



NEWSLETTER

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

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Arnold Stark
Lillian Stark

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Tampa FL 33610

PRESIDENT: Arnold Stark CHAPTER MAIL ADDRESS: PO Box 260363, Tampa FL 33685
(including renewals)

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

NEXT MEETING MAY 11, 1986

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 DR. DON MAYNARD will speak on GROWING
SPECIALTY VEGETABLES IN FLORIDA. Dr.
Maynard received his Doctor's degree
in Massachusetts and is presently involved
in the study of unusual vegetables at the
Gulf Coast Research & Education Center in
Bradenton which is an extension of Univer-
sity of Florida. His talk, punctuated with
slides, should be very interesting.

NEW MEMBERS:

William & Elinor Wilson, 185 - 27th Ave. N., St. Petersburg FL 33704
Rhea Hurwitz, 219 Columbia, Tampa FL 33606

* * *

IS TAMPA A SLEEPY BACKWATER TOWN?

Apparently Steve Otto of the Tampa Tribune thinks our club is symptomatic of Tampa's failure to be destined as "the next great city", since we are one of the "life is slow around here" clubs as mentioned in his recent column. If he is such a swinger, we invite him to swing in one of our rare fruit trees anytime he so desires; he'll probably find it a most fitting habitat. Perhaps if he were to attend one of our meetings, he could learn how to properly shovel manure without getting it all over himself. Simultaneously, he could extricate his foot from his mouth, while the rest of us continue to use his column as mulch in our gardens. Ours may not be life in the fast lane, but we do have a grape time. We are sending him a copy of this newsletter to broaden his horizons.

• I don't know if this is further proof that we are not destined to be the next great city or not, but this week someone gave me a copy of the new "Tampa's Guide to Clubs and Organizations," which is being put out by the Friends of the Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library to raise money.

I'm not suggesting that life is slow around here, but you wonder when we have groups like: "The Aladdin Story Tellers League," "Just Us Social Club," "Mayflower Descendents" and the "Rare Fruit Council International."

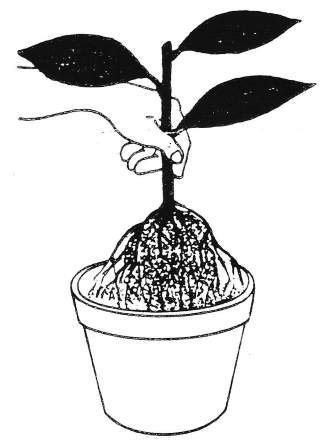
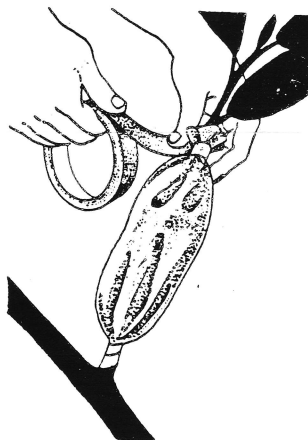
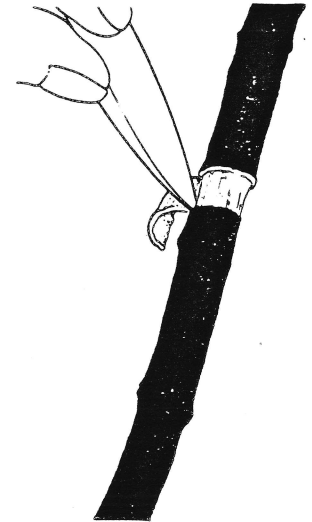
EXCERPT FROM A RECENT STEVE OTTO
COLUMN IN THE TAMPA TRIBUNE

AIR LAYERING

Air layering is a method by which branches, while still attached to a plant, are induced to form roots. It is one of the oldest artificial techniques of propagation. It is reputed to have been used in China over 4000 years ago. Because of its use in French gardening in the seventeenth century, air layering is also referred to as marcottage.

