



# NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 1988

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

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: BOB HEATH  
THERESA HEATH  
ARNOLD STARK  
LILLIAN STARK

NEWSLETTER MAIL ADDRESS: ARNOLD & LILLIAN STARK  
6305 EUREKA SPRINGS RD.  
TAMPA FL 33610

PRESIDENT: AL HENDRY CHAPTER MAIL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 260363, TAMPA FL 33685  
(INCLUDING RENEWALS)

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

NEXT MEETING . . . . . NOVEMBER 13, 1988

MEETING PLACE . . . . . HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS CENTER  
(COUNTY AG. AGENTS' BUILDING), SEFFNER



TAKE I-4 TO EXIT 8 SOUTH, STATE ROAD 579; GO PAST  
TRAFFIC LIGHT AT U.S. 92 INTERSECTION. BUILDING IS  
LESS THAN 1/2 MILE ON LEFT (EAST) SIDE OF U.S. 92.  
USE PARKING LOT. MEETING ROOM IN REAR OF BUILDING.  
MAIN DOOR WILL PROBABLY BE LOCKED. WALK AROUND.

PROGRAM . . . . . OUR PROGRAM SHALL INCLUDE A SLIDE PRESENTATION BY  
JOHN BURNS WHO IS A WELL KNOWN PAPAYA & BANANA GROWER IN SARASOTA. Mr. Burns  
is an interesting speaker who may present many important clues in the propa-  
gation & growing of two not-so-rare but very desirable door-yard fruit for  
this area. His talk should provide information for those who want quick  
results in developing fruit to pick from their own trees.  
For new members and for any others who may be interested, we will have the  
fruit tree park on display behind the Agricultural Center. For those who  
have plants to donate, please bring them to the tree raffle. We should have  
a unique offering of fruit trees for lucky members to select from.  
We also need additional volunteers for the tasting and refreshment table. It  
is certainly one of the highlights of the meetings when lots of goodies are  
available.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Thanks to all who worked to make this year's tree sale a most successful one. After  
nine of them we are doing well, but any suggestions for improvement are most welcome.

I am meeting October 24 with Sydney Park-Brown of Hillsborough County Cooperative  
Extension Service and representatives of other plant organizations to develop a  
community education program: more on this as we go along. Suggestions are welcome.

Mary O'Connell of St. Petersburg has a son who, because of an illness, needs a  
diet of fruit. Call her at 864-1287 if you have excess fruit to sell or donate.

Rangoon Creeper (*Quisqualis indica*). I received many inquiries on this after an  
article in the Tampa Tribune on Janet Conard's plants, "Sturtevant's Notes on Edible  
Plants" stated that it is grown ornamentally and that the seeds taste like coconut  
and are used for food, though even a few seeds cause some people to become ill.  
In China 4-5 seeds are roasted and eaten in the morning as an effective means of  
expelling worms. Large amounts are said to cause spasms and other ill effects  
according to IFAS Guide to Poisonous Plants.

NEW MEMBERS:

**This year's sale generated the following 22 new members, probably a record for us -**

Ronnie A. Barnes, P.O.Box 3347, Riverview, FL 33569, 621-9648  
 Jeanney Bosworth, 4817 Plantation Dr., Tampa, FL 33615, 885-4189  
 John O. Braden, 9700 2nd St. N., St. Petersburg, FL 33702, 576-0955  
 Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Cannone, 506 Broxburn Ave., Temple Terrace, FL 33617, 980-6857  
 Steve & Molly Charlton, 18630 San Rio Cir., Lutz, FL 33549, 949-8157  
 Srirat Chutur Bhuti, 11808 N. 51st St., Tampa, FL 33617, 985-0222  
 John & Denise Cooper, 4096 40th St. S., St. Petersburg, FL 33711, 867-2480  
 Frances Anne Curtis, P.O.Box 22264, Tampa, FL 33622, 251-4732  
 Frances B. Curtis, 3415 Almeria Ave., Tampa, FL 33629, 253-3620  
 Christine & Don De Board, Rt. 1, Box 715, 15004 Carlton Lake Rd., Lithia, FL 33547, 633-1808  
 Fernando & Carmelita Galang, 6701 16th Ave. N., St. Petersburg, FL 33710, 345-2839  
 Glenda Garner, 8206 Mays Ave., Riverview, FL 33569, 677-2979  
 Stan Good, 105 S. MacDill Ave., Tampa, FL 33609, 876-2707  
 Robert & Beverly Hall, Rt. 1, Box 168, Arcadia, FL 33821, 494-5843  
 Ann Halperin, 13079 Spencer Ct., Spring Hill, FL 34609, (904)686-8123  
 Dick & Sue Hamilton, 18847 Tracer Dr., Lutz, FL 33549, 949-8237  
 Mark & JoAnn Hartung, 4011 W. Dale Ave., Tampa, FL 33609, 289-4407  
 Truett & Sukanya Holcomb, 1555 High Crest Cir., Valrico, FL 33594, 684-6099  
 R. Edwin Moore, 102 Circle Hill Dr., Brandon, FL 33511, 689-2426  
 Lydia & Michael Oratowski, 6991 18th St. N., St. Petersburg, FL 33702, 525-9692  
 Punchai Patamasank, 3208 W. Trapnell Ave., Plant City, FL 33566, 754-5463  
 Louis James Zoehrer, 12333 Glen Haven St., Spring Hill, FL 34609, (904)683-004? (Please send us correction)

THE ABIU

by Bob Heath

The abiu (*Pouteria Caimito*) is native to Peru and belongs to a group of small tropical trees (the family Sapotaceae) which produce excellent fruit. And, although the abiu is one of the best of the family, it is not so well known as several other species such as the Sapodilla, canistel and star apple. The tree greatly resembles the canistel (egg fruit) in habit of growth and in foliage, usually reaching 15 to 20 feet in height. The leaves are obovate to lanceolate, four to six inches long, and bright green.

