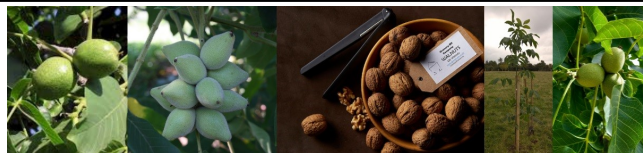




# Granary Oils & Warwickshire Walnuts



## August 2023

### Winter 2022/2023

The winter proved very mixed here, terribly dry ground up to November so we pre-dug 300+ holes for our new orchard with a mini digger and then it promptly started raining for weeks and made some lovely ponds. It was mid December before we could plant and then we had the coldest few days for 20 years, down to  $-15^{\circ}\text{C}$  at its coldest. In the end we refilled the holes and didn't finish planting until April after a completely dry February and a very wet March, hardly ideal for a new planting. The winter was about  $2^{\circ}\text{C}$  colder than the average.



### New Orchard & gap filling

This new orchard is 311 trees and Sylvopasture but will be ungrazed for a few years yet due to the lack of robust sheep protection. It has a mix of 4 main cultivars Chandler, Fernette, Fernor, Lara with a smaller number of Franquette & Tulare on either side. At this stage the winter wet has taken a toll on a few trees so there will be some replacements. We have irrigation at each tree in a new system so we don't yet know how effective that will be, so far the wet summer has helped greatly. We filled most of the gaps in our main orchard and smaller side paddocks and have left spaces to finish it this winter with more *Carya* and some other *Juglans* cultivars from various species, we have more old British cultivars going in as well as some very exciting new cultivars from other countries. We found the severe December cold killed some of the small newly planted trees so they will be replaced like for like but also with some cultivars I grafted from locally collected scion wood.

### Spring / Summer so far

A fairly benign spring with some very slight frosts during April which only really affected the very early Sychrov red nut, the Saturn we left in have their first good crop for 6 years which demonstrates the mild spring. Buccaneer is better than last year but still pretty disappointing considering all the promotion it had over the last 20 years. In contrast Broadview looks very good, last year the nuts were undersized and we'll see how it responds to disease in what's proving to be a damp summer. Similar with Lara which has a good crop but is susceptible to a bit of disease, the damp spring & summer so far will really show up any cultivars that are susceptible. Irrigation has been minimal since early June, growth extension of virtually all the trees is good especially a lot of the younger cultivars on large rootstocks, the Heartnuts in particular are looking very promising. We have nuts on some of the more unusual nuts as well for the first time, many of the Red walnuts, heartnuts and butternuts have a few if we can keep the squirrels off them.

### Pest control

Squirrel control is an all year task with cage and Fenn traps up to now and shooting when they start coming down for the cobnuts. We've just purchased two Goodnature Humane CO2 traps to trial and they look very promising, first hit within 36 hours.

### Pollination

The way the year progressed weather wise affected our flowering times and pollination quite a lot, some cultivars like Broadview had very sparse male pollen, it seems as though the few light frosts hit as the catkins were starting to develop. Overall we have enough pollination to cover most of the season if a few cultivars have an issue but we did see female flowers mid June with no male flowers anywhere, normally our seedling trees cover that period but not that well this year.

To cover this I've been sourcing a few very late male pollinators—Corne de Perigord, Cyril and two Danish cultivars June & July, a long term project though!

This is something to keep in mind with any orchard, what works in one micro-climate might not replicate even a few miles away in another different one.

Example. This year we have very few red Sychrov nuts, but a tree 14 miles away 70m higher in altitude is loaded and in a supposedly colder location.

### Diary Dates

New Commercial Walnut Growing Courses on Eventbrite -

11th September & 13th November

Agroforestry Show—6/7th September, Eastbrook Farm

## Grafted Nut Trees for sale

We received a range of newly grafted *Carya* this summer for the first time in 3 years (Ultra-Northern Pecans, Hicans and Hickory cultivars), all the pecans were already sold but we expect to have some Hickory & Hican cultivars available from September.

We again have a selection of Red and Dwarf Walnuts and a range of cultivars of Heartnuts, Butternuts, Buartnuts and Black Walnuts.

Some older trees are available in pots (mostly Red walnuts) but we've put all the new *Juglans* into the ground to grow on this year, last years drought and high temperatures caused too many problems with pot grown trees,.

These will be available around the same time as the larger bare-rooted commercial orchard trees available in early December and although most are pre-ordered we expect to have a good number extra at that point for late orders, these will be Chandler, Fernette, Fernor, Franquette & Tulare, nominally 1.2-1.5m.

For large new orders we are usually able to re-order until March if quantities are sufficient.

***For tree related enquiries contact Tom on 07816 674854.***

## Commercial Walnut Orchard Courses

We've run 3 of these new courses so far this year and they've been very well received if a bit intense.

Trying to take in so much information in a day is demanding for everyone but they all had comprehensive course notes and could take more as the day progressed and we're available to answer questions on the phone if anyone needs help later on.

We covered everything from site selection to selling to final products but we concentrate on planting, establishment and how to harvest and dry the nuts.

The aim is to give everyone the basic details they need to start taking decisions with some confidence on what to plant, where and how to begin to build a new business.

Whilst we're still trialling new cultivars and adding to the data each year and along with our harvesting at other orchards in the south of England and having contacts with other growers we are already in a position to advise on many cultivars and planting situations.

## Other *Juglans* & *Carya*

Whilst our main preoccupation is the English/Persian walnuts we have taken the opportunity to plant every other cultivated *Juglandaceae* we could, Martin Crawford had already planted most of these species in South Devon but our climate here is rather different (hotter, drier, colder) so it seemed like an opportunity to experiment with all these lovely nuts.

This includes all the major *Juglans* species like Black Walnuts, Butternuts, Heartnuts, Buartnuts and a few other rarer and even less cultivated species. We have the first nuts on some of them this year after some pretty horrible spring frosts for their first 3-4 years, the oldest ones are now 6 years old. These other walnuts actually make more attractive (and often bigger) trees which is why you often find them in arboretum.

The heartnut is particularly nice and we think this species will prove commercially interesting long term, we have 13 cultivars with another 6 we hope to plant in the next 18 months.



***Heartnut 'Fodermaier'***

The *Carya* are much harder to source but as luck would have it one of the first people I approached for walnut cultivars to trial holds the Dutch national *Carya* collection. We have planted pecans, hickories, Hican cultivars, all N. American in origin, and I'm trying to source a few others from Asia. We have the Chinese Hickory but they have lots of cultivars which aren't available in the west I'd like to get. None of our *Carya* are flowering yet (4 years in this November) but some are now approaching 2-2.5m and in the Netherlands some cultivars flower around 8 years but we expect maybe 10 on average.

Our low lying orchards, dry climate (600-650mm a year average) and coldish winters make this a challenging location, the late spring frosts are the real killer of young *Juglans*/*Carya*, once established they can cope with getting frost burn though.

## Walnut Cracking and Shelling for Kernels

With harvest approaching just a reminder that if you are looking to shell your own nuts we have a full cracking and shelling line and can also press for oil with a new press being constructed at the moment, so if you have a quantity of dried walnuts of a suitable variety and you want them shelling please contact **David on 07806 917587.**

Nuts must have been properly washed and dried and be in sufficient quantity, maybe 30Kg upwards.