

Virtual Pomology Specialist in Collaborative Tools



Franz Niederholzer
Farm Advisor—Orchard Systems
530-822-7515
fjniederholzer@ucdavis.edu

The “Virtual Pomology Specialist” site within the Collaborative Tools site at ANR is a great way to gather and archive valuable information and experience from UC academics for use now and in the future. It differs from email because it archives the responses in a group according to the subject for easier current review of responses and for review in years to come.

Advantages: secure (not open to the public), searchable, ability to post and view photos, no spam (moderated), archived

“Because this is yet another new thing to learn while doing everything else you do, and in hopes of getting more use of the Virtual Pomology Specialist, and Collaborative Tools in general, here are some step by step instructions for using it...”

Franz Niederholzer, UC Farm Advisor, Sutter and Yuba Counties

If you want to pose a question to the group:

Option 1:

- 1) Go to <http://collaborate.ucanr.org/>. A list of groups you belong to is displayed.
- 2) Click on “UC Virtual Pomology Specialist” or the name of another group you want to post a question to.
- 3) Click on **Start New Subject** next to **Options** in the upper left corner of the page.
- 4) Type in a unique subject and your message. Scroll down to the bottom of the screen and click on **Save Subject** to send your message to the group.
- 5) You’re off and running.

Option 2:

- 1) Go to the UC ANR Portal <https://my.ucanr.org> and log in (if you haven’t been there before, it takes a few minutes to get a password, but it is worth it. I use this site as my homepage and really like it).
- 2) Click on **UC Virtual Pomology Specialist** (or another group), listed under **Collaborative Tools** in the bottom left hand corner of the page
- 3) Click on **Start New Subject** next to **Options** in the upper left corner of the page.
- 4) Type in a unique subject and your message. Scroll down to the bottom of the screen and click on **Save Subject** to save and send your message to the group. You can also attach files to your message. Be sure to click **Save File** after you locate the filename and path with **Browse**.
- 5) You’re off and running.

If you want to respond to an e-mail that is sent to you though the Collaborative Tools system (you will see the link to collaborative tools in the body of the email along with the message being sent).

- 1) Do NOT click “Reply” in your e-mail program,
- 2) Click on the **View message in the Collaborative Tools System** text in the e-mail itself, and you will be connected to the Virtual Pomology site in Collaborative Tools. (You must be on-line for the connection to be made)
- 3) Click on **Add to Discussion** next to **Options** in the upper left hand corner of the page
- 4) Make sure to scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on **Add to Discussion** to save and send your reply. You can also attach files to your message. Be sure to click **Save File** after you locate the filename and path with **Browse**.
- 5) You’re off and running.

To view or search subjects and messages:

- 1) Click **Messages** or **Return to Messages** in the top headers of the Collaborative Tools page for your group.
- 2) Click on the subject title you are interested in. A page displaying all the responses to that subject is displayed.
- 3) Scroll down the page to view all responses.
- 3) Just above the shaded subject title for the first message (above the date) is a link option to toggle between viewing the messages in "Newest First" or "Oldest First" order.
- 4) There is a search feature available on the page listing all subjects (messages) (see 1, above) that allows you to search all subjects and messages within the group site.
- 5) There is also an option to "subscribe/unsubscribe" at the message level for each subject so you can opt out of a subject you are not interested in to avoid receiving the email messages.

Dave Krause at ANR Communications, who can help out with questions about Collaborative Tools (and the ANR Portal). Dave helped write the software for these sites, so he is very knowledgeable about the stuff (and helpful) djkrause@ucdavis.edu or 530-757-8393.

EXAMPLE OF COLLABORATIVE TOOLS DISCUSSION

The screenshot shows the Collaborative Tools website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with icons for home, search, star, refresh, mail, printer, document, folder, and user. Below this is the logo for Collaborative Tools, University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR), with the tagline "A simple way to stay connected." The main content area shows the group name "UC Virtual Pomology Specialist" and navigation links for Home, Messages, Files, Your Info, and Help. A message header includes "Options: Add to Discussion | Unsubscribe | Return to Messages" and the subject "Two crops in one orchard?". The group description is "An on-line troubleshooting tool for gathering the expertise of UCCE Pomology Farm Advisors, Specialists, and Faculty." A "Change to: Oldest First" link is visible. The message list shows three entries:

Author	Subject	Date
Louise_Ferguson	Interplanting Presimmons and Prunes	14 Oct 06 03:06 PM
Paul_Verdegaal	Multiple crops	13 Oct 06 03:49 PM
Maxwell_V_Norton	Require high level of management	13 Oct 06 02:31 PM

The message content for Louise_Ferguson reads: "Persimmons have few problems that would interfere with prunes; However, little is registered for persimmons so spraying may be aproblem. They have similar pruning schedules. Persimmons do not function well in heavy, wet soils. I have heard this situation described by one grower as "like having two wives.""

The message content for Paul_Verdegaal reads: "Maxwell is right. Commercially, multiple crop horticulture, is hard to justify over the long term (unsustainable?), but it can be done. Grapes in walnuts (an Italian strategy, also known as "promiscuous" viticulture); beans or melons in non-bearing almonds; or almonds in grapes, until the almonds begin bearing, have been done. And Ben is right, in today's more complicated regulatory landscape (does that have a literary flow?) it is more difcult to maintain multiple crops and possible bail requirements. PV"