we will touch on other perennial fruit crops, as well as plants that support ecological function within the farmscape.

There is a **FREE** introduction session on Feb 19 where you can learn more about the course and myself before committing. Email mike@knowyourroots.com with questions or comments. It may be cold outside now, but spring will be here soon! Register today. All sessions are recorded for viewing throughout the year.

Each webinar is designed for a full 2-hours including Q&A. All webinars include intensive biodynamic and holistic insights!! Access to numerous white papers and reports to help expand your knowledge and – hopefully – your minds. Registrants from the 2021 series receive 20% registration for the 2022 webinar series. For more information and to register, go to <http://knowyourroots.com/orchard-classes2.html>.

Holistic and Biodynamic Pomology: An Orchard is More Than Just the Sum of Its Parts

Saturday, February 19, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

An introduction to the 2022 Know Your Roots online webinar series for holistic orchardists. During this **FREE** intro session, I will lay out the outline for the webinar series including topics, dates, costs, and other important information. We will discuss the basics of holistic orcharding with a focus on biodynamic principles and practices. This introductory session is FREE and open to anyone interested in holistic fruit growing (register below).

The Full Course Syllabus is as Follows:

Holistic Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Predictive Modeling

Saturday, March 5, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

An introduction to the art and science of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) from a holistic and biodynamic perspective. We will discuss the basics of IPM in principle and practice, including the use of historical data, observations, pheromone trap monitoring, degree-day modeling, and weather forecasts. We'll discuss the various tools and technology available to everyone as we triangulate the IPM cornerstones of observation, technology, and practical solutions, all with the perspective that technology is just one piece of the puzzle and there is more at play in your orchard than the eye can see.

****NOT PART OF THE COURSE****

Biodynamic Orchardng at Josephine Porter Institute, Floyd, Va.

Saturday March 12, 2022

Join JPI for a day of Biodynamic Orchardng instruction, presented by JPI Board President Mike Biltonen of Know Your Roots! This workshop is suitable for total beginners as well as seasoned farmers and will include a morning session of classroom instruction followed by an afternoon of practical grafting, after which attendees will have their very own apple tree to take home.

The cost of this workshop is \$125, which includes all learning materials, rootstock, and scion. JPI wishes this workshop to be open to all, regardless of financial circumstances. Partial scholarships are available - please send an email to jpiadmin@jpi-biodynamics.org along with a poem or story or song, a drawing or painting or cartoon about apples, trees, farming, or whatever fills your spirit!

Register at JPI's web site [HERE](#)

Common Diseases of Apple Trees and Fruit

Saturday, March 19, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

An in-depth look at the major early season tree fruit diseases of apples (*Malus* spp.). We'll describe and discuss the life cycles, epidemiology, management, and control options for apple scab, fireblight, cedar apple rust, powdery mildew, and Marssonina leaf blotch. We will also include a discussion of some of the lesser-known diseases such as viruses and root rots. There will be ample time focused on nematodes as disease vectors and biotic stress factors.

Tree Fruit Physiology – The Basics

Saturday, April 2, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

What is actually going on inside the tree? Photosynthesis, respiration, plant growth hormones, immune systems, and water relations all play a role in the health and proper functioning of the tree. Yet, photosynthesis is more than just leaves turning sunlight into sugars, and respiration is more than photosynthesis' polar opposite. Each of these interrelated physiological functions could be a course unto itself, so we will only be able to cover the scientific basics. Each physiological topic will be discussed considering their practical aspects in the orchard and how they relate to a successful holistic and biodynamic orchard ecosystem.

Let It Grow! Soils, Fertility, and Plant Nutrition

Saturday, April 9, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

Soils are the foundation of any farm or orchard. Without healthy soils, plants won't thrive and you can't raise nutrient dense food. In this session, we'll discuss the basics of soils, what makes them up, what supports them, how they support you, and basically digging into the fact that soils are more than just dirt. Soil biology, chemistry, nutrition, fertility, and ways to revitalize and balance used and abused soils. This is a highly recommended precursor to the Fungal Connection.

The Fungal Connection *NEW*

Saturday, April 16, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

NEW for 2022 There is little doubt that the foundation of any farm or orchard is the soil on which it stands. Yet for far too long we have looked at soil and something dead; a combination of sand, silt, clay and gravel made of inert ingredients that we're nothing more than physical substance for the tree to stand in and feed off of. The last 20 years has opened up entire fungal worlds to us and their importance to nature and managed ecosystems. As illustrated in the collective works of Paul Stamets, Michael Phillips, Suzanne Simard and Melvin Sheldrake we stand at the vanguard of a new period in our agricultural existence. But what does this mean to the health and vitality of your orchard. Learn about the basics of fungi and what you can do to enhance the fungal diversity and health in your orchard.

Bug Off! Spring Insect Pests of Apple Trees and Fruit

Saturday, April 23, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

Insect pests can provide some of the most confounding and confusing problems for a holistic orchardist. From mites and scale to codling moth and plum curculio, each insect pest has a unique life cycle, level of importance, and effective control strategy. We'll discuss this and more including the use of beneficial insects, biological organisms, and biodynamic peppering to understand and control the major early season insect pests of any apple orchard.

Carrying Capacity - Managing Your Crop for Quality and Production

Saturday, May 7, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

Did you know that if you tried to grow an apple on every single flower your tree blossomed that they tree would break. The reality is that you only need about 15-20% of all the potential fruit on a tree in a good year – this is for fruit quality and consistent return bloom. The time to begin adjusting or thinning the crop load to ensure quality fruit production, healthy trees, and return bloom begins at bloom and last for only a few weeks. There are a number of ways to reduce the crop load from blossom thinning to sprays to hand thinning to simply letting nature take its course. But whatever you do, how you manage the crop load will have profound implications on the health, fruit quality and future productivity of your orchard.

