



NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1985

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

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(including renewals)

MEETINGS ARE HELD AT 2:00 P.M. ON THE 2nd SUNDAY OF THE MONTH.

NEXT MEETING DECEMBER 8 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. STAN DeFREITAS SPEAKING ON WINTER PRO-
TECTION FOR FLORIDA PLANTS, AND SINGING...
"ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS MY TWO FRUIT
TREES, THEY SHOULDN'T FREEZE, MY NEW FRUIT
TREES!"

NEW MEMBERS:

George & Marian Austin
531 - 48th St. N.
St Pete 33713
321-5023

Bill & Helen Cornwell
4732 Murray Hill Dr.
Tampa 33615
884-4295

Henry & Diane Chamberlain
10103 Ventura Ave.
Tampa 33619
621-3820

Raymond & Theresa Pilot
4 Sunset Bay Dr.
Belleair 33540

Scott & Jill Turner
475 Boynton Rd.
Maitland 32751

Burns & Cathy Creighton
828 Bayside Dr.
Tampa 33609
876-8466

S. J. & Harriet Zachwieja
P O Box 430
Arcadia 33821
813-993-0073

Ray & Connie Vernon
10365 Hazel St.
Largo 33544

Change of Address:

Henry & Mary Dawes
5800 Turban Shell Point Rd.
Ft Myers 33908

NOVEMBER PLANT RAFFLE:

Plant	Donor	Winner
Banana sucker	Nola Leclair	Walter Vines
Banana tree	Nola Leclair	J. B. Creighton
<u>Bunchosia argentia</u>	Betty Dickson	Walter Vines
" "	" "	Seekins
" "	" "	John Bell
" "	" "	Lloyd Shipley
" "	" "	George Merrill
" "	" "	John Bell
" "	" "	Connie Vernon
" "	" "	Pat Duke
" "	" "	?
Fried Egg Fruit	RFCI	Walter Vines
Avocado	"	Pearl Nelson
Surinam Cherry	"	Betty Dickson
Loquat	"	(illegible)
Loquat	"	Bruce Beasor
Spanish red pineapple	"	Betty Dickson
Yellow Passion Fruit (many)	Stark	Connie Vernon
Papaya	"	Seekins
Licorice Basil	"	George Austin
Cinnamon Basil	"	A. Mendez
Bush Green Basil	"	Gus Fleischman
Bush Green Basil	"	Nola Leclair
Oregano	"	M. Austin
Yellow guava (many)	"	Pearl Nelson
Yellow guava (3 small pots)	"	Seekins
" "	"	John Bell
" "	"	Harriet Zachwieja
Brazos Blackberry	Bob Duke	Nola Leclair
" "	" "	Lloyd Shipley
" "	" "	Lloyd Shipley
Lake Emerald Grape	Lottice Shipley	George Merrill
Banana pepper	Lottice Shipley	Gus Fleischman
Pepper Squash	RFCI	Mary Lou Creighton
Cavendish Banana	RFCI	Stark
Lady Finger Banana	A. Mendez	?
Canistel	" "	L. C. Alcaron
Black Sapote	" "	W. Yedkois
Cattleya Guava	" "	Gus Fleischman
Avocado (2 fruit)	Tom Economou	Al Hendry
Chayote (fruit)	" "	Gus Fleischman
Mamey (fruit)	" "	Zachwieja
unknown (amperella?)	Stark	Al Hendry

HOSPITALITY TABLE

Priscilla Lachut - Raspberry bars
 Beatrice Seekins - Cheese and crackers
 Betty Dickson - Guava paste
 Doris Lee - Brown turkey figs
 Pat Duke - Mango bread and cream cheese

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November 1985 Program - TROPICAL FRUIT FIESTA by Tom Economou

We are fortunate to have with us again this year, that world traveler, Tom Economou, with an impressive array of tropical fruit. Tom emphasized the fact that tropical fruit will grow in Florida and at any time of the year he can assemble an extensive display, but he reminded us that they are tropical fruit and central Florida is hardly a tropical area. Tom's fruit display was collected at the University of Florida Homestead experimental station, or IFAS, and also from the Fruit and Spice Park.

