

**FIGS 4 FUN FOUNDATION**

**Purpose**:

**History**: The genesis of collection started more than ten years ago with a personal quest for a few additional figs that were as good as Vista Black Mission. At that time, adding two or three more varieties to a varied fruit tree collection would have been sufficient. Learning that they could be grown from cuttings, expanded the opportunities, and soon there were 100 varieties, and now many hundreds. About two years ago, duplication of the collection began to lower the risk of losing varieties. The collection now consists of about 1800 trees. The vastness of the collection is a testimony to the sharing nature of the fig community, which has made it possible.

**Education and Research**: The collector, who has been part of a rich tradition of education and sharing, has developed a large website-database (http://figs4fun.com) of Ficus carica varieties. New pictures and information from the collection are added each year, along with years of field observations from the USDA/UC Davis Germplasm collection and material from other private collections and sources. There are practical guides about propagating and growing figs, which are oriented to the home gardener and orchardist, along with links to over 1000 external sources of additional information. The Foundation plans to continue expansion of this free public database. In 2007, the Figs 4 Fun Forum (http://figs4funforum.websitetoolbox.com/) was initiated to provide for the interchange of knowledge, ideas, and experiences, along with the sharing of plants, cuttings and more. It has been a platform for connecting long time fig lovers with like-minded people, and those who are seeking information following a first enjoyable encounter with fresh figs.

**Collecting**: The Foundation plans to expand the collection beyond the current 1000 varieties with material from other private collections, from sources that are threatened with being lost, and from ethnic neighborhoods containing trees that "emigrated" from Portugal, Greece, Italy, etc., in the early part of the 20th century.

**Distribution**: The Preservation Orchard collection will enable the distribution of cuttings for propagation by amateur gardeners and fig lovers nationwide. The collection will safeguard material from private collections and wide distribution will, in turn, safeguard the collection.

**Future**: We are currently seeking ten acres and funding to make this project a reality, benefitting our local community and fig lovers around the world.

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