



# NEWSLETTER

MAY 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 . . . . . MAY 8, 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 . . . . . GENE JOYNER WILL GENIALLY JOIN US AGAIN  
FOR A GENUINELY JOVIAL GEM OF A JAUNT  
THRU THE WORLD OF LYCHEES, LONGANS,  
MACADAMIAS, CARAMBOLAS AND LOQUATS.  
WON'T YOU JOIN US TOO?

## NEW MEMBERS:

Chris Moyer, 1555 Pennwood Cir. N., Clearwater, FL 33516  
Anjan Chowdhury, 112 Peninsular Dr., Land O' Lakes, FL 34639

## DUES:

Dues were due last month. If you have not paid by this meeting, you will not receive the next newsletter, you will be dropped from the membership roll, and all your fruit trees will die.

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Our annual fruit tree sale will be October 16. Lots of work to be done.  
Volunteers?

The annual grape field day is July 20, from 9:00 - 2:00 at CFREC - Leesburg.  
It's worth a trip for grape growers.

The Palm Beach Chapter RFCI will hold a fruit tree sale at Mounts Garden,  
531 Military Trail, West Palm Beach, on May 14, 1988. The Garden is a great  
place to visit!

Gene Joyner, our next speaker, will arrive early at the meeting room, around  
1:00 p.m., to answer any questions we may have. It's a great opportunity to  
talk to an expert fruit grower.

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## HERBS & SPICES AND HOW TO GROW THEM By Kaye Cude

Kaye Cude started her talk with a discussion of how to use herbs because there's no point in growing them if you're not going to use them. The biggest incentive to using herbs is learning how to prepare them because once you have them prepared and in your kitchen, you will use them. This applies especially to ginger root, which must be properly prepared to keep. Her first warning was, "Don't put it in the refrigerator." Whenever ginger root is cooled below 55<sup>0</sup>, it begins to deteriorate. One way to prepare ginger is to run it through the puree cycle on a food processor. Put it in a jar and cover it with wine, which will help preserve it. It will keep quite a while this way and it is very easy to use, in that you simply open the jar and scoop out what you need, already pureed for adding to a recipe. Nor is it necessary to peel it before it is processed. Properly planted ginger is clean, as it actually grows on top of the soil. So when you plant your ginger, do not bury it or it will rot. Simply scoop out the space for the bottom of the ginger to lay in and place it on top of the soil, paying attention to the following rules:

- 1) Grow it in deep shade.
- 2) Provide much water, never allowing it to dry out.
- 3) Provide a lot of food.

It may be grown in the ground or in a container. In either case, you need about 12" of good rich compost mixed with fertilizer and a little lime. A little soapy water or other wetting agent will help to wet the soil and retain moisture. Also there is a need for manure in the soil to act as a conditioner. On top of the compost and manure, add a couple inches of a good rich soil to plant the ginger in. And for those who are interested in growing ginger, now is the time to plant it because the eyes on the rhizomes are ready to sprout, and as soon as the temperature conditions are right, the rhizomes will send up a shoot from each eye and roots down into the soil. After two and a half to three months, the rhizomes have developed into good usable ginger. After about five months, the new ginger begins to become woody, which is when it is ready to dry. At that point, you need to withhold the water and let the rhizomes dry for three to six weeks. Up to the time you start to dry it, the soil must never become dry. It should always remain moist. Ginger will even take a certain amount of flooding, but when you get ready to harvest it, you need to let it dry out in the soil for three to six weeks.

Many plants won't take any flooding but ginger and many other plants will, particularly if they are in the shade and if the water is moving. If the water is still and in the sun, you can expect to boil the plants. Still water laying in the sun can get very hot.

A flower on edible ginger is very rare. Ginger will probably bloom very seldom unless it is properly planted and properly grown. And when it does bloom it will not set seeds. Edible ginger has a long narrow leaf, while your shell ginger and ornamental gingers have a much wider leaf. Kaye indicated that as far as she knows, none of the gingers are toxic; they all may be eaten. She has never found any information to indicate that any of the gingers are toxic.

There are several other cultivars besides the edible ginger, *zingiber officinale*, that are also edible. They are also used but the edible ginger, *zingiber officinale*, is the best, and the one commonly referred to as ginger.

Cardamom is also a ginger and the leaf can be used as a cardamom seasoning. The leaf can be pulverized in a food processor or it may be used dried.

Galangale is a cultivar of *alpinia zerumbet*, which is the shell ginger, and may be eaten.

When we refer to the non-edible gingers, we are not talking about toxicity but they may be bitter or very small, or have some other adverse quality.