The first fruit that Tom displayed for us was a papaya which was grown in Clearwater by Joe Constantine. Joe Constantine donated two papayas from his own trees for Tom to show at this meeting and for the members to taste. It is a variety developed by the University of Florida at Homestead by Dr. Conover and Dr. Litz. Seeds were available from both papayas for those who wish to cultivate them through the winter and plant them in their yard next spring.

Tom next showed us an interesting and attractive fruit called the pin cushion fruit. He cut it for us and indicated that we could taste it after the talk.

The next fruit he showed us was the hog plum or spondias. The spondias is very popular in the tropics, although it has a large seed and little flesh. There are a number of different varieties of spondias but they are available throughout the tropics in every country in Latin America.

Tom next showed us the flower of the banana tree which is edible and is eaten in the Orient. It is also canned as a delicacy. Another interesting fruit which Tom collected from the Fruit & Spice Park is the candlestick or edulis. The fruit is borne on the trunk of the tree instead of at the ends of the branches. It is edible but not a very tasty plant. Tom described it as stringy celery.

Another interesting fruit, a berry, which grows on a very large tree, is the antidesma. It is a black berry that matures about this time of the year. It makes a delicious jelly and an excellent wine.

He next showed us the star apple which matures either green or purple. The tree has very beautiful leaves, being dark green on the top side & velvet on the bottom, but the tree is very cold sensitive. Another interesting fruit which we can grow in this area is the Chinese jujube. There are several varieties and they grow on a small, sometimes thorny tree which is very cold hardy in this area.

He next showed us a relative of the mangosteen, the garcinia tinctora. In taste, it certainly doesn't equal the mangosteen which is considered by some as the ultimate tropical fruit. Another very popular fruit in the tropics, a tree which comes in male and female, is the Spanish lime. The Spanish lime is an excellent fruit, somewhat resembling the lichee with a hard skin like the lichee and a juicy white pulp which is very delicious. This is another fruit which is sold on the street corners in all Latin American countries.

Tom next showed us the fruit of the lipstick tree which grows to about the size of a cherry tomato and is used in the tropics as a food coloring.

We were next introduced to the Chinese raisin. The edible part of the tree is the stem which tastes very similar to a dried raisin. He next showed us the Barbados cherry which will grow in central Florida with some protection in the winter. It is a heavy producer of cherry-like fruit, bearing throughout the warm summer months from May all the way to October. Each cherry is purported to have as much vitamin C as an orange.

He next showed us some Macadamia nuts. The tree will stand about 25° without damage. The Macadamia tree is a beautiful tree and the nuts are exceptionally fine and are one of the most important nuts in the world.

The next display was the jak fruit. The jak fruit grows to 60 or 80 pounds and maybe even more. Tom has seen a 60 pound fruit himself. The jak fruit is an exceptionally important fruit in Southeast Asia where they cultivate as many as 25 varieties. In Brazil they have the same quality and variety of jak fruit as

in Southeast Asia. Their fruit is delicious and they preserve it or make a drink with it.

Tom next presented us with the miracle fruit, and we were fortunate enough that he could bring some samples from Joe Constantine's gardens. Tom passed the miracle fruit out to those in the audience who had never eaten a miracle fruit and then gave them a Persian lime to taste. All the members agreed the Persian lime was extremely sour but after eating the miracle fruit, they all had to agree that the Persian lime had become very sweet. This, of course, is the gift of the miracle fruit, which tends to deaden the taste buds which taste the sour and allow the taste buds which taste the sweet in a fruit to function.

