

# The IDFTA in Virtual Perspective: the IDFTA World Wide Web Site and More

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In furtherance of its mission, “to promote an understanding of the nature and use of dwarf fruit trees through research, education, and dissemination of information,” the International Dwarf Fruit Tree Association now has a home page on the World Wide Web. The Web site, <http://www.idfta.org>, features easy access to IDFTA membership, meeting, and contact information, as well as an archive of IDFTA publications and articles. Such information, readily available via the WWW, should be useful to dwarf fruit tree growers, researchers, and extension and industry personnel—be they IDFTA members or not—throughout the world.

For IDFTA members, the IDFTA World Wide Web site should be thought of as a “value-added” member benefit. It is not intended to replace the IDFTA quarterly publication *Compact Fruit Tree*, however, it certainly complements and enhances this traditional source of information. Furthermore, the IDFTA WWW site will be a historical archive of dwarf fruit tree growing information, publications and events that is accessible any time by anyone with Internet access. It will also promote IDFTA programs and activities worldwide, perhaps resulting in increased membership and notoriety.

The IDFTA WWW site’s heart is the home page, <http://www.idfta.org>. Here there are hyper-text links to pages that detail more of what IDFTA is all about, including IDFTA Contacts, IDFTA Board of Directors, IDFTA Calendar, *Compact Fruit*

*Tree*, Annual Meeting, Summer Tours and IDFTA News.

Let’s look at the content of each of the IDFTA WWW pages in a bit more detail:

**IDFTA Contacts** includes the name, address, phone number and e-mail address of the IDFTA Business (Charles Ax) and Education (Bruce Barritt) Directors. If you have a question about your membership or a suggestion for an educational program, you can easily contact the appropriate Director. Also, if you have a question about the details of an upcoming meeting or tour, the Annual Conference/Summer Tour Coordinator(s) contact information is found on the IDFTA Contacts page.

**IDFTA Board of Directors** lists the names, addresses, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail addresses of the current Board of Directors. In some cases, a link to their personal/business WWW site is also included. Now it is easy to contact any of the Board members with your comments or questions about IDFTA.

**The IDFTA Calendar** is self explanatory. Annual Meeting and Summer Tour dates and locations are listed, as well as registration deadlines, etc. The IDFTA Calendar provides fast and easy access to dates and locations for upcoming IDFTA meetings and tours.

*Compact Fruit Tree* is the premier publication of IDFTA. Therefore, it is prominent on the IDFTA WWW site. Indexes of the 1995 (Vol. 28), 1996 (Vol. 29), and 1997 (Vol. 30) issues of *Compact Fruit Tree* are included. And for 1998 (Vol. 31, nos. 1,2, and 3), not only are the Indexes

*IDFTA on the World  
Wide Web—  
<http://www.idfta.org>*

available, but full text articles, including tables and figures are on-line too. Beginning with the 1998 articles, it is the intention of the IDFTA Board of Directors to have the full text of all *Compact Fruit Tree* articles available on the IDFTA WWW site for your reference.

For **IDFTA Annual Meetings** and **Summer Tours**, the IDFTA WWW site hosts all the conference and tour information, including the program, accommodations, directions and a registration form. In addition, highlights and pictures of select Annual Meeting and Summer Tour orchard visits are featured, a perfect example of the “value-added” benefit provided by the IDFTA WWW site.

Finally, the IDFTA WWW site features **IDFTA News**. For example, at the 1999 Annual Meeting in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, the Rootstock Research Committee granted a total of \$70,000 for rootstock research in 1999 and the outstanding Grower, Researcher and Extensionist were recognized with awards. IDFTA News will be

updated frequently with timely information and news of interest to all IDFTA members.

With the IDFTA Web site, and as technology improves, IDFTA will also be well positioned in the near future to develop and deliver multi-media educational programs and information to its membership. For example, it will become feasible to highlight key speaker or grower presentations with short QuickTime™ movie presentations that can be viewed later by those unable to attend the meeting or tour. Truly this is an exciting example of a “value-added” membership feature made possible by the IDFTA WWW site.

The IDFTA WWW site is also a useful conduit to other tree fruit production related information on the Internet. For example, the NC-140 Regional Rootstock Research Project’s home page, <http://www.virtualorchard.net/nc140/>, hosts useful information including a rootstock characteristic chart, “NC-140 Cherry Pages,” and research project summaries.

The “apple-crop” home page, found at [www.virtualorchard.net/applecrop.html](http://www.virtualorchard.net/applecrop.html), has information on subscribing to the “apple-crop” e-mail discussion group ([requests@virtualorchard.net](mailto:requests@virtualorchard.net), HELP in the SUBJECT line) that has over 500 subscribers from throughout the world.

The IDFTA Board of Directors is excited about and stands behind the IDFTA WWW site. They are committed to making it a valuable “extra” membership benefit and to keeping it updated with the latest IDFTA news and information. Now they need you, the IDFTA membership, to turn your Web browser to the IDFTA home page to get the latest information on your organization’s educational programs, tours and publications. As always, your feedback and suggestions are welcome.