



NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1988

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

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(INCLUDING RENEWALS)

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

NEXT MEETING APRIL 10, 1988

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 KAYE CUDE WILL TALK ON HOW TO GROW HERBS &
SPICES AND HOW TO USE THEM. Kaye Cude is
a master gardener, a member of the Caloosa
Rare Fruit Council and publisher of "Spice
and Herb Arts". In addition, we will have
our plant raffle, refreshments and social
hour. This should be an interesting and
informative meeting.

* * *

Some Sources For Fruit Trees Mentioned By Chris Howell:

Horace Whittaker
5142 Foothills Road
Carpinteria, CA 93013 (805) 684-7246
Varieties KIWI: Hayward, Abbott, Vincent, Tewi

Bill Nelson
Pacific Tree Farm
4301 Lynwood Dr.
Chula Vista, CA 92010

from The Fruit Gardener, first quarter '88, Vol. 20, No. 1 (\$1.50):

California Rare Fruit Growers
The Fullerton Arboretum
Calif. State U. Fullerton
Fullerton, CA 92634

Seed Savers Exchange
203 Rural Ave.
Decorah, Iowa 52101
Membership \$10.00

(They also offer a computerized list of all non-hybrid seeds offered by
230 companies in Canada and the U.S., "Garden Seed Inventory", edited by
Kent Whealy - soft cover \$12.00, hard cover \$20.00.)

A TRIP TO BRAZIL by Chris Howell

Chris started his presentation with a map of South America showing Brazil and the various other countries. Brazil is larger than the continental United States but has only approximately 1/3 the population. Almost 2/3 of the country is rain forest, the Amazon Basin. The cities of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo are approximately the same distance below the equator that south Florida is above. So the plants that do well in southern Brazil should also do well in south Florida.

Chris began his visit at Rio de Janeiro, which is one of the most spectacular cities in the world. It's very picturesque overlooking the bay, and has a spectacular statue of Christ on the mountaintop, and across the bay, Sugarloaf Mountain with its cable cars. Rio is a very interesting city but also a very dangerous city, as it has the highest crime rate in South America and one of the highest crime rates in the world. It is on the coast wrapped around the bay and surrounded by mountains. In Rio they have fairs instead of fixed markets. The fairs move about and you must know where they are at any particular day in order to visit the markets. There is a large population of Orientals in the southern part of Brazil and one can see it in the neat way things are displayed in the market place. In addition to the fairs, one of the main sites to visit is the National Botanical Garden, which is one of the oldest botanical gardens in the New World, and the site of some of the oldest trees in the western hemisphere. Chris showed us a slide of a row of Royal Palm trees that were planted from seeds brought by a prisoner of the French from European Royal Palms, and a slide of very large clove trees, the seeds of which were also provided by the same prisoner. The ones presently in the garden are probably third generation trees. Cloves are a relative of the guava, allspice, bay rum, jaboticaba, surinam cherry, etc. Clove is also one of the more expensive spices. These horticultural gardens are very impressive, in that they have a lot of the native plants and trees of Brazil, arranged in different areas according to the parts of the country from which they come.

The next slide showed some extremely large trees with orchids and bromeliads growing all over them. What is unusual about these trees is that they are mangoes. The trunks of some of these trees are 8 feet in circumference and of course, they are very old, being among some of the earliest plantings in the gardens.

He also showed us a slide of the Victoria Amazonica, the giant water lily with lily pads as much as six feet in diameter, from the Amazon in Brazil. They curl up around the edges and are big enough to support a small child in the water. Brazil is known as the origin of many different kinds of fruits, the grumichama, the surinam cherry, cherry of the Rio Grande, catley guava, jaboticaba and many other interesting fruit that have never been exported or introduced, as well as many indigenous species occurring in small areas around Rio. Rio is on the coast and separated from the interior by a chain of mountains, which has acted as a barrier to isolate many of the fruit trees that developed, unique and only found in these areas, and many of these are endangered because of the encroachment of the development of Rio.

Chris showed us a slide of the Eugenia species that is found only along the Coca Cabana beach area and looks very similar to a catley guava, although it is a Eugenia species. Chris also showed us a slide of the jaboticaba which is probably the most famous Brazilian fruit. It is found in a town that is called Jaboticabol, where there is a horticultural experimental station. There are many forms of jaboticaba. It is relatively cold hardy and will usually grow in central Florida. It likes a lot of water, very moist growing conditions, because they grow in swamps. The seeds are polyembryonic so the fruit usually comes true from seed.

Next, we looked at the carambola, some of the many types of embryonic which are the fuzzy fruited type, the giant fruited types and one with ribs like a pumpkin. The clove is an unopened flower bud so if you harvest the clove for the spices, you'll never get any fruit. The fruit of the clove is very similar to the java plumb with the exception of the aroma of clove. Growing cloves is a significant industry in

Brazil and Granada, which are the only two commercial sources of cloves in the western hemisphere. Chris indicated that they brought back about 200 seeds to plant but only got about 10% germination because the seeds bruise so easily. In addition to that, the birds are attracted by the sprouting seeds and dig them up so they lost quite a few to birds before they found out what was happening. There are a few clove trees in southern Florida at this time and since they grow in southern Brazil, they would probably grow satisfactorily in central Florida.