The method is very simple and the materials needed are few, a sharp knife, moist sphagnum moss, polyethylene plastic, aluminum foil and tape.

A suitable branch on a preferred tree is selected, one quarter inch in diameter or larger. The branch is girdled just below a dormant bud, removing the bark and cambium down to the hard wood. This will entirely interrupt the sap flow and if no further action is taken, the branch will die. The wound may now be treated with a rooting hormone such as rootone. The wound is next covered with sphagnum moss which is the preferred rooting medium because it holds water, is well aerated and is readily manipulated. Soak the moss for several hours so it is completely saturated. Squeeze the moss into a ball to remove excess moisture and shape the ball around the wound. Next wrap the moss ball with a square of polyethylene and secure the ends of the plastic with tape. The plastic may now be covered with aluminum foil to keep out the light. It is important to ensure that rain water cannot run down into the moss and waterlog it. So, wrap the tape around the ends of the plastic and foil, overlapping on to the stem.



The cover applied this way will retain moisture, maintain a warm environment and allow gases to permeate the moss.

Development of roots will take from four weeks to several months. When roots are well established, the branch may be severed immediately below the cover, which is removed to expose the roots. Most of the moss is removed and the branch may be set in a suitable sized pot. Firm the soil and water well. Also, prune the entire branch by at least 1/3 to prevent expiration of moisture. Keep moist and shaded until the branch shows vigorous growth.

* * *

CONDOLENCES...

The post office has notified us of the passing away of one of our members, William R. Edson, of Tampa. Those of us who knew him will miss him; our condolences to his family and friends.

What did the King of Siam
say?

Anna, you're the apple of
my eye.

* * *

Why did the erstwhile King
of Barbados always win at
poker?

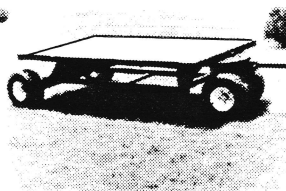
Answer: He always had an
acerola up his sleeve.

* * *

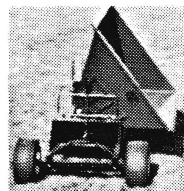
We would have had some more
jokes this month but we
guess these four jokers
aren't writing with a full
deck. We could only think
of a pear. Orange you
glad we're plum out?
There'll be morus next month.

* * *

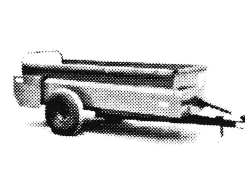
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IN NARROW ROWS AND IN SHORT TURNS.



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RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Vegetable Spread from Bea Seekins

Beat 8oz cream or cottage cheese with 1tsp cumin. Add 1c shredded
carrot, 1c finely chopped cucumber, 1c chopped celery, 1c chopped
green pepper. Mix. If necessary, add sour cream to make proper
consistency for spreading. Chill.

HOSPITALITY TABLE:

Priscilla Lachut: Papaya Muffins; Cactus Pear Jelly
Bruce Beasor: Mulberries
Lottice Shipley: Guavas & Cream Cheese; Guava Puree & Crackers
George Merrill: Fruit Juice
Bea Seekins: Pear Cactus Leaves; Vegetable Spread; Aloha Spread & Crackers

* * *

A Message from the President

I would like to extend a sincere and warm thank you to our members Joe Constantine, Herb Hill, Jim Mercer, and Walter Vines, all of whom provided us with excellent tutorage during our grafting and air-layering workshop. I am sure we all gained much from their many years of experience. Hopefully, if we all practice what we were taught, we too will gain some expertise.

I also wish to thank all of you who have helped with our monthly plant drawing and hospitality table. It is your support and effort that makes each meeting a success. Keep up the good work, and to the rest of our members: these are 2 bandwagons you should jump upon with both feet. YOUR RFCI NEEDS YOU!

See you at the next meeting!

Accolades from the Garden Guide...

