



NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1981

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

NEXT MEETING.....SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1981 at 2:00 PM

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

PROGRAM.....Dr. George A. Marlowe, Jr. of the Agricultural Research
and Education Center, IFAS, Bradenton
Dr. Marlowe promises us a very interesting program on
the subject of seedling production.

NEW MEMBERS

Gary L. Anderson, 4524 Sweetwater Lake Drive, Lutz 33549, Tel. 977-6738

Homer V. Autry, 101 Palm Tree Drive, Thonotosassa 33592, Tel. 986-5509

Ann McDowell, 824 Lowry Lane, Tampa 33604, Tel. 935-2600

Pat McDowell, 13119 North Florida Ave., Tampa 33612, Tel. 935-6394

Bernard F. Saul, Jr., 16213 Parkside Drive, Tampa 33624, Tel. 962-0389

Harry & Carol Snyder, 3151 S. Kanner Hwy., Stuart 33494, Tel. (305)283-4054

Frank & Joan Tayntor, P.O. Box 1113, Wauchula 33873, Tel. 773-4879

Susan Weigand, 9706 North Albany Ave., Tampa 33612, Tel. 935-8690

Ross & Mary Ann Dickson, 6710 Bouganville Ave., S., St. Petersburg 33707, Tel. 384-3386

Mrs. Doris H. Everett, 481 Palmetto Ave., Frostproof 33843, Tel. (813) 635-2687

Mr. & Mrs. Lou LaMonte, Sr., 2308 St. Isabel St., Tampa 33607, Tel. 876-1201

James & Grace Calhoun, 6915 Mushinski Road, Tampa 33624, Tel. 961-3367

Marvin & Kathy Dees, Route 2, Box 889, Simms Road, Odessa 33556, Tel. 920-5484

Mary K. Voss, 13119 North Florida Ave., Tampa 33612, Tel. 935-5514

ADDRESS CHANGES

Rosalie D. Obregon, P.O. Box 41154, St. Petersburg 33743

William Vernon Ryland, 3235 Yale St., N., St. Petersburg 33713, Tel. 823-3689

Glenn Warren, 806 Pierce St., Clearwater 33516

TREASURER'S REPORT OF SECOND ANNUAL PLANT SALE, OCTOBER 18, 1981

Gross Sales	\$19,720.00	
Expenses	13,636.28	* \$1004.00 worth of unsold plants
Net Income	6,083.72	is on consignment at Andy's
* Consignment	1,004.00	Nursery.
Total Proceeds	7,087.72	

Unsold plants are still available to members at reduced prices. They include Jaboticabas, Grumichamas, Downy Myrtles, Feijoas, etc.

REPORT OF THE NOVEMBER 1, 1981 MEETING

President Bill Lester extended special thanks to Paul and Irene Rubenstein for their extraordinary efforts in making the Plant Sale such a success. He noted that our sale is quickly becoming an established annual event in Tampa which the public looks forward to and will continue to support.

Joe Constantine brought notice of the pre-publication sale by NAFEX (North American Fruit Explorers) of a new book on Persimmons. Our Book Sales Chairman, Betty Dickson, will order the permitted maximum of 10 copies at the reduced price for resale to members.

Jud Newcombe opened a lively discussion of the monthly Plant Exchange by stating his preference for a free distribution of donated plants. In this way new members could obtain relatively rare and unusual plants to spark their interest in adding to their collection. The system used would be like Miami's. Ray Thorndike suggested that a way to encourage members to bring in better quality plants would be to let the donor share in the sale price. Hansen Chen proposed a clearinghouse approach whereby members would submit their wants and others would list what they have available. The terms of the exchange could then be negotiated by the participants. This would require a billboard at the meetings and/or insertions in the newsletter. The newsletter has been available for this purpose all along, but so far noone has made use of this service. If you have fruit trees for sale, let the newsletter know about it.

Our guest speaker, Tom Economou, who is familiar with the methods of exchange used by the other chapters and clubs in Florida, was invited to comment. He recommended distributing plants by means of a drawing at each meeting. The proceeds could be used to purchase high quality plants for the next meeting.

A motion was passed directing a drawing to be held at the December meeting for approximately ten plants. Members wishing to donate or sell plants for the drawing should contact Bob Heath at 876-7422. The first lot drawn will have the pick of the selection presented. The second lot may choose from the remainder, etc.

Plants that have been selected for the December 6th drawing are:

'Kohala' Longan, Grumichama, Jaboticaba, Lemon Grass, Seedling Cashew, Governors Plum, Surinam Cherry, Pineapple, Blackberry Jam Fruit and perhaps more.

The meeting was adjourned and turned over to Program Chairman, Ray Thorndike, who introduced our guest speaker, Tom Economou, from Miami. Tom is a Miami member, is active in the Master Gardener program and has a respectable collection of fruit trees on his own property. He is well known in the RFCI for being the operator of Botanical Tours, Box 450662, Miami 33145. He has led a number of tours to Latin America to see, sample and bring back trees and seeds of the rare fruits we generally only read about. Countries visited include Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, Panama, Colombia, Peru and Brazil. Future tours will include these same countries and many more if all goes as Tom is planning. He hopes to be arranging tours all around the world in the near future.