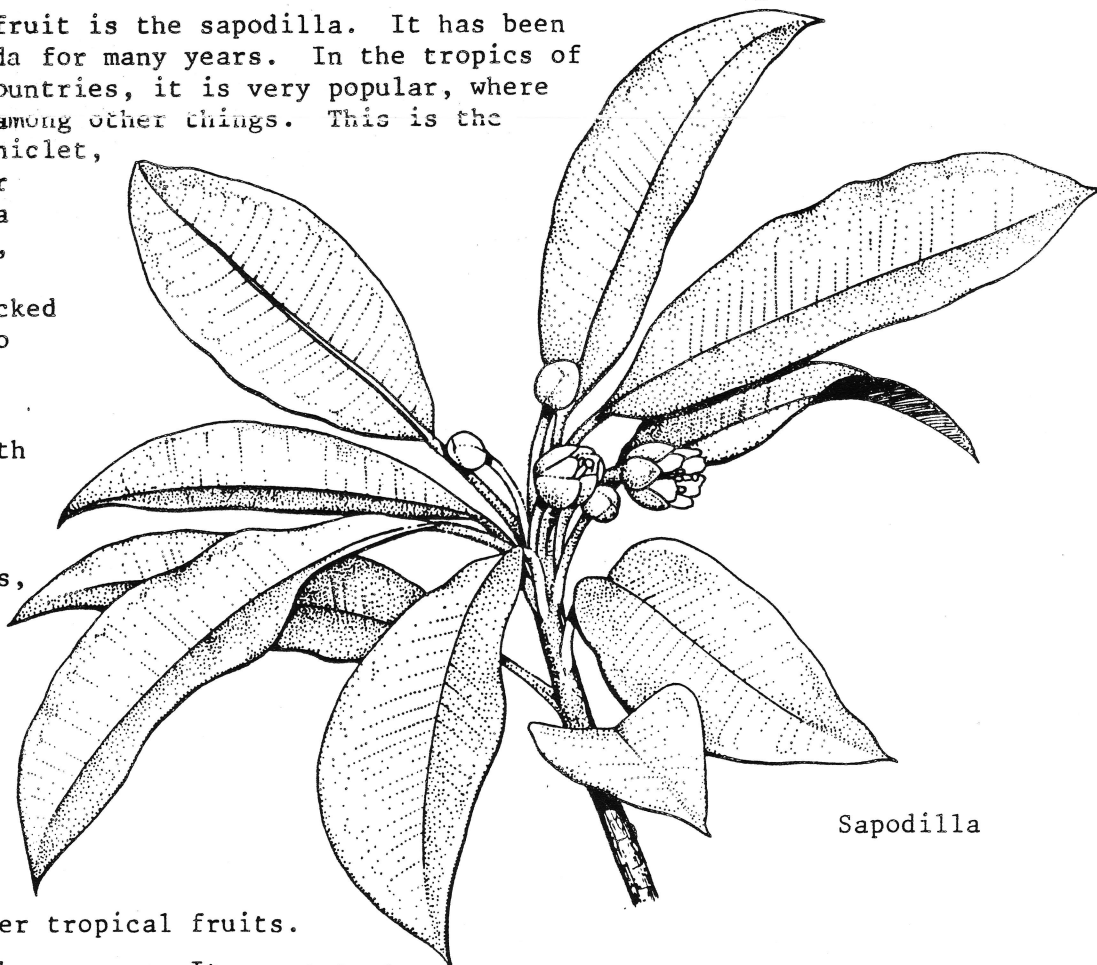
The next fruit that Tom showed us was the most popular fruit in Jamaica, the akee, the fruit of which is deadly poison except at one stage of its development when it is "ripe". It is the akee that killed Popenoe's wife many years ago. So to eat the akee safely, you must know what you are doing. When the fruit opens naturally and before it is over ripe, the yellow part of the fruit is eaten extensively in Jamaica and other Central American countries. In Jamaica, they prepare the akee with codfish and it's a very popular dish.

He next showed us the chayote, which is a member of the squash family and is grown extensively in Cuba and south Florida. It is very subject to nematodes but is being grown successfully in this area. The chayote is a rampant vining plant and is very easy to grow. The fruit, the seed, the tips of the vines and the root are all edible in the chayote.

Tom next mentioned the fact that we have 200 different commercial varieties of avocado in Florida. Tom displayed several varieties on the table for us. Avocados range from cold hardy Mexican varieties to cold tender West Indian varieties.

