



# NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 1981

TAMPA BAY CHAPTER of the  
RARE FRUIT COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL, Inc.

NEXT MEETING.....SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1981 at 2:00 PM

MEETING PLACE.....HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS CENTER  
5339 STATE ROAD 579, SEFFNER  
TAKE EXIT 8 SOUTH off I-4

NO PROGRAM THIS MONTH. THIS WILL BE A BUSINESS MEETING AND PLANNING SESSION FOR THE SECOND ANNUAL PLANT SALE. PLEASE ATTEND AND VOLUNTEER YOUR SERVICES FOR THE SALE TO BE HELD ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18TH FROM 1:00 to 5:00 AT THE FLORIDA STATE FAIR GROUNDS, TAMPA. USE THE ORIENT ROAD ENTRANCE. SET-UP WILL BE ALL DAY SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17TH AND SUNDAY MORNING. SEE ADDITIONAL DETAILS IN THE MEETING REPORTS.

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## MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 13, 1981 MEETING

The regular meeting of the chapter was called to order at 2:00 PM by the President, Bill Lester. It was the first meeting held in what will be our regular meeting place from now on, the Hillsborough County Agricultural Business Center in Seffner.

President Lester announced that Jud Newcombe (Past Pres., 1979-1980) has accepted the post of Membership Committee Chairman, replacing Glenn Warren, who had to resign for personal reasons. It should also be noted that due to Maja Byvoet being in Hawaii until after the first of the year, Dave Schwaderer is now Co-Chairman of the Library Committee.

Because so many national holidays fall on the first weekend of the month, it was suggested that our regular meeting date be changed to the second Sunday of the month, beginning with January 10, 1982. Our next three meetings will not be affected and will fall on the first Sunday of the month as originally scheduled. The newsletter will keep you informed.

Members were urged to groom their plants in preparation for the October Plant Sale which will be held at the Florida State Fair Grounds in Tampa on the afternoon of Sunday the 18th. We shall have 22,000 square feet of floor space for the sale - twice as much as for last year, according to Paul Rubenstein, Sale Coordinator.

Gene Joyner, Urban Horticulturist and Extension Agent I for Palm Beach County, was our speaker for the afternoon. Gene is a Miami member and a very active member of the Palm Beach Chapter, also. His topic was 'Insect Pests and Diseases of Fruit Trees' and was illustrated with his own excellent slides. It was a very informative lecture.

A large variety of fruit was displayed for the membership's educational and gustatorial pleasure. Among the fruits represented were: White Sapote, Bael Fruit, Sugar Apple, Persimmon, Sea Grape, Bignay, Carambola, Prickly Pear, etc. We are indebted to Gene Joyner for bringing some of these up from West Palm Beach.

Following the meeting a Plant Auction was held which included the following: Papaya, Dewberry, Purple Fig (variety unknown), Black Pepper, Governors Plum, Grumichama, Ornamental Pineapple and Naranjilla. Ray Thorndike brought bare-rooted papaya plants for distribution.

Respectfully submitted,  
Willard Sarrett, Secretary

An Executive Board meeting was held on the night of September 22, 1981. Most of the agenda concerned the approaching plant sale. Certain incentives and privileges for members and non-members were acted upon. Following is a summary:

- (1) - Sales to members. On Sunday, October 18th, members will be permitted to purchase plants before 12:00 noon and after 5:00 PM at 25% discount. This will not apply to <sup>new</sup> members signing up on the date of the sale.
- (2) - Sales to members working at the sale. Current members who work Saturday and/or Sunday will receive a 50% discount on purchases after 5:00 PM Sunday.
- (3) - Sales to non-members working for the chapter at the sale. Said non-members shall receive a credit of \$15.00 towards the purchase of any plant.

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It is now official. The Tampa Bay Chapter of the Rare Fruit Council International has received its papers of incorporation as a non-profit organization. That is, put a bit more simply, we are now a Non-Profit Corporation with all the attendant rights and privileges.

