



# NEWSLETTER JUNE 1985

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

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(including renewals)

MEETINGS ARE HELD THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 2:00 P.M.

NEXT MEETING . . . . . JUNE 9, 1985

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

PROGRAM. . . . . LA RUE ROBINSON - Commercial horticulturist  
advisor, Pinellas County Extension Service.  
He will speak about the kiwi fruit.

\* \* \* \* \*

## JAMAICA TRIP WITH TOM ECONOMOU

At our last meeting, Gus Fleischman was kind enough to give us a report on his and Eleanor's trip to Jamaica with Tom Economou. They joined 17 members of the Miami and Palm Beach RFCI chapters, and spent 7 days and 6 nights based in Kingston, on the south coast of Jamaica's drier region, doing and seeing that which is denied the typical tourist: daily tours of plantations and farms growing Orinique and Ugli citrus, macadamia, Blue Mountain coffee, allspice, ginger, mangos, and bananas; and tasting exotic tropical fruits, including akee, jakfruit, Malay apple, passion fruit, cashews, and much more. These daily tours left the hotel promptly at 8 A.M., and returned shortly after 5 P.M. The group was impressed with 80 year old Marjorie Davidson's expertise in Jamaica's horticulture and horticulturists. Much seed was collected and brought back to the U.S., but some, e.g., akee, was not allowed to enter. No plants were permitted entry. Gus and Eleanor recommend Tom Economou's trips highly. Thanks, Gus.

## 3rd INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL PLANT FESTIVAL

Tom Economou has sent us notice of the 3rd International Tropical Plant Festival, which is scheduled for August 4-11, 1985, in PERU. The cost is \$974.00 per person, and the itinerary includes Lima, Cuzco, and Machu-Picchu. There are optional extensions to Nasca and the Amazon. Fruits to be seen and tasted include the Amazon tree grape, ice cream bean, cherimoya, papuela, lacuma, pepino, and many others. For more information, contact Tom Economou, Nature Trail, Inc., Box 450662, Miami, Fla. 33145, phone (305) 285-7173. Tom has said that the BRAZIL tour has been scheduled for November.

\* \* \* \* \*

JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE

Lewis Maxwell was kind enough to provide us with some Jerusalem artichoke, or sunchoke, Helianthus tuberosus, tubers; these were among the distributed 'freebies' at the last meeting. He also provided us with a copy of his July/August 1979 Garden Guide, which contained an article about this interesting, unusual, and useful vegetable. Here is a synopsis of that article. The plant, which is a sunflower, is native to the northeastern U.S., and was one of the vegetables cultivated by the Indians of that region. It forms a 7 ft. tall twiggy bush with a 2-3 foot spread, and has 3 inch yellow flowers. The plants are brittle, and require support. Plant the tubers 1-2 inches deep and 30 inches apart in well-enriched soil (they will fail to grow in our poor sandy soil). Fertilize monthly with 1/4 lb. of a quality mixed fertilizer, or equivalent soluble fertilizer. Plant them in the spring, and they will grow virorously all summer, being ready to harvest in the fall, when the tops die down. Dig the tubers, wash and dry them, and store them in plastic bags in the refrigerator (they cannot be stored in the open). They also can be left in the ground until used, but must be harvested before they resprout in the spring. They can be used in any way that water chestnuts or potatoes are used, and can be eaten either raw or cooked. Our thanks to Lewis Maxwell for his generosity. He would like to remind us that, although some of us are organic gardening buffs, there is no evidence to indicate that inorganic fertilizers are any less effective, or more potentially harmful, than organic ones. In my experience (ALS), some plants, e.g., etrog (citron), are considerably sensitive to the application of inorganic fertilizer, however, this is likely to be due to the immediately available concentration of substances, and not to their inorganic vs. organic sources.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

First off, I would like to thank Dale Jenkins, not only for his excellent talk on figs and pineapples, but also for his extreme generosity in bringing us some fig cuttings and pineapple suckers for our 'freebies' distribution, and some beautiful potted pineapples for our plant drawing, including one beautiful specimen that had a fruit on it!

One note about the plant drawing. We have had many great plants brough in lately. Please keep it up! PLEASE remember to sign the sheet when you win a plant; the question mark on our typewriter is wearing out! Also, when you sign the sheet, please WRITE LEGIBLY (print if necessary); you wouldn't like to see your name in the newsletter written as Pxbrtvsm, but that's how it looks sometimes!

