

Apple blooming

Sept 13

Q: I have a newly planted apple tree, planted out of a pot in May, and with a trunk about 5/8" that seems to be growing in a healthy fashion. But a couple of weeks ago it started blossoming, and now, close to the last week in August, it's covered with blooms. And none of them come from fruit spurs, everyone is at the end of a branch that looks like it should be producing nothing but leaves. What does this tree think it's up to? Can it be mortally wounded somehow, and I not be able to tell? Anyway, not a life & death question, obviously, but it does make me really curious. I've never seen anything like it before -- an occasional bloom, yes, but never a tree covered with them.

A: The apple blooming on the terminal bud is normal for a young tree as they bloom on the terminal buds until spurs form. Spurs can take up to two years to form. As for it blooming now, we had had a couple weeks of unusually cooler weather this summer that would have confused a tree with lower chill hour requirements to think it should bloom. Whenever we have a cold spell and then it warms back up it may fool trees into thinking it is spring. This does not mean the tree is going to die, it is just confused.

For the month of September the Master Gardeners will be offering free services at the Saturday Farmers Market.

Saturday September 17:

Free winter garden planning and garden layouts while you wait, emailed to the customers computers and phones.

Saturday September 24:

Sweetest tomato contest: free Brix sugar reading on all tomatoes submitted, and free advice on how to preserve heirloom tomato seeds, and plant for next year.