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#### NEW MEMBERS

Since the 1981-1982 Membership Directory was published and distributed, the following new members have been welcomed into the chapter:

Loraine R. Ball, 18812 Walker Road, Lutz 33549, Tel. 949-5608

J.K. Davis, D.D.S., 200 Palm Avenue, N.W., Clearwater 33515, Tel. 446-2155

George B. Merrill, 1342 West Lake Parker Drive, Lakeland 33805, Tel. 683-2306

George & Margie Keith, 14260 - 110th Terrace, North, Largo 33540 Tel. 595-8289

Virgil H. Meares, 12600 Palm Drive, Largo 33540, Tel. 595-3156

Chris Nguyen, P.O. Box 151745 (6002 Benjamin Road), Tampa 33684, Tel. 886-1737, 962-4756

Leon & Maria Dorado, 1006 West Ohio, Tampa 33603, Tel. 228-0339

Mrs. J.S. (Fran) Stevens, 2023 Iowa Avenue, N.E., St. Petersburg 33703, Tel. 526-3767

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Your editor has been keeping a sort of 'diary', only monthly, of the flowering and fruiting of plants in Central Florida. Lists are available in Miami and Palm Beach, but are not accurate here since a couple hundred miles makes a lot of difference. Anyway, my purpose is to gather information so that it may be included as a regular feature in the newsletter beginning next year. The problem is, however, that I don't have access to many species and varieties that are being grown here in Central Florida. It would be of great help if members made note of the events in their yards and passed them on to me at some later date. I feel that a list each month of the plants in flower and bearing ripe fruit would be of some use, especially for those planning their landscape. It would also help to add monthly information on pruning times and the best months for grafting, layering, etc. Any comments?

September 13, 1981 Program:

INSECT PESTS AND DISEASES OF FRUIT TREES

by Gene Joyner

Gene began his talk with a discussion of some of the diseases of fruit trees, advising us that, unless quickly controlled, diseases can cause more damage to your trees than insects. At the worst, diseases can kill a tree or may severely damage the fruit crop.

In citrus crop areas, Red Algae, found particularly heavy on lemons and limes, may also be found on other fruit. It has a host preference for some of our 'rare fruits', such as avocados, mangos and White Sapote. Red Algae is a parasite found on the trunks and branches of trees. During the humid summer months it will have an orange color, the rest of the year being a dull cinnamon color. Left uncontrolled it will girdle branches finger size or smaller, killing the wood beyond that point. It is not a critical factor on larger limbs, but being a parasite, it can spread and be devastating on a small tree. Treatment is copper fungicide repeated several times until control is achieved. Do not use on White Sapote, however.

Anthracnose and Cercospora Leaf Spot are found on avocado trees causing severe leaf loss in late spring and summer months when such a loss can severely affect fruit production. Anthracnose can also attack flower buds and even the fruit itself. Flower buds should be sprayed before they open and set fruit. Continue spraying at four to five week intervals until the fruit is at least half mature. Rainy weather causes fruit split and should the fruit have anthracnose spots, the fungus will invade the fruit and destroy it in two or three days. Likewise, when a fruit matures and softens, the fungus can penetrate the skin. So, early treatment is a necessity.

Scab on avocados appears as unattractive small bumps on the skin of the fruit. It does not affect the interior of the fruit, i.e., there is no damage to the fruit quality, merely to the appearance. Some varieties, like Lula, are particularly susceptible to scab and may have the entire surface covered with it. Neutral coppers is again the recommended control.

Fireblight is found on loquats, apples, pears, and some ornamentals. Branches suddenly wilt, the leaves turning a rusty brown, hanging down and eventually dropping off. Treat by severe pruning well below the infected area, into healthy wood, at the earliest possible moment after onset. Spraying with a copper fungicide or Agrimycin may sometimes help. It is a bacterial disease spread by bees and other pollinating insects from flower to flower.

The White Sapote is affected by a leaf spot which in rainy summers may cause extensive leaf loss. The tree will replace the leaves, but this will interrupt fruit production. No spray is available at this time for control and do NOT ever use copper sprays on White Sapote as they do not seem to tolerate copper. You might try other fungicides like Dithane, Maneb, etc.

Virus Diseases - Papaya Ring Spot virus affects the fruit causing little circles on it. The foliage then yellows and stunts. The tree quits producing and then dies. This is usually not a problem with isolated trees, occurring mainly in large concentrations of trees, as in commercial plantings. It is the commercial grower's number one problem. It usually occurs in the tree's second year and therefore the whole planting has to be replaced.

Fig Rust is prevalent in warm, humid weather, beginning on lower leaves and eventually covering the entire plant. In the late stages the leaf edges turn brown, roll up and the leaf aborts. Control requires a religious spray program of once every two or three weeks. Copper or Maneb are the preferred sprays. Most people prefer to pick off the worst leaves and fertilize well to promote new growth.