I know it seems like the last one was just yesterday, but before we know it, it will be October - time for another annual tree sale. We will need your assistance, so keep Saturday and Sunday, October 19th and 20th, open, and plan to give us a hand. Also let us know if you can help out beforehand. Grow some plants for the sale. Remember, we expect to have an expanded selection of unusual herbs and vegetables for this sale, and everyone could help by growing SOMETHING!

Priscilla Lachut has generously volunteered as chairperson of the hospitality table. We all appreciate her efforts over the past few months, and now she's agreed to make it official. Thanks, Priscilla! Now, let's hope many of you volunteer to give her a hand; it's a big job!

That's it for now - see you soon!

\* \* \* \* \*

Knock, knock.

Who's there?

Banana.

Banana, who? (continued in this issue)

## GROWING FIGS &amp; PINEAPPLES IN FLORIDA

by Dr. Dale Jenkins  
of the Sarasota Fruit & Nut Society

Dr. Jenkins first brought us greetings from the Sarasota Fruit & Nut Society and pointed out that the objective of their Society is the accumulation of knowledge concerning the growing of various kinds of fruit, not just tropical or rare fruit, and being concerned with getting good production with emphasis on the interesting ones. He first arrived in Florida about six years ago, after spending several years in the Tropics. He was very interested in growing some of the exotic tropical trees, such as black sapote and mango. After four freezing winters out of six, he decided to change his concept and devote his efforts to what you might call semi-tropical or sub-tropical fruiting trees. In his garden now he is growing some 100 types of different fruits and nuts, which on 3/4 of an acre, makes things a little crowded. There are 16 kinds of citrus, 28 kinds of figs, 4 kinds of bananas, and 4 kinds of loquats. He is also growing a number of grapes, apples and nectarines. At this point, he described his experiences in growing figs, particularly with the method of using heavy mulch, including the advantages and disadvantages.

Dr. Jenkins proceeded with the description of the various types of figs. He mentioned that the figs which grow on the woody part of last year's growth are called Breba. All of the fig varieties have Breba figs. The main crop comes on the new tender green growth. Dr. Jenkins mentioned that most California figs are not particularly adapted here. He is growing several varieties from California, some of which are doing very well. One that does exceptionally well in this area is Excel. It is rather large and has a large hole in it and is light green. It is quite tasty although not exceptionally sweet.

Another one that has done beautifully here is Beale. It looks very similar to Excel but has purplish red fruit. He doesn't recommend Panache, Tiger Fig, Enturo, and Tena. The most common figs grown in this area are Celeste, which is the little sugar fig, and Brown Turkey. Brown Turkey is more cold hardy than the other figs. Another common variety is Magnolia, or Brunswick, which has very deeply cleft leaves, making it easy to distinguish. The fruit is usually distinctive also, with a thick neck and a lopsided form and a bronze color. Conadria is one of the green figs and grows very well in this area. Figs can be divided into groups according to color of the fruit. Figs such as the Green Ischia are green with strawberry red centers and very sweet, very good, but not very productive, and slow growing. Kadota is another that does very well in this area.

There are a number of white figs such as Blanc and White Marseilles, which are actually light green with a white center. Then there are the yellow figs such as Lemon and Hunt. There are also amber colored figs such as Spanish Amber. Figs also come in brown and orange, dark purple and red, and also striped. The sweetest fig in his opinion, is the Celeste.

The small size of the opening at the end of the figs is one of the things you look for in a good fig. The Kadota has a little drop of honey in the opening so the water doesn't get in. If you have a fig that stands upright, water can get inside and you get spoilage and splitting of the fruit. The Green Ischia, for example, has a large hole but in this case, the fig has a long stem and hangs down so the water runs off.