The club has received a very nice letter from member Mary Jane McSwain, who is the Garden Guide Editor, and a photo-journalist for the Daytona Beach News Journal. Her letter begins, "Dear Rare Fruit Friends...", and she states that she greatly enjoys our newsletter, and sometimes uses some of our material in her weekly column; she believes we are all her "kind of gardener". Thank you for your letter Mary, and we also hope you get to attend a meeting soon. We would appreciate having more members from your area, and would appreciate an announcement on your page. When the time comes, we'd also appreciate a notice about our annual tree sale.

 ***EDITORS' NOTE: We would greatly appreciate hearing from more**
 **of our members regarding your opinions about our newsletter. **
 **Your contributions would also be most welcome. **

TREASURER'S REPORT: SUMMARY OF FISCAL YEAR 4/85-3/86

by Irene Rubenstein

INCOME:

Membership Dues.....	1510.90
Plant Exchange.....	436.20
Tree Sale.....	19926.10
Book Sales.....	193.30
Interest.....	1889.58
Miscellaneous.....	120.82

TOTAL.....	24076.90

EXPENDITURES:

Meetings.....	1131.94
Newsletter.....	1338.85
Seffner Project.....	178.82
Book Purchases.....	498.89
Tree Sale.....	13846.53
Miscellaneous.....	669.28

TOTAL.....	17664.31

Income beyond expenses were placed into our savings accounts for future club activities.

NOTE: Membership dues pays for little more than the newsletter you receive every month. Were it not for our various fund-raising activities, we could afford none of our club activities! Please remember this when we ask for your assistance in our endeavors.

APRIL PLANT RAFFLE

Plant Name	Donor	Winner
Anise	Leland Terrell	Albert Greenberg
Banana, Cavendish	H. Seekins	Pearl Nelson
Banana, Cavendish	H. Seekins	Lloyd Shipley
Banana, Cavendish	H. Seekins	Doris Lee
Banana, Cavendish	H. Seekins	Mary Jo Cross
Grape, Cowart	Will Unruh	George Merrill
Grape, Dixie	Will Unruh	Stark
Grape, Dixie	Will Unruh	Liz Jackson
Grape, Southland	Will Unruh	Doris Lee
Grape, Triumph?	L. Shipley	?
Grape, Cowart?	L. Shipley	Liz Jackson
Governor's Plum	Pearl Nelson	Alice Beasor
Yellow Guava	Pearl Nelson	Helen Cornwell
Tamarind	Stark	Walter Vines
Yellow Passion Fruit	Stark	Mary Jo Cross
Avocado	E. Freedma	Mary Jo Cross
Pomegranate	H. Hill	Mary Jo Cross
Yellow Guava	H. Hill	Mary Jo Cross
Sunflower (2)	B. Heath	K. Netscher
Sunflower (2)	B. Heath	K. Netscher
Pigeon Pea	B. Heath	K. Netscher
Fuyu Persimmon (seedling)	Paul Rubenstein	Helen Cornwell
Okinawa Peach	Paul Rubenstein	Helen Cornwell
Cattleya Guava	Walter Vines	Liz Jackson
Wild onions (5)	Stan Lachut	Bob Heath
Okinawa Peach	Paul Rubenstein	Bob Heath
Rio Grande Cherry	Bob Heath	Walter Vines
Loquat	?	Mary Jo Cross
Grape, Triumph	Will Unruh	George Merrill

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

We have had a letter from Dr. John Ashford, Asst. Professor of Anthropology at the College of Charleston. He has been doing research on the distribution of the baobab tree, *Adansonia digitata*, in the Caribbean and Florida. He requests that any of our members who have any information concerning the location of baobabs in Florida, or other relative information, please contact him at the Dept. of Sociology & Anthropology, College of Charleston, Charleston, South Carolina 29424.

We frequently receive requests for information about the availability and/or cultural requirements of various fruits and vegetables. Most recently, we have received several requests for information about growing methods and production of kiwi fruits in Florida. If you have any knowledge and/or experience with this matter, please send written information to the editors for inclusion in future newsletters. Thank you.