THE LONGAN
Euphoria longana

The Longan, a close relative of the Lychee, is a handsome, medium-sized, evergreen tree with dense dark green foliage, reaching a height of up to 35 feet. The leaves are compound, up to 12 inches long. The small flowers are borne thickly on large, upright, branched panicles at branch tips and leaf axils. The fruits, generally maturing in July and August, are one inch or less in diameter, with a thin, nearly smooth reddish brown rind and a rather large brown seed. The fruit is eaten fresh, dried or preserved. Although generally recognized as less delicious than the Lychee, the Longan merits wider planting, both as an ornamental and, in the better varieties, for its fruit. It is a slightly hardier tree than the Lychee and less exacting in its cultural requirements. It is a fast growing tree and responds exceptionally well to good care.

From the June 1968 Miami Newsletter

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THE GRUMICHAMA
Eugenia dombeyi

The Grumichama is a compact, very attractive evergreen with glossy, leathery, 3 to 5 inch long deep green leaves which are a beautiful dark wine color when young. It likes a slightly acid, rich soil and a lot of water. Mulching is strongly recommended and close attention to fertilizer requirements (especially for minor elements) is necessary to prevent leaf yellowing. The fruit is scarlet to purplish-black, ranging from $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to 1 inch in diameter, depending on the soil quality and water supply during development. Little more than a month elapses between flower and ripe fruit. The skin is thin and delicate, the flesh soft and melting with an agreeably sweet subacid flavor in the better cultivars. The fruiting season may run from March to August in Florida. Seedlings may bear fruit as early as their fourth year, but are quite variable in quality. The Grumichama is related to the Surinam Cherry, Jaboticaba and Guava and it is subtropical, able to withstand 26 degrees (F.) or less when mature.

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THE JABOTICABA
Myrciaria cauliflora

The Jaboticaba is a small, bushy evergreen tree seldom exceeding 15 feet in height. Branches develop from near ground level resulting in a dense rounded form. Its leaves are small and dark green and the bark peels as in the Guava. The tree is ornamental but is a fine conversation piece as well as the source of a useful fruit, much resembling a large grape in looks and flavor. It is unusual in that the flowers and fruit appear in profusion in clusters directly on the trunk and major branches. Within a month of the flowers the purplish-black fruits up to 1 inch in diameter ripen and this cycle is repeated as many as 5 to 6 times per year. Aside from being eaten fresh, out of hand, the fruit makes a superior jelly or jam and can be used for juice and wine. It also freezes well. Its main drawback is its slow growth and it may take 10 to 20 years to fruit from seed. It is very difficult to propagate by vegetative methods. The Jaboticaba's unique characteristics make it a highly sought after plant in South Florida where it is better known. It must have a rich soil and a constant supply of moisture. Minor elements (manganese, iron and magnesium, especially) must supplement the regular fertilization and the use of a mulch is recommended.

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PLANTING TIPS

A good planting hole for your newly acquired tree need not be expensive. The following instructions will give consistently good results despite the rule of 'a \$10 hole for a \$5 plant.'

Dig an adequately large hole, approximately twice the diameter of the plant's root-ball and up to two spades deep, if possible. The root system must not be cramped in its initial growth, needing loosened soil in which to become established. The shape of the hole should be cylindrical, not bowl-shaped. Fork over the bottom and roughen up the sides since the spade may have glazed them, thus possibly inhibiting root growth. While digging, separate the topsoil and subsoil into two piles. Then place the topsoil (or sod) into the bottom of the hole. Be sure to remove and kill all grubs found in the soil. If aggressive weeds or grasses surround the hole, line the sides with thick layers of newspaper before filling. This will give the tree about a year free of competition before the paper composts. Avoid colored ink, such as comics and slick ads, as it is reputed to be rich in poisonous heavy metals.

In Florida, adding fertilizer to a planting hole is usually discouraged, but if you must, mix only a handful of 100% organic fertilizer containing trace minerals into the remaining subsoil. Do not overdo and be certain that it is '100% organic' so as not to burn the roots. If you have compost, peat, or other thoroughly decomposed organic material available, mix this into the subsoil, also. Never use undecomposed material as the tree could be killed by the anaerobic composting gases generated in the ground. The tree could also be killed by foot-rot as the ground begins to sink when the organic shrinkage occurs due to decomposition.

Add enough of this soil mix to the hole to be able to set the plant at its original depth as grown in the container. If there is any question, set the plant shallower, not deeper, as there will be a natural tendency for the filled hole to settle as time passes. Before setting the plant in the hole, fill it with water and allow it to settle (the hole, that is).