Central Florida is a wonderful area for growing ginger because we have enough cold to eliminate the pests that ravage the ginger plants in areas further south, such as Costa Rica and also enough cold to allow the gingers to go dormant, which they normally do in the winter. Kaye indicates that she plants her ginger much too close together and then harvests every other one. Each eye on the ginger root grows into a bulb which is very hot but very delicious and not woody, although this hot is different from the hot of a red pepper because it doesn't linger like pepper does. Of course when you cut off the bulb, you destroy the growing eye and that is why she plants them close together so she can harvest every other eye.

Now is the ideal time to plant ginger because the number of light hours and temperature are right for the sprouting of the eyes, but because of the dry weather it is vitally important that the ginger be watered frequently.

Ginger should be harvested after about five months so if you start growing it now, you may harvest it at the end of September. To harvest it, we should let it dry out for three to four weeks without watering, which is easy if you have it in a pot; you can bring it indoors.

A delicious dessert can be made with ginger and vanilla ice milk. Puree about a quarter of a cup of ginger and mix it with a quart of ice milk, and then re-freeze it. It makes a delicious dessert.

At this point, Kaye went on to other herbs, starting with basil. To prepare basil, she suggests chopping the basil leaves in a food processor or blender with a little water and then freezing it. Freeze it in ice cubes so that when you need it, you can use an ice cube. This is a better way of preserving basil than drying because in drying, a lot of the flavor is lost. Ideally, herbs should be used fresh. It's helpful if you know what you're going to cook in the evening and go out in the morning to pick the herbs for the dinner meal.

However, if you are using your herbs dry, the best way to use them is to add them to some of the liquid on the side while you're cooking the remainder of the dish. As the meal is cooking, the herbs will be marinating in the liquid and then may be added five or ten minutes before cooking is complete. In that way, the herbs do not take over but you do have a lot of good flavor. Likewise, with fresh herbs, add them just before you remove the pot from the stove to the table to provide the most flavor from the herbs. Also, remember not to prepare too much of your herbs ahead of time because the best place to preserve the herbs is on the plant. An example is the all spice tree where you may use the leaves in lieu of the seeds. Just pick them fresh and run them through the blender before adding.

Comfrey is another herb that grows very well here. It needs shade and a lot of water and will get quite tall and is a beautiful plant. And don't worry about any stories you hear about comfrey causing cancer because the latest studies indicate that you would have to drink four cups of comfrey tea a day for over 140 years to expect to get cancer.

Water celery is another plant that is supposed to have some toxicity but it's been reported that its toxicity is about the same as carrots. Water celery is a good ground cover, is cold hardy and spreads very rapidly. If someone wants to get it started, you'll soon have enough for everyone. It has a leaf similar to celery, and at times during the year, it has a flavor similar to celery. It does its best in wet, boggy situations.

Some people have a problem with fungus on their herbs. Kaye suggests if you have this problem, you might try spraying the plants with water about 11:00 in the morning where they'll have time to dry off before dark, and use a strong spray to wash the leaves. This seems to remove something from the leaves and tends to prevent the fungus from growing. She indicates it works better than the use of a fungicide and is certainly easier to apply.

Kaye also showed us some of the plants she had brought, among which was an edible coleus which she said grows like a weed and has an oregano flavor, and since oregano doesn't grow well in the summer, the edible coleus is a good substitute.

She showed us fennel which also grows well in the summer. Fennel has a licorice flavor. Use the leaves in lieu of the seeds; just pick them fresh and run them through the blender before adding.

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## April Plant Exchange

Plant Name	Donor	Winner
Oregano	N. Gullerud	K. Netscher
Penny Royal	N. Gullerud	M. Brandeis
Orange Mint	N. Gullerud	B. Heath
Orange Mint	N. Gullerud	A. Stark
Rosemary	N. Gullerud	J. Murrie
Carambola	B. Heath	F. Honeycutt
Pineapple	B. Heath	M. Brandeis
Brazos Blackberry	J. Elliott	N. Gullerud
Brazos Blackberry	J. Elliott	N. Gullerud
Brazos Blackberry	J. Elliott	J. Murrie
Brazos Blackberry	J. Elliott	Yuku Tanaka
Brazos Blackberry	J. Elliott	?
Kwaimuk	A. Stark	F. Honeycutt
Kwaimuk	A. Stark	J. Elliott
Carissa	?	N. Gullerud

## Hospitality Table- April

Janet Conard: Banana Nut Cakes

Pearl Nelson: Persimmon Cake

Bea Seekins: Yeast Bread with Fruit Filling, Lemonade

## Hospitality Table- March

Bea Seekins: Carrot Cookies, Jarlsberg Cheese, Apple juice

Al Hendry: Tamarind

Bruce Beason: Carambola Cookies

Pearl Nelson: Zucchini Bread, Persimmon Cake

Janet Conard & Al Roberts: Pineapple Ice Cream

## Recipe of the month: Fried Orange Delight

1 3/4 cup orange juice

1 package (18 1/2 oz) orange cake mix

Oranges (about 8)

Flour

Confectioners' sugar

Flaked coconut

Blend orange juice with cake mix until smooth. Peel oranges; pull apart the sections. Dust sections lightly with flour; dip in orange mixture, coat well. Fry sections in deep hot fat (350 degrees F) until golden brown, about one minute. Drain on absorbent paper; let cool slightly. Sprinkle with powdered sugar or flaked coconut.