* * *

For those of you who didn't get the poker joke (and we can't blame you for that), an acerola is a Barbados cherry.

* * *

TROPICAL ROOT CROPS

Tropical root crops are becoming big agribusiness in Florida, especially in the Homestead area of Dade County. Our country's increasing Latin and Oriental populations, as well as an increasing willingness to use more diverse produce in the American diet, have made boniato, yuca, malanga, and taro common sights in many markets. Another vegetable increasing in popularity is the calabaza or Cuban pumpkin, which is also commercially grown in South Florida. All of these vegetables can be grown in our area, and potential local markets are certainly present. Perhaps some members might think of starting a new commercial crop!

* * *

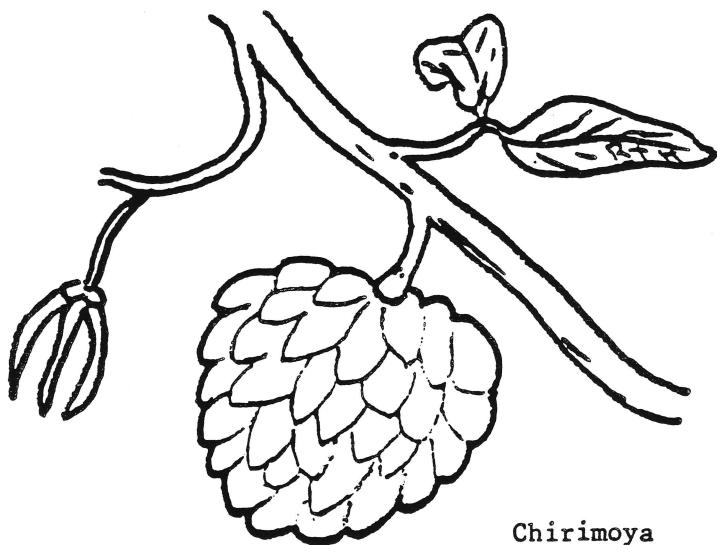
Most people do not take much notice of the mention of tropical fruits and vegetables in literature or other reading matter. Such is not the case among RFCI members, whose minds are ever ripe for the fructiferous word. Paul Rubenstein recently read Mark Twain's second book, "Roughing It", (1872) about his trip to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii). Here are a couple of excerpts:

We had an abundance of fruit in Honolulu, of course. Oranges, pineapples, bananas, strawberries, lemons, limes, mangoes, guavas, melons, and a rare and curious luxury called the chirimoya, which is deliciousness itself. Then there is the tamarind. I thought tamarinds were made to eat, but that was probably not the idea. I ate several, and it seemed to me that they were rather sour that year. They pursed up my lips, till they resembled the stem-end of a tomato, and I had to take my sustenance through a quill for twenty-four hours. They sharpened my teeth till I could have shaved with them, and gave them a "wire edge" that I was afraid would stay; but a citizen said "no, it will come off when the enamel does"—which was comforting, at any rate. I found, afterward, that only strangers eat tamarinds—but they only eat them once.

We rode through one orange grove that had ten thousand trees in it! They were all laden with fruit.

At one farm-house we got some large peaches of excellent flavor. This fruit, as a general thing, does not do well in the Sandwich Islands. It takes a sort of almond shape, and is small and bitter. It needs frost, they say, and perhaps it does; if this be so, it will have a good opportunity to go on needing it, as it will not be likely to get it. The trees from which the fine fruit I have spoken of came had been planted and replanted *sixteen times*, and to this treatment the proprietor of the orchard attributed his success.