Set the plant in the hole, surrounding it with the mixed soil, all the while running water to thoroughly wet the fill. This will settle the mix as well as ensure that the rootball does not dry out due to its own moisture being blotted up by drier soil around it. Do not tamp the loose earth as that would defeat the whole process. You want the soil settled, not compacted. Most planting guides suggest a dish or saucer shaped depression in the ground around the base of the newly planted tree so as to retain water. This 'saucer' must be above ground level, not below (adjacent ground level, that is). Were it below ground level, foot-rot might occur.

Do stake the tree if wind is to be a problem and provide a windscreen if possible. If the plant or tree has suffered any shock due to the transplanting, provide some temporary shade. This also would be advisable if the plant had been grown under shady conditions and is now in the full sun. Burlap on a support frame is one excellent method of shading. Wet the burlap to raise the humidity and to cool the air flowing through it.

Keep your new plant or tree watered during its period of establishment, at least twice a week, and water the foliage as well. Remember, in general, trees do not die, they are killed. As a grower, it is only practical that you perform an 'autopsy' on each dead tree. Usually the cause of death will be found in the top 12 inches of the root system. The most common causes are: foot-rot, nematodes, insects in the trunk heart and tap-root spiral due to being pot-bound at planting. All are preventable and/or treatable.

PLANTING, GRAFTING AND BUDDING BY THE MOON AND STARS

If you would like to experiment and see if you can improve your success ratio by following the recommended days for starting plants, here are the dates for the upcoming month: December 4,5,9,10 and 31

RULE OF THUMB FOR FROST FORECASTING

This might help you out-guess the TV weatherman on those questionable nights - "Should I cover the plants or not?" It is not infallible, but it could pay off. 'If the daytime temperature does not rise above 65 degrees and it falls to 49 degrees or below by 7:00 PM, there will likely be frost if there be no cloud cover or wind.'

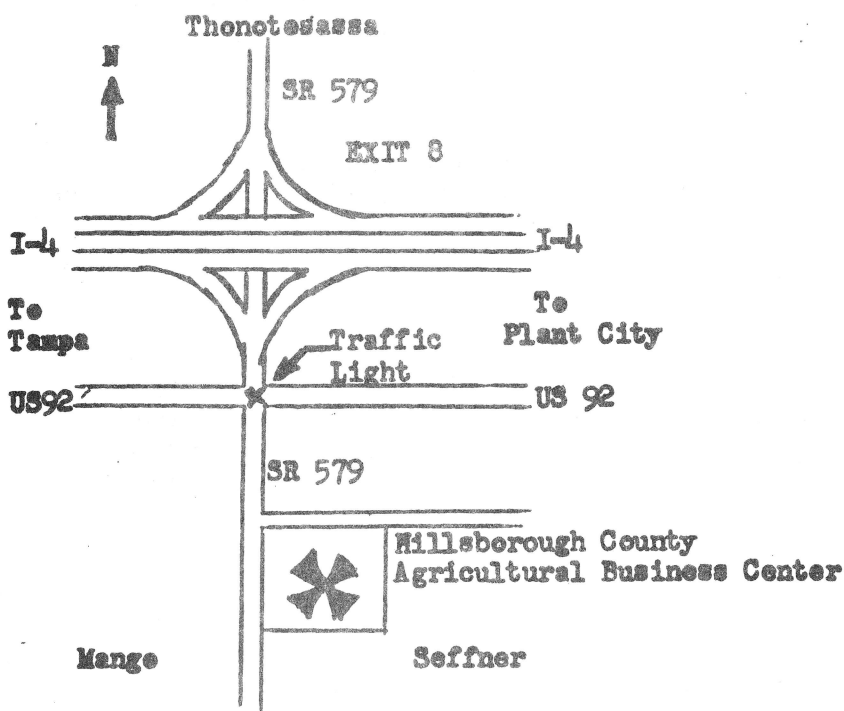
FREEZING PERSIMMONS

Extra Persimmons may be frozen and enjoyed up to a year later (preferably before). They may be frozen whole in their skins in plastic bags or frozen as a puree. To puree: Use only soft, fully ripe fruit. Wash, peel and cut into sections. Press through a sieve. To prevent discoloration of the pulp (and possible flavor loss), to each quart add one of the following: 2 Tablespoons Lime or Lemon juice (1 Tbsp. per 2 cups pulp) or 1/8 teaspoon crystalline ascorbic acid or 1 1/2 tsp. crystalline citric acid. Puree made from native (D. virginiana) varieties needs no sugar. Puree made from cultivated (Japanese, or D. kaki) varieties may be packed with or without sugar. Mix one cup sugar with one quart (2 lbs.) puree. Pack puree into containers, leaving head space - 1/2 to 3/4 inch for pints and 1 to 1 1/2 inch for quarts. Seal and freeze.

BOOK SALE

Betty Dickson still has a goodly quantity of books leftover from the Annual Plant Sale. They were listed in last month's newsletter. See her at this next meeting.

Tampa Bay Chapter Newsletter
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