Figs are easy to grow from cuttings but the time to put in cuttings is during the winter time when the plants are dormant. A cutting should include about 3 nodes and should be buried 3/4 or more in the ground after dipping the end in Rootone. Also branches may be rooted by bending down to the ground and staking in place until roots form. In this area, we have some real problems in growing figs, sandy sterile soil, nematods which are a real problem, and fig leaf rust. The sterile

soil and the nematode problem can be handled by the use of a deep mulch. A good mulch material is the leaf and wood chip which can be obtained from a local tree service. The mulch should be distributed in a large circle around the trunk and should be 4" to 8" deep and should be replenished every six months. The mulch rots down into humus. A procedure which Dr. Jenkins uses is to remove sod in an area several months before he intends to plant a fig and heavily mulch the area to decrease the nematode population. Nematodes thrive in our dry sandy soil. The organisms that feed on nematodes cannot live under the same conditions. However, under a deep mulch these organisms thrive and tend to decimate the nematode population. As in most organic controls, of course, the problem is not eliminated but only under good control. So the advantages of mulch are that it keeps the soil temperature relatively constant, increases the penetration of water into the soil, lessens evaporation from the soil, provides compost as the mulch decomposes and also helps to control the weed growth around the plant. One of the disadvantages of mulch is that additional fertilizer is required because the mulch in decomposing uses nitrogen. Use of the mulch is also equally beneficial in growing pineapples. Figs require a fair amount of fertilization. Dr. Jenkins suggests fertilizing figs every 3 months, one pound of fertilizer for every 2 or 3 feet in height of the plant. Spread around well, not too close to the trunk of the plant itself. He suggests a low priced 6-6-6 fertilizer with 2% chelated iron and strongly recommends the addition of magnesium sulfate (epsom salts) to his fertilizer at the rate of one pound for each 50 pound bag of fertilizer. This is the secret of growing good figs and is also excellent on pineapples.

One of the other problems with fig trees is fig rust. Where you have a concentrated population of fig trees such as Dr. Jenkins has and when the growth is luxuriant, you can expect an increased amount of fig rust on the leaves, particularly during the rainy season. Rust frequently will get so bad in late July and August, that it will completely defoliate a tree.

Fungicides such as Zineb and Maneb seem to do little good against fig rust. Dr. Jenkins indicated that Benylate, which is a very toxic substance, seems to control the fig rust better than the Zineb and Maneb but he hesitates to use it because of its high toxicity. Lewis Maxwell suggests the use of copper for the control of fig rust. Dr. Jenkins agreed that he would try it. Fortunately, figs seem to be little bothered by insect pests, although there are some that are noted for being very destructive. Another method of controlling nematodes is by the use of a nematode resistant root stock such as *Ficus Glomorata*. However, this root stock, while very compatible with domestic figs, is also very cold tender and needs to be banked up during the winter time to prevent freezing of the root stock. *Ficus Cuclafolia* is another nematode resistant root stock which also is very susceptible to cold. There are other potential root stocks which are more cold hardy, and provide very compatible unions.



Fig

PINEAPPLES. Dr. Jenkins suggested that pineapples do very well in this area. He has four different varie-



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

JEZEBEL SAUCE (Priscilla Lachut)

1 (18 ounce) jar pineapple preserves

1 (18 ounce) jar apple jelly

1 (1, 12 ounce) can DRY mustard

1 (5 ounce) jar prepared horseradish

1 Tablespoon cracked peppercorns

Combine all ingredients; stir well. Pour sauce into air tight containers; store in the refrigerator. Serve sauce over cream cheese with crackers as an appetizer, or with pork or beef. Yields 3-2/3 cups.

\* \* \* \* \*

ALL-AROUND FERTILIZER

Harold Seekins has submitted G. K. Palmer's recipe for an ALL-AROUND FERTILIZER (Palmer's Garden & Nursery, St. Petersburg).

50# 4-6-8, e.g., from Murphy's or Scotty's (the lower nitrogen helps prevent fruit drop)

17# 1-1-1 dehydrated cow manure

2# Magnesium sulfate (Epsom Salts)

1# Manganese sulfate

2# PERK (a commercial 'fruit set' compound)

Mix all ingredients thoroughly and store. Apply a handful each in conical holes arranged about 2 feet apart in 3 circles around the tree, the outermost at the drip line, the second about 1/2 way, and the third about 3/4 way, in towards the trunk. The diameter of the holes should be 1 - 1½ inches.

Thanks, Harold, for this useful information.

\* \* \* \* \*

HOSPITALITY TABLE

Mary & John Victor: Cream cheese with chives, strawberry jam

Louis Yedkois: Orange punch

Jean Miller: Greek honey cookies

Priscilla Lachut: Jezebel sauce and cream cheese

Alice Beasor: Preserved oranges

Bea Seekins: Pumpkin squares

\* \* \* \* \*

Knock, knock.

