



NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 1984

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

EDITOR: RAY THORNDIKE, NEWSLETTER MAIL ADDRESS: 3114 TROY AVE., LAKELAND 33803

PRESIDENT: PAUL RUBENSTEIN, CHAPTER MAIL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 260363, TAMPA 33685

EXCEPT MAY AND JULY, 1984, MEETINGS ARE HELD THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH

NEXT MEETING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1984 AT 2:00 PM

MEETING PLACE COMMUNITY ROOM UNDER WEST RAMP,
TAMPA BAY CENTER SHOPPING MALL,
BUFFALO & HIMES AVES. NEXT TO
TAMPA STADIUM. (TAKE DALE MABRY
TO BUFFALO AVE., AT STADIUM.)

PROGRAM "UNUSUAL FRUITS AS COMMERCIAL CROPS
IN FLORIDA" by Dr. Carl W. Campbell
of the Subtropical Experiment Station
(IFAS), Univ. of Florida, Homestead.
Prof. Campbell has been a very active
member of the Miami Council since 1959
and is a Past President (1963-1964.)

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NEW MEMBERS

The American Foundation, Inc., Bok Tower Gardens, P.O. Drawer 3810, Lake Wales 33859-3810

Jorge M. Giroud, 6250 Cape Hatteras Way, N.E., No. 3, St. Petersburg 33702

Nolan Jensen, P.O. Box 638, Riverview 33569, Tel. 689-0809

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1984 PROGRAM & ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

February 12 Dr. Carl W. Campbell, Homestead: "UNUSUAL FRUITS AS COMMERCIAL CROPS
IN FLORIDA"

March 11 Dr. Richard Litz, Homestead: "APPLICATION OF TISSUE CULTURE SYSTEMS
TO TROPICAL FRUIT TREES"

April 8 Albert A. Will, Jr., Ft. Lauderdale: "FRUITS OF JAVA AND BALI"

May 6 (Note date). Gene Joyner, West Palm Beach: "BANANAS"

June 10 Mike Murphy, Thonotosassa: "COMPANION PLANTING"

July 15 (Note date) Lawrence Wasser, Tampa: "A REPORT ON ISRAELI AGRICULTURE"

August 12 Tom Hughes Vineyard, Dover - MUSCADINE GRAPE HARVEST TIME

September 9 No Program - Annual Plant Sale Planning Session (?)

October ? 5TH ANNUAL PLANT SALE

1984 PROGRAM & ACTIVITIES CALENDAR (CONTINUED)

November 11 Tom Economou, Miami: "TROPICAL FRUIT FIESTA"

December 9 Marian Van Atta, Melbourne: "LIVING OFF THE LAND"

In addition:

February 24,25,26 Exhibit & Plant Sale, Botanical Council of Tampa Bay,
University Square Mall, Fowler Ave. at 22nd St.

DISPLAY AND SALE, FEBRUARY 24,25,26 - UNIVERSITY SQUARE MALL

Volunteers will be requested at the February meeting to set up and man our tables at the Display & Sale this month at University Square Mall run by the Botanical Council of Tampa Bay. Set-up will be Thursday evening, Feb. 23. Volunteers will be required to man our display, answer the public's questions and sell plants (if we have any.) Much like our booths at the Florida State Fair, except we will be meeting local people rather than tourists, mainly. This will be an excellent chance to acquire new members and if it is a success, then we shall probably participate in the next Botanical Council Displays in April and June. This is a lot more fun than work, so do yourself a favor and volunteer! If you have any plants suitable for sale (you may split the proceeds with the club or donate them), we really need them. If you have potted plants of sufficient size for display, please loan them for the weekend - especially if they have fruit on them - and keep them company by volunteering yourself.

JANUARY MEETING

The tape recording of the program turned up blank, illustrating that yours truly needs an audio assistant at the meetings. Any volunteers?