We passed several sugar plantations—new ones and not very extensive. The crops were, in most cases, third rattoons. [NOTE.—The first crop is called "plant cane"; subsequent crops which spring from the original roots, without replanting, are called "rattoons."] Almost everywhere on the island of Hawaii sugar-cane matures in twelve months, both rattoons and plant, and although it ought to be taken off as soon as it tassels, no doubt, it is not absolutely necessary to do it until about four months afterward. In Kona, the average yield of an acre of ground is *two tons* of sugar, they say. This is only a moderate yield for these islands, but would be astounding for Louisiana and most other sugar-growing countries. The plantations in Kona being on pretty high ground—up among the light and frequent rains—no irrigation whatever is required.



Chirimoya

From a Past Issue of the Miami Chapter RFCI Newsletter:

DOES THE SOIL NEED TESTING?

Whenever a plant appears to be dying, a great many homeowners inquire about having soil tested in the mistaken belief that the decline of the plant resulted from a lack of nutrients in the soil. After growing well for a long period of time, however, a plant will not suddenly wilt and die due to malnutrition. It would be very rare to find a garden soil so low in nutrients that it could not support plant life. In fact, more plants are killed from over-fertilization than from not enough. A number of factors can cause plant failures which are not revealed by soil testing.

Poor drainage, particularly during wet weather, is one of the major causes of plant failure. Wet soils contain little oxygen which is needed in greater amounts than other elements for healthy plant growth. When a plant's root system is deprived of oxygen, it can no longer perform its function of absorbing water and nutrients from the soil. Left uncorrected, such waterlogged soil will ultimately kill the root system and subsequently the entire plant will die. Conversely, during periods of drought, plants need additional water for survival.

Soil tests also do not indicate the presence of insects or disease organisms. Plants should be carefully examined for signs of insect damage, indicated by holes in the leaves caused by chewing insects or by yellowing of leaves from sucking type insects. Brown spots on leaves and branches would be an indication of a fungus problem, which can be controlled by the application of a copper fungicide.

The indiscriminate use of herbicides or weed killers will often result in the sudden death of plants. Unfortunately, soil testing does not reveal this information either.

Infestation of plants by microscopic wormlike animals, called nematodes, would not be revealed by ordinary soil testing. Nematodes damage plants by feeding on the root systems. Affected roots appear shriveled, blackened and stubby, and there generally will be an absence of white feeder roots.

The next time you have a soil problem which you think might be related to lack of fertilizer, please examine your growing conditions (water, drainage, insects, disease and nematodes) to determine whether any of the above mentioned factors are causing the problem. If none of these are revelant, then you may consider having your soil tested.

Soil tests performed at your County Extension office indicate the pH (acidity or alkalinity) of the soil. Generally, South Florida soils are alkaline, and it is necessary that an acidifying agent be added to the soil. Such acidifying agents are sulfur, iron sulfate, aluminum sulfate and organic material.

* * *

FLORIDA NATIVE FRUITING TREES No. 7ELDERBERRY

Member Honeysuckle Family (Caprifoliaceae)

The elderberry is a small tree 10 to 15 feet in height with an open, irregular growth. The wood is soft and brittle and contains a pithy center which may be pushed out to make a wooden tube. The tube so formed has been used for spiles in tapping sugar maple trees and for making whistles.

The tree is very rapid growing, sending up long green sprouts in the spring which produce the berries. It has attractive pinnate leaves with from five to seven leaflets.

Tiny white flowers are borne in large saucer shaped cymes during April and May. The flowers are followed by purple-black berries 1/8" to 1/4" in diameter.

Trees are usually found in wet areas, along creek banks and drainage ditches and may be gathered in great abundance. The entire cluster may be clipped off intact and the berries stripped from their stems later at home.

Elderberries are one of nature's richest sources of Vitamin "C", far richer than citrus or tomatoes. They are very low in acid and are not palatable out of hand. However, they have few equals in the jelly department and also make excellent wine. The color is beautiful and the taste is unique.

The flowers are called Elder Blow when used in culinary arts and may be dipped in batter and fried to make an excellent fritter.



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Tampa FL 33685

Igor Stravinsky

USA
2c



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TEMPLE TERRACE, FL 33617