Who's there?

Orange.

Orange who?

Orange you glad we didn't say Banana? (finally, the end.)

\* \* \* \* \*

ties and about 60 pineapples at this time and he indicated that he has no problem with the pineapples fruiting. He displayed a pineapple in a pot that he dug up for our presentation which had the fruit developing. The top growth above the pineapple fruit is called the crown. The sprouts from directly under the fruit are called slips and those coming up from the base are suckers. The sucker is the ideal part to plant because it produces larger fruit quicker. The slips are less desirable but much better than the crown. Pernam-buco is one variety very similar in appearance to Natal Queen. They both have sharp serrated edges on their leaves and like all pineapples, are somewhat tender to cold, Natal Queen being more cold hardy than Pernam-buco. His favorite is the Smooth Cayenne, which has no thorns on the leaves. The Smooth Cayenne and the Natal Queen both produce a large sweet pineapple, bright yellow when ripe, soft and very sweet. Spanish Red, the other variety which he cultivates, produces a very large fruit, long, narrow and red, and very difficult to tell when ripe.

For maximum sweetness, as with most fruits, pineapples should be picked when they are fully ripe. Pineapples are propagated from the slips and suckers which should be pulled off and allowed to harden for a day or two in the shade before planting. One note of caution is to never get sand, soil or fertilizer into the crown. This is one advantage of mulching around the pineapples because the mulch can keep sand from splashing or blowing into the crown of the pineapple, which could kill it. So the secret of success in growing pineapples is to use a heavy mulch, lots of water and fertilizer about four times a year with a 6-6-6 fertilizer to which you add the magnesium sulfate as mentioned earlier. From the suckers under ideal conditions, it is possible to get fruit in one year and Dr. Jenkins frequently does just this.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT SUMMARY (April 1, 1984 to May 6, 1985)

Balance Brought Forward (Checking)	\$ 1,041.51
Income	18,319.94
Membership Dues	2,070.90
Plant Sale	13,593.46
Misc.	2,655.58
Expenditures	13,760.44
Newsletter	1,366.64
Meeting Room, Speakers, Etc.	983.87
Plant Sale	9,795.49
Misc	1,614.44
Balance to be Forwarded	5,601.01
Savings Accounts	20,314.68

\* \* \* \* \*

#### PLANT INDEX

Syd Goheen and Kay Netscher have both been busy compiling an index to the plants discussed in our 1981 - 1984 newsletters. We are grateful to both of them, as this is a time-consuming and difficult task. A consolidated index will hopefully soon be prepared, and will be part of the next newsletter.

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## PLANT RAFFLE - MAY

PLANT NAME	DONOR	WINNER
Allspice Tree	RFCI	Walter Vines
Yellow Guava	RFCI	Walter Vines
Yellow Guava	RFCI	John Victor
Loquat	RFCI	Theresa Mapes
"Giant" Grenadilla	Stark	?
Jicama	Stark	Seekins
Jicama	Stark	Seekins
Sugar Apple	Heath	H. Klaus
Pitaya Cactus	Heath	Walter Vines
Persimmon	Heath	Seekins
White Sapote	B. Beasor	Stan Lachut
Yellow Guava	Hill	Stan Lachut
Gardenia	H. Klaus	Seekins
Box of miscellaneous produce	Priscilla Lachut	Seekins
Tahitian & Spaghetti Squash	Stan Lachut	?
Yellow Guava	H. Seekins	Keith Norton
Roselle	Syd Goheen	A. Mendez
"	Syd Goheen	B. Beasor
"	"	Stan Lachut
"	"	B. Beasor
"	"	Stark
"	"	Walter Vines
Red Thornless Opuntia	Bea Seekins	Amyot
Yellow moderatethorn Opuntia	Bea Seekins	B. Beasor
Pineapple	Dale Jenkins	B. Heath
"	Dale Jenkins	Vickie Roberts
"	"	Syd Goheen
"	"	Steve Roberts
"	"	Gus Fleischman
Paprika Pepper (3)	Stark	J. Victor (2), ? (1)
Striped Cavern Tomato (3)	"	V. Roberts (2), ? (1)
San Marzano Paste Tomato (4)	"	G. Fleischman (1), Amyot (1), ? (2)
Golden Jubilee Tomato	"	?
Red Pear Tomato (4)	"	B. Puls (2), Merrill (1), ? (1)
Golden Yellow Eggplant	"	B. Puls (2), Vaccaro (1), ? (1)
Delicata Squash	"	?
Chinese Winter Melon	"	Stan Lachut
French Dinant Celery	"	?
Yellow Plum Tomato (2)	"	Vaccaro (1), Yedkois (1)
Tropic Tomato (2)	"	Lachut (1), ? (1)
Homestead Tomato (2)	"	Amyot (1), Merrill (1)