Dr. William C. Cooper gave us a very interesting program following his life and travels in his work with citrus and other subtropical and tropical fruit. In lieu of a resume of his program, I shall have to refer you to his book, "In Search of the Golden Apple", which may be purchased from our Book Sales Chairman, Betty Dickson, or you may borrow our library copy.

JANUARY PLANT DRAWING

<u>PLANT</u>	<u>DONOR</u>	<u>WINNER</u>
Seedling White Sapote	Arnold & Lillian Stark	Al Lima
Miracle Fruit	Chapter	Willard Sarrett
Sunlite Nectarine	Paul Rubenstein	Frank da Costa
Sugar Pear	Paul Rubenstein	Frank da Costa
Flowering Crabapple	Paul Rubenstein	Frank da Costa
Feijoa	Bob Heath	Tom Goldsworthy
Feijoa	Bob Heath	Armando Mendez
Abakka Pineapple	Bob Heath	Doris Lee
Miracle Fruit	Bob Heath	Al Lima
Seedling White Sapote	Ray Thorndike	Bob Heath
Seedling White Sapote	Ray Thorndike	Bruce Beasor
Abakka Pineapple	Ray Thorndike	Rome Vaccaro
Abakka Pineapple	Ray Thorndike	Roland Williams
5 ea. Persimmon fruit	Frank da Costa	Doris Lee

DURIAN!

Text by Harry Rolnick, photographs by Michael Chua

(This article appeared in the February 1983 issue of "SILVER KRIS", the Singapore Airlines inflight magazine.)

Durian is not just a fruit: durian is the fruit they love to hate. Travel writers and food writers from the West can't wait till they get their olfactory adjectives into a piece of durian and, over the years, they have berated this most *noble* of fruits with the most pulverising invective.

The smell of durian has been compared to that of rotten onions, sewage, old socks, Limberger cheese, garlic, putrefying flesh, dogs in heat and very dirty socks. One very serious economics writer compared durian to the smell of the 42nd-Street subway station in New York City, while a visiting musician, treated to a durian in Bangkok, literally jumped away when the fruit was served, suspecting that a particularly nauseating accident had occurred at a nearby table.

Ah, what insults are offered in thy name, O durian — and for no good reason. For the poor fruit of the durian is not at all to blame for the infamous odour: the fetid smell comes not from the fruit, but from the husk.

No matter. The gustatory wonders of the durian are so magnificent (to experienced durianologists, that is) that the odour can either be avoided or relished . . . perhaps like the single stone which is purposely out of place in a Japanese garden.

From East Malaysia (its proverbial home) to Zanzibar, one sees the durian between April and September, and one admits that this fruit looks positively dangerous from the outside. It was once compared to a jaundiced American football, geared out in spikes like a wicked medieval knight. Yet despite its

reputation, its odour and its external appearance, the durian is eagerly snatched up by the millions. In Thailand, for example, about 18 million durian are harvested each year, a crop worth close to US\$30 million. And while Thailand has the largest harvest, the wild durian in the Philippines and Malaysia would double that figure.

It's amazing that the fruit can travel at all. Not a single Asian airline will carry it, and pilots and stewardesses, at the first sniff, will literally delay flights until the offensive fruit is removed. The rules aren't written in any manifest, but it's an inviolable taboo for any pilot to allow the durian on board.

(Durian-lovers will go to any lengths, though. One smuggler told me that if one buys a durian just before ripening, it should be wrapped up in three sheets of thick plastic and sealed tightly to prevent the odour from leaking into the cabin.)

Why all this bother for a simple fruit — one which can sell at up to US\$15 in Thailand? Simply because the *taste* of the durian is in inverse proportion to its odour.

The sweetness is simply extraordinary. True, the mango can be sweet — but to durian-lovers, the mango has an easy, gooey sweetness. It has the sweetness of Sigmund Romberg melody or a greeting-card illustration.

Durian sweetness is strong and exceptionally complex. Depending on the kind of durian, the sweet taste is magnified, or in counterpoint with rich butter, or highly flavoured as if with an almond paste.



Choosing durian: the art of durian-tapping takes years of practice.