A close relative of the Brazil nut is the paradise nut or the lecyphis. It is sometimes called the monkey pot. The nuts are better flavored than the Brazil nut we know. The ones from southern Brazil produce the larger pot, which may be as large as a football. There is a tree growing in Val Harbor which has flowered several times but not fruited, maybe because it needs cross pollination. Another variety of lecyphis introduced into south Florida called the little monkey pot, has fruited in Boynton Beach for the last five years. This tree was about 10 years old when it came into bearing, whereas the true Brazil nut may take as much as 60 years to start producing nuts. Until about 10 or 15 years ago, all Brazil nuts were collected from wild trees, and about that time Brazil began planting grafted varieties in groves, but it will still be a long time before they come into bearing.

As you travel through the mountains from Rio, it is spectacularly different. One thing they found interesting in southern Brazil as they traveled along the road was the large number of jack fruit, which is not native but had been introduced into Brazil. Since the jackfruit were growing on the sides of the mountains and hills, and the temperature there gets a little colder, it may be that the jackfruit is not as cold sensitive as has been indicated. The jack fruit comes in two forms, the firm form which is usually preferred by the American palate, and the slimier form which is sweeter. There are several name varieties of both the firm and slimy form, which are being tried out at this point. Chris suggested that the jack fruit may be another species that we should try in this area, particularly in more protected places.

Further up in the mountainous areas where the temperatures are cooler, some of the temperate fruit are grown. One of these is the pecan which grows up in the mountains but is not being grown in the horticultural gardens in Rio. Also there are several species of Araucaria which bear edible fruit or nuts. The araucaria contains the familiar Norfolk Island pine and the monkey puzzle tree. The monkey puzzle tree bears an edible nut which is sold in the markets in southern Brazil. The actually dominate the coniferous forests of southern Brazil, and many mountain slopes in Chile.

The next slide showed a market in Sao Paulo which is a little further south in Brazil from Rio, and there was an enormous array of fruit and vegetables on display, many of which are imported to satisfy the needs of the many ethnic groups which inhabit southern Brazil.

The next slide showed the area around Quito, Ecuador in the Andes Mountains. Ecuador was interesting because an awful lot of produce was brought into the capitol city from the low lands and the coastal areas where most of the tropical fruit is grown. So in the markets at Quito you can find things like the Amazon tree grape, South American sapotes and others which are all from the South American tropics. The Quito area is rather humid but it is also very cold and this is the area where the Amazon River is forming. At this elevation they grow the babaco, the papaya relative which is now becoming commercially important in New Zealand. The babaco is a papaya relative but it is definitely not a papaya, it is sour and has no seeds and none of the musky flavor that is familiar with papayas. Ecuador is one of the major suppliers to the world. Chris showed us a slide of some of the fruit they had collected in Quito; the pineapple, three kinds of passion fruit, and many other tropical fruit which are imported from the low lands, including the Brazilian tree grape which is a fig relative, a fruit which is the largest of the Eugenia group, which is very sour but makes an excellent beverage, a Brazil nut called a sacho mango, and the rollinia which is an annona relative which should do well in central Florida; it doesn't like high winds but it will stand some cold. They tend to keep flowering

no matter how cold it gets. They may lose all their leaves but they will keep right on flowering. And the camu camu, which is the other source of Vitamin C comparable to the ascerola or Barbados cherry, and which is another relative of the jaboticaba. These fruit are all from the Amazon but you also find fruit like the sweet granadilla and the pepino, which is expected to be the next big fruit in California after the kiwi, all of which come from higher altitudes. The pepino is a relative of the potato, tomato, eggplant and peppers, which are all in the solanum family. It has very small seeds, sometimes almost seedless, and resembles a honeydew melon. Coming from higher altitudes, it may require a cool summer to fruit properly and should be grown in a container because it is probably subject to nematodes just like tomatoes and eggplant. Pepinos, where they are available in the grocery stores, may be \$3.00 to \$4.00 a piece, so it might be a fruit that's well worth looking into.

Species of raspberries and blackberries also grow in the mountain regions and they seem to be very high quality fruit and quite large also, being from 1" to 1½" long. In Ecuador they saw many temperate fruits, notably several varieties of plum, as well as the true tropical cherry, the capulin cherry, which is considered to be an improvement on our northern black cherry. The fruit is large and sweet, but seems to have a bitter taste in the skin; but they're growing two varieties in California which are very sweet and both of which should do well in central Florida because the capulin cherry has fruited in Florida in the past.