What did the cabbage say to  
the turnip?

"Lettuce sit down, I'm beet."

# Walter A. Vines Real Estate

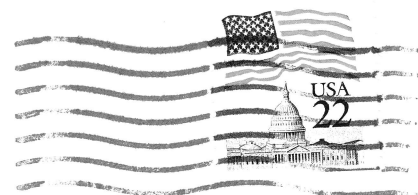


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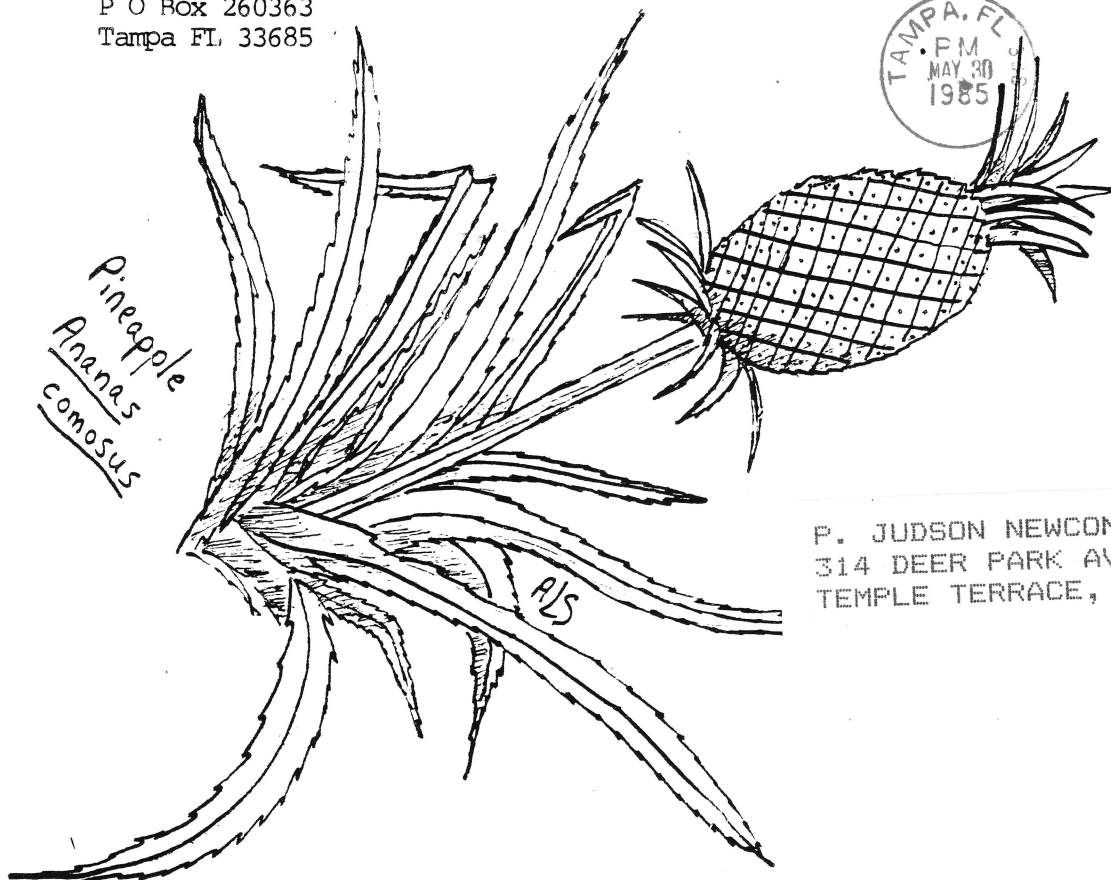
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Pineapple  
 Ananas  
 comosus



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