Muntingia calabura, the Strawberry Tree or Panama Berry, is affected by a leaf spot leading to defoliation of the whole tree. Copper or Dithane is the only control at this time.

Anthrachnose also attacks Barbados Cherry or Acerola causing leaf spot and early abortion of the leaf, seemingly preferring older leaves. Again, use copper. Blackberry and Raspberry are also susceptible, usually exhibiting symptoms after fruit harvest. They must be treated in order to prevent carryover of the infection to the next season, which would affect fruit production. Use copper on mature plants and on young plants the systemic, Benlate, may be used.

The Grumichama has a leaf spot disease causing leaves to abort rather quickly and sometimes results in twig dieback. The systemics, Benlate or Benomyl, may give the best control.

Grumichama, Pitomba and Cherry of the Rio Grande have a dieback problem similar to Fireblight. The cause of this disease has not been isolated and there is no chemical control. Pruning back to good wood is the only treatment.

Grapes have leaf problems, usually after harvest, like the blackberry and raspberry. Again, they should be treated to prevent carryover to spring. Refer to the state bulletins for preventive spray program instructions.

Annonas (Cherimoya, Atemoya, Sugar Apple, etc.) have a problem of partially developed fruit turning black and mummifying, caused by a fungus entering the fruit through small holes made by the Chalcid Fly. So this fly is the primary problem, but there is no effective control.

Rainy weather will cause splitting, and even excessive watering is capable of doing the same. Once the fruit splits, fungus diseases may enter it and destroy it.

Gene then went on to list some of the insect problems which face the fruit grower:

Annonas such as Soursop and Mountain Soursop especially, may have a Thrip problem evidenced by a bronzing of the foliage during the spring dry season and followed by a virtual defoliation. A black and orange caterpillar can cause defoliation of small annona trees. Control by hand-picking or spray with Sevin.

Aphids occur on most all plants on new growth, stems, leaves and flower buds. They occur in large colonies, usually with each flush of growth. They cause leaf distortion such as wrinkling or curling.

Whiteflies have a wide host range. The adult is the size of a tiny white gnat. They lay eggs on the undersides of leaves, hatching out into the immature stages which do most of the damage. These are flat, semi-transparent, usually yellow-green scale-like creatures and do not move around. After three to four weeks they become adults. Their worst damage is caused by the sweet honeydew given off which Sooty Mold likes, causing the covering of leaves with a black, oily film. Control with repeated sprayings of Malathion, Diazinon, etc.

(Gene's program will be concluded in the next issue - Ed.)

Tom Reese, Newsletter Editor for the Palm Beach Chapter and an experienced grower writes:

"I have just read your August newsletter and have some thoughts on propagation. After listening to those who have had good success with the use of plastic coverings for their pots and other containers in starting cuttings and seeds, I tried something different, as I am a lazy fellow when it comes to fixing plastic on each and every container.

"I got together some scrap material and constructed a box-frame, about 4' X 6', and over this I stapled a heavy plastic available from garden shops; the bottom, of course, is left open and rests on the ground. Never in my experience with the growing of seeds and cuttings have I had better luck than with this set-up. All you have to do to water the containers is to lift the end of the frame or stand it on its end. During the day you can see drops of moisture all over the inside of the plastic. In the summer months be sure to keep the frame out of the sun, such as under a tree, or the contents would be cooked quickly.

"On grafting avocados, carambolas and atemoyas: On avocados I use the side graft and leave about four leaves on the scion, the scion being about 3" in length (actually this is a veneer graft). I wrap with a green tape sold by both Mellinger and Leonard Companies. At the top I seal the open end with propagating wax and over the leaves of the scion I place a section cut from a clear plastic newspaper wrap, tying top and bottom. I leave this clear plastic cover on seven days in the summer and two weeks in the winter. The green tape is left on another week to ten days. My average of 'takes' with this method on avocados is 100% most of the time.

"I follow the same method with carambolas except that I wind up my propagation of this plant in September. You may propagate the avocado year-round; it just takes longer in the winter. On atemoyas I use the cleft graft and also cover the scion leaves with clear plastic. My general average of 'takes' with atemoya is 80 to 90%.