The spiked husk of the durian is daunting enough but neither this, nor the unpleasant smell or texture, will deter the avid durianologist.

WINTER PROTECTION OF TENDER PLANTS

by Stanley Edward Lachut

We have spent part of each winter in central Florida for over 20 years and moved down here to stay in 1977. We have had about 80 killing freezes in those 20 years, so we can expect an average of 4 bad freezes per year here in Holiday, although we had none in the winter of 1982-1983.

Banana protection: As usual, I have several Ladyfinger bananas dug up and in a garage for the winter. A banana needs up to two years to bear fruit, so on or about December 1 I dig up some of the largest stalks, cut off the leaves for ease of handling and storage and place them in a garage. Surprisingly, this is easy to do as they have a small root system. I replant them in March when the danger of frost is past.

Trenching: This year I have also trenched several bananas, stalks, leaves and all. Trenching is a method that I successfully used in Massachusetts on tree roses and fig trees. You dig a shallow trench next to the tree or shrub. Tie the branches together if so needed. Carefully loosen the root ball and lay the tree down in the trench. Cover with straw, weeds or light brush and, finally, earth. In the spring, reverse the procedure. The trick is not to cover them too deep or they might mold, but deep enough to keep from freezing.

Besides the bananas, I have the following plants and trees trenched this year:

- One carambola which had 6 nice fruits on it this past season.
- Two small mango trees.
- One two year old avocado.
- Two papaya plants.
- Two pineapple plants.

How will these trees and plants look in March when stood up again? Only time will tell. These trenched plants may be observed weekday mornings at 5111-5127 C.R. 54, Holiday - across the street from the new Lundquist, Michels, Short funeral home. I always like to talk gardening with interested RFCI gardeners.

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CHRISTMAS FREEZE FOLLOW-ON

The damage from the great freeze of December 24,25 goes on. Plants that I thought were lightly damaged have now begun to show very severe injuries. This is a normal course of events after any bad freeze. In my yard here in Lakeland, the following plants were killed outright, roots and all: almost all papayas and papaya relatives, two Black Sapotes in Lerio cans of flowering age, several pineapples. Killed to the ground, but possibly or probably still having a living root system which will eventually sprout a new tree: carambola, guava, cas, cattley guava (both red & yellow), grumichama, lychee, pitomba, surinam cherry, dovyalis hybrid, atemoya, downy myrtle, wampi. Major wood loss occurred to my two avocados, Winter Mexican and Brogden. Also killed outright were several tree tomatos.

The only deciduous fruits damaged were the sugar apples, which are showing progressively worsening wood loss and the figs, which suffered small twig loss because they were not fully dormant. Aside from the other deciduous fruits such as apple, plum, nectarine, capulin cherry, persimmon, etc., the plants and trees which tolerated the low temperatures around the 20 degree mark without damage were the blueberries, feijoas and loquats. The loquats suffered 100% loss of bloom, however, which means no hope of fruit this year. We shall have more reports in later issues.

Ray Thorndike

TREASURER'S REPORTDate: January 8, 1984

Checking Account Balance \$ 1,561.67

Savings: Citrus Park HiFi Account \$ 5,291.51

Dean Witter I.L.A. Fund 8,692.63

Savings Total \$13,984.14

Total Chapter Assets \$15,545.81

Irene Rubenstein, Treasurer

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1984-1985 ELECTIONS AND YOU

by Tom Goldsworthy, Director

No grove owner would take fruit from his trees year after year without ever putting anything back into his grove. So it is with organizations. You cannot always be a taker. At some point you must give something back to your club.

The Nominating Committee extends this opportunity to each member to help nourish the club. To help pump new blood into our leadership, complete this form and bring it to the February meeting (or mail it in to P.O. Box 260363, Tampa 33685.) Give it to Tom Goldsworthy.

Our goal is to have 20 candidates for 12 Board of Directors positions. The Nominating Committee reports to the membership at the March meeting. Nominations are welcomed from the floor, also. Then the members present at the March meeting will elect the new Board of Directors for a one year term. The Board subsequently elects the chapter officers from among their own number.