Another interesting fruit is the sapodilla. It has been grown in south Florida for many years. In the tropics of the Latin American countries, it is very popular, where it is called chico, among other things. This is the tree that produces chiclet, which is the base for chewing gum. It is a very delicious fruit, reminiscent of brown sugar. It may be picked unripe and allowed to soften indoors.

The carambola is a fascinating fruit with a star shaped cross section. It is very versatile, can be eaten fresh in salads, used in punch and relishes, can be cooked in pies and made into wine and jellies or it can be eaten out of hand. The carambola will grow in central Florida. It is more cold hardy than many of our other tropical fruits.



Sapodilla

Our next fruit was the wampee. It grows on a very attractive tree but it is somewhat cold tender. The fruit is brown and resembles a lichee nut and is somewhat smaller, about the size of a marble, but it grows in bunches and bears heavily throughout the summer. It has a very sweet, tart flavor.

Next, Tom showed us a cas, which is a relative of the guava, sometimes called a Costa Rican guava. It is a favorite for fruit drinks of Costa Rica. Again we had samples to taste and Tom advised us that the fruit is rather sour but it is also sweet, probably would be good with the miracle fruit first. You might wonder why it would be a favorite for making drinks, but with sugar it is very delicious. It does make an excellent drink and it is one of Tom's favorites.

The next fruit was the black sapote, a native of Mexico, a fruit to be eaten out of and. It is green on the outside, even when it's ripe, black on the inside and has been called the chocolate pudding fruit or the black persimmon because it is a relative of the persimmon. In addition to being a delicious fruit which is definitely different, it also is a beautiful tree. In the jungles of Mexico and Central America, it is said that the hunters and the monkeys fight for this fruit because of its delicious taste. But like the persimmon, it has to be eaten when it is dead ripe, so soft you can stick your finger right through it.

Another very popular and very interesting fruit is a member of the anona family, the atemoya, which is a cross between the cherimoya and the sugar apple. The fruit is a commercial crop in south Florida. It is an excellent fruit, very sweet and very tasty. The flower is unusual, being a female in the afternoon and a male in the morning, so the pollen has to be carried over from the morning to fertilize the flowers in the afternoon.

Another interesting fruit, a relative of the citrus family, is the bael fruit, also called orange marmalade fruit because when the fruit are mature, the pulp inside of the hard shell has a texture and taste somewhat like orange marmalade.

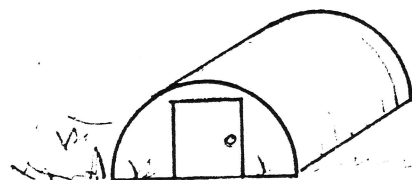
Next he showed us the governors plum, a small tree or shrub with very tasty fruit but this tree is also very tender. Another very interesting fruit from Southeast Asia, the Phillipines, is the velvet apple. It has a beautiful dark green leaf and the fruit itself is beautiful. The mature fruit is vivid red on the tree, although it fades somewhat after it's picked. The flesh has a nice texture and a delicious flavor.

Next was the egg fruit, or canistel. It is called the egg fruit because the flesh resembles the yolk of a boiled egg. It has a delicious flavor but is somewhat dry and is used in making milk shakes and ice cream. It may be mixed with milk and a little sugar or honey, or it may be sweet enough to use with only milk to make an excellent drink.

Next, the most expensive fruit in the world, the mamey sapote. The fruit may be picked green and allowed to ripen if it is mature. The fruit will range in size from two pounds to 4 pounds. It is one of the most popular fruits of the Tropics, a very delicious and desirable fruit.

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At this time we wish to extend our heartfelt thanks to Bill Heath and Florence Mazalook of Riverview for donating the use of a part of their property for storage of our shopping carts. We now own approximately 70 carts (thanks to John Bell) which were used at the tree sale. There are now being stored at the residence of Bill and Florence in an aluminum quonset hut donated by Bob Heath and assembled by Mike Heath and Chris Banks.