"use good grafting knives and other equipment and keep the blades shaving-sharp. I clean my knives with alcohol after every sharpening or whetting on the leather. I think that half the fun of growing fruit trees is in propagating them and making them into what you want. I have some carambolas, avocados and others with two varieties on one stem."

Thank you, Tom, for your very welcome contribution.

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#### CLIMATIC INFLUENCES

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| 1. Precipitation     | 3. Wind & Evaporation | 5. Light Intensity |
| 2. Relative Humidity | 4. Temperature        |                    |

All these factors taken together comprise what we call 'weather'. It is the climate prevailing close to the ground, however, which is of major importance to a plant. If this can be modified to the plant's liking, the upper air conditions are of less importance.

- The Japanese Persimmon (Diospyros kaki) wants a year-round wet climate.
- The Banana, Papaya & Sapodilla want medium wet climate conditions.
- Citrus, Mango, Amarella and Annonas want a climate having a pronounced dry period.
- Some shade-loving trees, like Coffea, when planted in full sun will grow fast and bear sooner and in abundance, but they do not live as long.

- Root systems of Papaya, Banana and many others need much oxygen. Since they need much moisture also, they should have a soil rich in organic matter (for moisture retention), but porous as they cannot bear flooding.
- Eugenias and Syzygiums need lots of moisture but not so much air (oxygen). Use a soil rich in organics. They must have water in dry periods.

Taken from the 12/10/65 issue of the Miami newsletter.

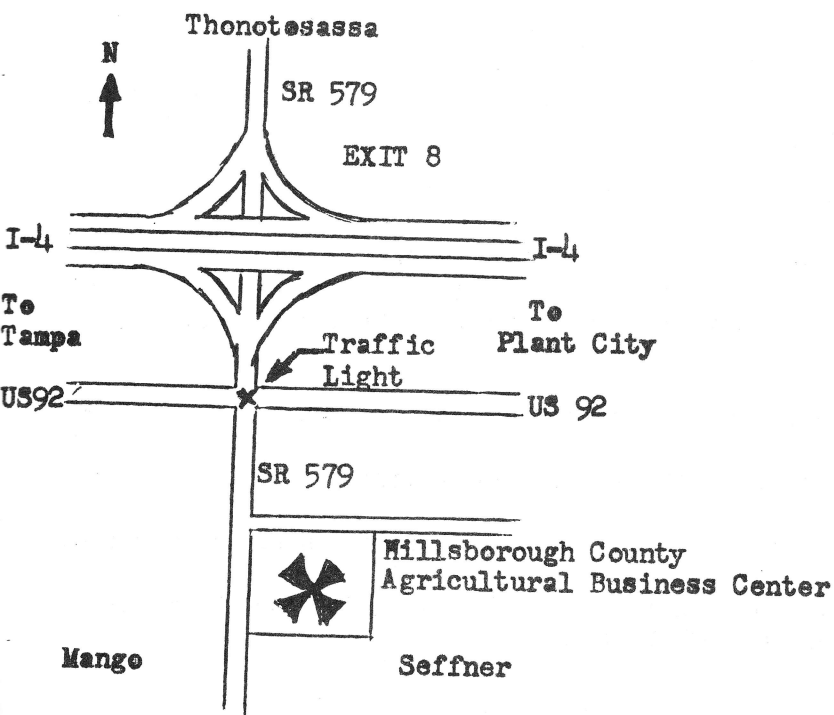
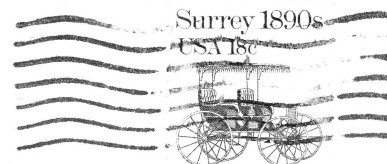
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Tom Economou of Miami has agreed to furnish us a slide illustrated program on November 1st. Tom will be replacing Dr. Tim Crocker of Gainesville who has had to postpone his appearance until a later date. Tom's program will be 'Tropical Fruits of Tropical America'. The last program Tom participated in here was with Crafton Clift on their tour through Colombia. As many of you know, Tom has organized and led a number of tours for Council members to Central and South America. We anticipate a flock of new members resulting from the Second Annual Plant Sale and this should be an excellent program for their first meeting.

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At the Executive Board meeting it was asked if we should continue to have regular meetings during the summer months of June, July, August and perhaps September since the attendance has not been anything to shout about during those months. Maybe scheduled field trips would be one solution. We have been invited to West Palm Beach by Gene Joyner. There are other possibilities in St. Petersburg, Sarasota, etc. ???

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