Item 1. I will agree to be a candidate for election to the Board of Directors for a one year term.

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Item 2. I will agree to serve on one or more committees this coming year.

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Check those committees that you are willing to serve on.

<input type="checkbox"/> Bylaws & Governance	<input type="checkbox"/> Auditing	<input type="checkbox"/> Membership
<input type="checkbox"/> Plant & Seed Exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> Program	<input type="checkbox"/> Tissue Culture
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Plant Sale	<input type="checkbox"/> Book Sales	<input type="checkbox"/> Recipes
<input type="checkbox"/> Historian	<input type="checkbox"/> Librarian	<input type="checkbox"/> Seffner Project
<input type="checkbox"/> Research	<input type="checkbox"/> Publications	<input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality
<input type="checkbox"/> (Fruit List, Freeze data, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> (Newsletter, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> (Refreshments, etc.)

Item 3. I will give a firm commitment to work at the Annual Plant Sale in October.

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

TISSUE CULTURE BRIEFS

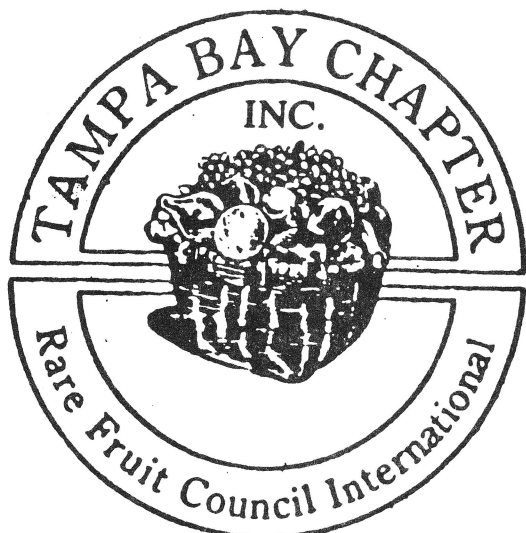
by George Merrill and Walter Vines

MANGOS. Researcher Dr. Richard Litz at the IFAS, Homestead, reports on readily culturing polyembryonic mangos in tissue culture by manipulation of the media and the procedure. Initially, a callus found to grow from the nucellus (a tissue within the ovule) when the culture medium included 2-4-D (an artificial plant hormone that stimulates growth - known technically as an auxin.) When the 2-4-D was removed, pseudobulbils formed from which an almost unlimited number of embryos were produced. In continuing culture, they grew large and went through the normal development of seedlings.

In the case of the more difficult mono-embryonic mango the most important commercial cultivars 'Keitt', 'Tommy Atkins', 'Haden', etc. were used. This time a different approach was tried. The nucellar tissue within the embryonic ovule was removed and put into culture. Again, by the addition of 2-4-D, a callus was induced. Following the induction of callus, the 2-4-D was removed and, presto!, embryos formed, the first time that this had ever been accomplished in a woody species. As a postscript, successful somatic embryogenesis, maturation and germination of jaboticaba (family Myrtaceae) followed shortly thereafter. The thought now is: can application be assumed in all plant species exhibiting naturally occurring polyembryony? Work is continuing.

Genetic engineering of a sort which shows promise is that of induced resistance. This process increases the plants' defenses or tolerances to certain things. At the right stage of development, tissue culture plants are exposed to culture mediums containing the selected substances. Such substances might be sodium chloride (salt), toxins (as in fungus), herbicides, etc. Those that do survive an adequate treatment - probably not many - would be induced to grow and multiply by cloning. These plants will be resistant to or tolerant of the substances used in the process. Among others, IFAS AREC, Homestead is actively engaged in the R&D of this process with several cultivars.

Tampa Bay Chapter Newsletter
Rare Fruit Council International, Inc.
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NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION STAFF:

Robert & Doris Lee, George Merrill, Walter Vines