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Voice on the phone: "Do you have Wampees?"

Answer: "I don't think so; is that some kind of contagious disease?"

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## FRUITS THAT I AM GROWING &amp; HAVE NEVER TASTED

by Celso E. Gomez-Sanchez

I have planted several plants that somehow I acquired without knowing anything about them, but I have managed to obtain some information which I would like to share.

Che (*Cudrania tricuspidata*), also known as cudrang and silkworm thorn, is a small tree or bush originally from China from the mulberry family. The fruit is from 1 to 1.5 inches and matures in October or November in Maryland. I do not know when they ripen in Florida. The dull maroon fruit, when firm, is tasteless, but when soft and ripe like a persimmon, is supposed to be delicious. The tree can be thorny or thornless, and both male and females are needed for fruit production. I have planted two females and a male but my wife's mare severely pruned them last year and I am afraid I am going to have to wait a couple more years before they have a chance of fruiting.

Kwai Muk is a relative of the jackfruit. I won this 6" tree in the raffle at one of our monthly meetings. It is a slow growing, ornamental, tall, evergreen tree. The fruit are 1-2 in. wide with velvety, brownish, thin, tender skin full of latex when unripe. The pulp is orange-red or red, soft, subacid to acid and has a pleasant taste. It ripens from August to October in Florida. Young trees are injured at 28-30 F; adults endure 25-26, and have been killed by 20°F weather. I am going to put my tree in a big container, otherwise it does not have a chance in North Tampa.

Capulin (*prunus salicifolia*). The tree is erect and can reach 40-50 feet in height with a stout trunk. Flowers are borne in slender, pendent racemes with 1 or more leaves at the base with white petals and a tuft of yellow stamens. The fruit is aromatic, round, 1/2" to 3/4" in diameter, with red or almost black, occasionally white or yellowish color. The skin is thin, tender and the pulp is juicy, pale green of sweet or acid flavor. There is a single seed. The capulin is native of Mexico and South America. It can tolerate down to 20°F and should do well in Florida. I do not know anybody who has grown it in our area. There are several named varieties including: Huachi Grande, Werner, Harriet, Lomeli. I have planted a Lomeli and hopefully will learn about fruit quality in a couple of years.

Kerriberry. New bramble from the Kerri valley of New Zealand. It is believed to have originated in Indonesia and to be a black raspberry. Several commercial plantations exist in New Zealand and it is becoming a very popular fruit. It is grown from cuttings or seed. It requires a rich soil and plenty of water. I bought several plants from J.S. Akin in Louisiana 2 years ago but they withered and died in the Florida sun. I tried again and placed them in an area with drip irrigation but suffered the same fate. I am trying again this year but have planted them in partial shade and hope they make it. I hope that I can report on the quality of the fruit in a year or so.

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## THE INVASION OF THE BERRY SNATCHERS!

Beware! They're here! Be berry careful of what you plant in your garden! It may have come from out there! Seeds from another glycosmos have invaded us! They grow into grape imitators of other fruits.

My name is Eugenia Cherry. I come from Surinam, where the berry snatchers have taken over. I'm so blue. They have boysened my homeland. Boy, am mysore! Dew you beleaf what happened? The people **had** to huckle under. A straw-vote was taken by the elders and I was selected because I am so brazos. Cran you imagine?

Little old me against alien invaders goose-stepping their way across a continent, spreading blackheart where everbearing they went. What will become of our heritage? There's fungus among us! Apparently, we must all twine together to nip this in the bud. This is not the time for tendrilness, but prunedent action is needed to raisin this oppression.

Wampees of the world, unite! We can end this spurge forever if we grapel with the root of the problem.

Wait... what's that longan rasping sound I hear? Lychee or not, here they come! Rum for your lives! There is no vaccinia to protect you from these rabbiteyes. When they poke at you, you choke and hack. They've already grabbed Alice and Becky, who are turning berry blue. Now Myrtle's looking downy! Gall for help, Bill! This is the pits. Boy, am I in a jam... I hope I can preserve my life... juice one more minute.

(Pardon my brambling on - I'm really bushed!)

It is jelly-well too late. Leaf go of me, you frond! No! No! Aieeee!

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### CONTEST

There are many references to fruiting plants in the above story, most of which are berries or selections of berries. The first person to arrive at the proper number of fruiting plants wins a fruiting plant.

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