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RECIPE OF THE MONTH: PAPAYA SEED DRESSING by Bea Seekins

4 Tbs fresh papaya seed (black)
 1 tsp salt
 1 tsp dry mustard
 1 cup cider vinegar
 2 cups safflower oil
 2 Tbs honey
 1 small onion (optional)

Blend dry ingredients and vinegar. Gradually add oil and onion. Add seeds and blend 30 seconds. Good on fruit or salad greens.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I would again like to thank Tom Economou for another excellent program. His annual visit provides our membership with the experience of seeing many rare and unusual tropical fruits (certainly rare in Tampa) otherwise only seen as pictures in a book, and you can't taste the pages! (I must add that a couple of those fruits probably tasted like those pages, but then we'd never know that were it not for Tom!) See you next year, Tom!

As typically happens when one has to thank a huge list of people, someone was inadvertently omitted. I would like to thank Bruce Beasor for his helping to organize the cashiers at our tree sale last month. I also would like to again thank John Bell for his handling of the difficult and time-consuming task of acquiring and renovating about 75 shopping carts for our sale. Keep up the good work, John, we need more members like you.

I would like to welcome all of our new members. It was great to see you at our last meeting, and we hope you will become active members. There is much to be gained from our organization, but there is much truth in the old cliché, "you get what you put in". See you at the next meeting!

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SEED SAVERS EXCHANGE

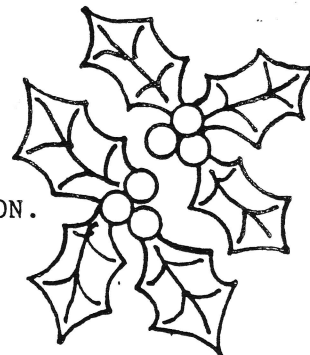
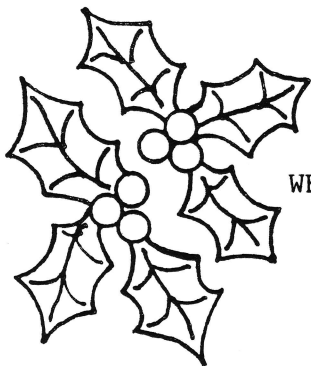
If you are interested in growing heirloom varieties of vegetables and garden plants, you may be interested in membership in the Seed Savers Exchange, an organization dedicated to the preservation of nonhybrid cultivars (this is one of various organizations throughout the world having a goal of maintaining the Earth's natural genetic diversity).

For information, write to the Seed Savers Exchange, 203 Rural Avenue, Decorah, Iowa 52101. 1985 membership is \$10.00. They have available a computerized list of all nonhybrid seeds offered by 230 companies in the U.S. and Canada (over 6000 varieties), entitled the "Garden Seed Inventory", which sells for \$12.00 soft cover, and \$20.00 hard cover.

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WE WOULD LIKE TO WISH EVERYONE A BERRY, BERRY HOLIDAY SEASON.

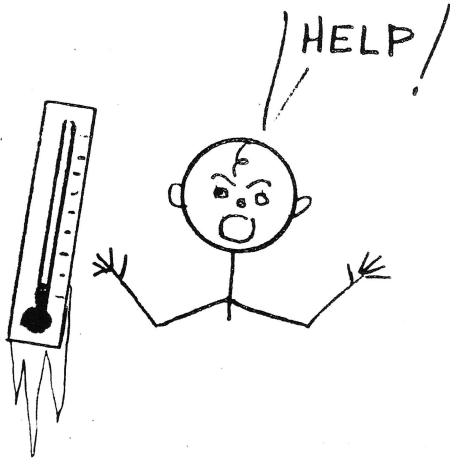
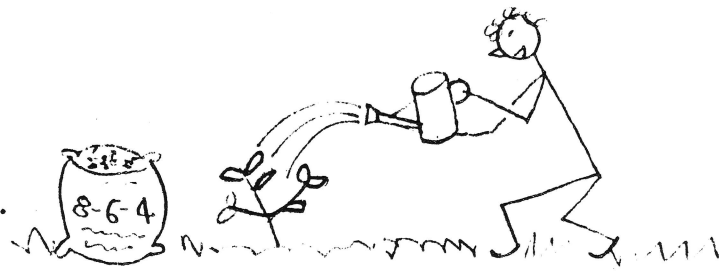
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WINTER LAMENT