The South American Institute for Tropic Agriculture is in Costa Rica and has the largest plasma resources of many varieties of tropical fruit. In the market in the city of San Juan, they found the naranjilla, the tomatilla and other fruit very similar to the tomato, only much sweeter, and also other varieties of the naranjilla. All of these varieties should do well in central Florida because they grow up in the mountains but they are very subject to nematodes. They might be grafted on to the ornamental potato which is a tree form of the solanum and produces a very good root system which is nematode resistant, or grow them in containers in nematode-free soil. A related fruit is the tree tomato. It comes in purple, red and yellow forms and is a major commercial crop in New Zealand and in California, but like the naranjilla, it is very subject to nematodes. They're imported quite extensively in California, and do well in central Florida.

They also found the varieties of white sapote, *casimira edulis* and *casimira tetrameria*, *Casimira edulis* and *casimira tetrameria*, the wooly leaf white sapote, are both found throughout Central America, Mexico, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, etc., and are fairly cold resistant, being a highland fruit, and do very well in central Florida. The white sapote is a commercial crop in California and you occasionally see the fruit in the markets here. The *edulis* has a pure white flesh but the wooly leafed sapote has a yellowish tint to its flesh and is usually more flavorful than the white fleshed *edulis*.

If anyone goes to the fruit conference this summer in California, they should see the major cherimoya growing in the gardens in the United States plantations. Or if you find cherimoyas in the grocery stores here, they probably have come from California. They also grow fejoas or pineapple guavas there commercially in plantations. Fejoas are a fruit which will grow very well in central Florida. Also, some very excellent selections have been made in California but we haven't had the benefit of these selections in Florida yet. Fejoas are also commercially grown in New Zealand.

California also grows the kiwi, as do New Zealand, and Chile is now getting into kiwi production and until about five or six years ago, there were no good varieties of kiwis that would bear dependably south of the Los Angeles area, but the California Department of Agriculture has developed a variety called Vincent, which was a low chill variety and which was introduced to southern California. A man named Whittaker went to the Canary Islands which has a climate similar to San Diego, and found some kiwis that were growing and fruiting there. He brought them back to California under the name of "tewi". Both of these varieties are being tried in Florida but Chris hasn't been advised of any that have flowered yet.

MARCH PLANT RAFFLE

<u>Plant</u>	<u>Donor</u>	<u>Winner</u>
Mysore Raspberry	George Riegler	C. Gomez Sanchez
Grumichama	Heath	Janet Conard
Pineapple	"	M. Elliott
Downy Myrtle	"	?
Kwaimuk	Stark	C. Gomez Sanchez
Kwaimuk	"	K. Netscher
Jaboticaba	RFCI	Frank Honeycutt
Orlando Seedless Grape	RFCI	B. Seekins
Chayote 2	Beasor	Heath
Chayote 2	"	?
Chayote 2	"	?
Chayote 3	"	Monica Brunties
Rototillo Pepper	?	J. Murrie

What tree is always complaining?

Could it be the crab apple?

* * * * *

BERRY IMPORTANT ACTION

The Club is seriously involved in a search for a location where we may build a clubhouse. We need the help of all of our membership in this search. Perhaps among our group is one who knows of a good site that is available for a reasonable price. Or one who knows someone who might donate some land for a good cause. In any event, with the membership aware of our needs, we are sure to find something soon. Below is the criteria to help you in our search:

1. Two to five acres
2. Centrally located
3. Not over \$20,000.00
4. Properly zoned

Two acres or more will allow room for a clubhouse, parking, greenhouse, work shed and planting area. This is what we have been working for and this kind of move is certainly a good investment.

* * *

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

We need members to fill these jobs: 1) Publicity chairperson to work with local news media on publicity for our tree sale, and 2) A program chairperson to arrange for speakers or other educational programs at meetings. If you can help on these, see me or other board members.

* * *

WE LOST IT!

We would like to apologize for not having last month's hospitality table listing. We lost it. Thanks to all of you who supplied the delicious goodies and if you let us know who you were and what you brought, we will try not to lose the reconstructed list for the next newsletter.

* * *

Cornfucius say, "Oh Shucks!"

* * *

THANKS. . .

Thanks to Janet Conard for the praying mantis egg cases she made available to members at our last meeting.

Thanks to Lewis Maxwell for the yellow gladiolus bulbs.

Thanks to Chris Howell for the passiflora seeds.

* * *

JOKES!!

Where has Mom bin? Looking for PawPaw.

*

I think I have some ill trees.

Why do you say that?

A horticulturist told me I have a horse chestnut and a sycamore.

*

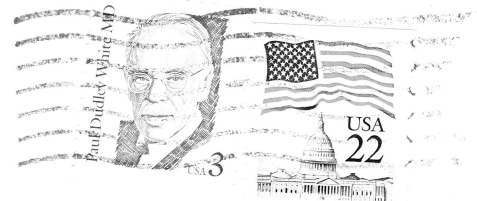
A skunk believed in reincarnation. When he died he came back as a muskmellon.

*



Brazil Nut

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P. JUDSON NEWCOMBE
314 DEER PARK AVE.
TEMPLE TERRACE, FL 33617