The Promise of Biodynamics – The Stars, the Planets and the Biodynamic Calendar

NEW Saturday, May 14, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

This webinar will be focused on the basis and use of the biodynamic calendar. Biodynamic farming is rooted in the basic principle "As Above, So Below," meaning, of course, that our farms and orchards are reflections of the cosmic archetype. The cosmic archetype is simply how the planets and stars align in the skies above. These alignments have cosmic implications for how Earth, our farms and orchards, the food we grow, all life, and ourselves. They also have implications for the practical activities that take place in all orchards and farms. What this means to how you do things now – in other words how you can align your farming practices with the cosmos – can be complicated, yet is not rocket science. That's where the biodynamic calendar comes in. During this webinar we'll demystify the biodynamic calendar and relate what it means on a cosmic scale to you and your orchard.

Beyond Apples : Building a Diverse Ecosystem

Saturday, May 28, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

In a conventional sense, an orchard is reduced to tree and grass between the rows. Diversity is discouraged as focus is on apple production at the highest levels. Yet without this diversity, reliance on synthetic inputs to fight the inevitable disease and insect pressure is paramount to success. In a holistic setting we are trying to grow an orchard that is more than just the trees and fruit. In this webinar we will discuss the myriad plants you can use and encourage in your orchard to help support the primary crop: apples. We'll discuss ecosystem design and function, the myriad understory plants and their functions, their utility, and ultimately what they mean to overall health of your orchard and You!

Orchard Design and Preparation

Saturday, June 4, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

The past year we've spent quite a bit of time working with growers to help them properly design a holistic orchard. We've borrowed from the permaculture world and applied concepts that allow the orchard to survive and thrive. Even if you don't have an orchard, but plan on planting one in the near future, this webinar is for you. How you prepare the site and get everything from soils, water, equipment, deer fence, etc. ready is critical to your long-term success. We'll discuss it all here using real-life examples of new and revitalized orchards. What makes a good orchard site? How do I prepare the soil? Do I need irrigation? What varieties work best? How do I even plant a tree? We'll cover it all and more.

Moths, Larva, and Spores, Oh My!: Summer IPM and Fertility Considerations

Saturday, June 18, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

We're close to the midpoint of the season. Now it's time to investigate summer insect pests and diseases. We'll throw in a good dose of summer fertility considerations. The insect pests we'll cover include mites, codling moth, Obliquebanded leafroller, borers, and more. We'll also delve into summer diseases and fruit rots that can also take hold as we round the bend and head for home during pre-harvest season. We'll discuss life cycles, ecological and economic importance, and more including the use of beneficial insects, biological organisms, and biodynamic practices to understand and control these apple orchard insects and disease pests.

Integrating Livestock into Your Orchard (Guest Speaker)

Saturday, July 23, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

Livestock are a critical missing component from many farms and orchards in as much as they bring vitality and fertility and pest control to the farmscape. Cows, sheep, pigs, duck, chickens, and even wildlife all play a role in the health and vitality of any farm and are a critical part of a biodynamic orchard. We'll discuss the role of livestock, different breeds, management considerations and issues involved with even having livestock, and more in this exciting session.

Getting Ready for Harvest – picking, handling, and storage

Saturday, August 27, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

You've done the hard work, now comes the fun – harvest! Getting prepared for harvest is critical. From the harvest tools, to timing, to handling and storage – all will depend on a keen eye for detail and the ability to get things done efficiently. We'll discuss different modes of harvest, handling and storage. How to time your harvest exactly right. This will be both a technical and practical understanding of the fruit maturation and ripening process and how to handle fruit whether it is for fresh, processing, cider, or something else.

Winterizing the Orchard

Saturday, November 19, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

Harvest is over. The fruit is in the barn – and you're ready to put the orchard to bed for the winter. Understanding what happens at the tail-end of the season, the things you can do to ensure happy, healthy trees next spring – late season fertility considerations, biodynamic tree paste, vole and critter protection, when you can start pruning, grafting considerations, and more. I've always said that the time to start thinking about next year is right after the last apple was picked this year. It's never too early. So take a breath and we'll dive right back in!

Pruning and Training

Saturday, December 10, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

Whether your trees are 4 or 40 years old, pruning and training trees is some of the critical and fun stuff you'll do throughout the year. But there are some basic considerations to pay attention to. Pruning and training is as much an art as it is a science. But if you don't understand the science, then the art suffers. With pruning and training there objectives you are trying to achieve – sunlight, air, architecture, balanced aged wood – that require an understanding of why you make certain cuts before you actually make them. Like everything else we've discussed – and why this all “integrated” – pruning and training can both make or break the success of your orchard.

Bringing it All Together

Saturday December 17, 2022 ~ 8:30-10:30am

As promised, this is the point where we will review the entire year. We'll tie concepts and practices together, integrating and interconnecting our knowledge into comprehensive systems approach to growing the best fruit around. This will be an “open” session where will summarize everything – bring questions, answers, successes and failures so that we can all share and learn from what will end of up being an amazing journey.

For more information, costs, and to register, go to <http://knowyourroots.com/orchard-classes2.html> . Email mike@knowyourroots.com with questions or comments.

[Mike Biltonen, Know Your Roots](#)

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