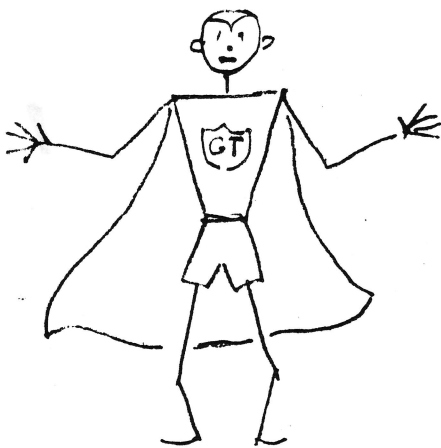
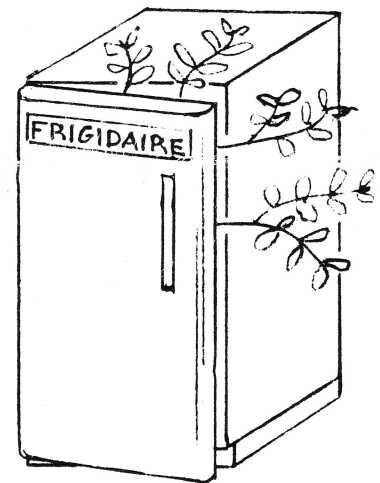
I think that I shall never see
A carambola on my tree.
The winters have all been so bad,
They've killed whatever trees I've had.

So every year I plant anew,
fertilize and water too.
Then I wait and hope and pray
The trees will bear, the fruit will stay.



I know full well that old Jack Frost
Could not care less, how much they cost.
What can I do, what shall I try
Before I kiss my trees goodbye?

Can guava trees survive our winter air
If climatized a week in my Frigidaire?
Who can help me solve my plight,
And keep the frost off through the night?



What to do when the temperature's low?
Ask Stan DeFreitas, he should know!
At our next meeting, December ten, **
Let's hope it doesn't freeze til then!

(** Actually, it's eight, but that didn't rhyme-
We hope you get this newsletter on time!!)

BANANA BLOSSOM RECIPES

If you attended our last meeting, you will recall that Tom Economou reported that banana blossoms are edible, and are relished by various Asian and Pacific cultures. Al Hendry kindly sent us several recipes; here are two from the Phillipines:

Banana Blossom Guinataan

2 banana blossoms
1 cup pure coconut milk
2 Tbs vinegar
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sliced tomatoes
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sliced onion
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 Tbs cooking oil
Salt & pepper to taste

Remove the tough covering of the blossoms; slice thin crosswise. Add 2 Tbs coarse salt and squeeze off bitter juice. Rinse in water and squeeze dry. Set aside. Heat oil in skillet and saute garlic until light brown. Add onion and then tomatoes. Cook about 3 minutes. Add banana blossoms and vinegar and bring to a boil without stirring. Simmer for another 3 minutes. Add salt & pepper and stir. Continue cooking until banana blossom is tender. Add coconut milk and turn off heat.

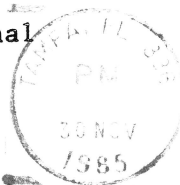
Banana Blossom Kilawin

2 banana blossoms
1 cup shelled shrimp
4 cloves garlic, chopped
1 sliced onion
4 Tbs lard
2 cups shrimp juice
Vinegar, salt & pepper to taste

Prepare banana blossoms as above. Mix shrimp, onion, and vinegar. Saute the garlic in the lard, add the shrimp mixture. Add shrimp juice and continue cooking. Then add blossoms. Turn over constantly until tender. Season with salt & pepper. Serve hot.

* * *

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