The abiu, of all tropical fruit, is perhaps the quickest to mature; going from seed to bearing in as little as 24 months, and will consistently bear two and sometimes three crops a year in the tropics. The fruit is ovate (occasionally almost round) in form, two to four inches long, and bright yellow when ripe with a thick and tough skin. The fruit will contain one to three seeds surrounded by a white or translucent flesh, firm in some seedlings, soft and mucilaginous in others. The flavor is sweet and pleasant, somewhat resembling the Sapodilla in flavor, but not in texture. Until fully ripe the fruit contains a milky latex which coagulates on the lips in an annoying manner.

The abiu is usually propagated from seed but vegetative means such as budding and grafting should be successful. The abiu can grow in a variety of soils but does best in a soil rich in humus. A heavy mulch will shade the soil and deter evaporation. The tree does well in a moist climate.

The abiu has few serious pest problems in Florida and should not need spraying. However, the tree can be injured by the cold and should be grown in containers or well protected during freezes. The tree should be grown in full sun or light shade and fertilized lightly but frequently with a good quality fruit tree fertilizer.

There are no named varieties of abiu, however, there is much variation in size and fruit quality and we need to obtain our seeds from superior plants or get graft wood from desirable trees.

\* \* \*

## SUPER SALE:

We are extremely pleased to announce that this year's plant sale was our best sale EVER! Gross sales were higher than for any previous sale, and the sale generated 22 new members, probably a record. We had fantastic support from our membership, and we'd like to mention those members & guests who worked at least 1/2 a day, thus earning a 25% discount on purchases: Jennie & Frank Tintera, Bobbie Puls, Terry & Bob Heath, Betty & Aubrey Dickson, Bill Ryland, Kay Netscher, Helen Cornwell, Gloria Obiena, Vincent Magaway, Lloyd & Lottice Shipley, Harry & Sandy Klaus, Paul & Irene Rubenstein, Joan & Jim Murrie, Celso & Daniel Gomez-Sanchez, Jeff Dodson, Lillie B. Simmons, Ellie Wilson, Arnold & Lillian Stark, Doris & Bob Lee, Walter Vines, George Merrill, Anthony Gricius, Frank Honeycutt, Joe & Fran Stevens, Al Hendry, Kay Tanaka, Christine Prodanas, Will Unruh, Romagene Vaccaro, Robert Eliason, Herb Hill, Peter Montano, Marlene Hyndman, Jud Newcombe, Monica Brandies, George Riegler, Chip Hill, Larry Shea, Donna Crowson, and Neils Gullerud. What's more, most of these 51 people worked most of the day both Saturday and Sunday. Special thanks need to go to Jennie Tintera & Terry Heath for preparing Saturday's lunch, and most especially to Chip Hill, for doing an outstanding job on publicity. We'd also like to thank our suppliers, both commercial and members, for a great variety and quality of plants. These suppliers included: Ray Green, Drew Smith, Harry & Carol Snyder, Larry Fisher, Kaye Cude, Mike Judd, Herb Hill, Bob & Terry Heath, Anthony Gricius, Arnold & Lillian Stark, Abe Freedman, and Celso Gomez-Sanchez. Fruit suppliers and procurers included Peggy Kenney, Arnold Stark, Bob Heath, Bruce Beasor, Bill Ryland, Paul Rubenstein, and George Riegler. As you can see, a successful sale is not a single-handed operation, nor the work of a few individuals, but the combined efforts of many people. Thanks again to all of you, and if we inadvertently forgot to mention someone, please notify us for recognition in the next newsletter. For all of you who helped, rest and relax, for next year will be here before you know it, and we'll need your contributions again!

## BEWARE OF BANANA WILT:

The latest Miami RFCI newsletter contains an article describing an outbreak of the soil-borne fungus Fusarian oxysporum in South Florida banana plantations. Especially hard hit are the 'apple' bananas, but the 'burro' plantain is also affected, and the 'Cavendish' banana is threatened. To prevent the spread of this pathogen to our area, we suggest you not import any banana plants from south Florida, or only acquire plants from nurseries certified 'Fusarian free'.

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH:

Papaya Souffle with Mamey Sauce (from "Florida Home & Garden Resource Annual, 1988) -

Mix 3T. cornstarch and 1/3c. sugar in heavy saucepan (not aluminum); gradually mix in 1/2c. milk, whisking to remove lumps, then add 1c. papaya puree, and heat (medium), stirring constantly, until boiling. Cook, stirring, 1 minute, until thickened. Remove from heat and beat in 4 egg yolks, one at a time. Return to heat, and cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly; pour into bowl to cool (room temperature) with waxed paper over surface to prevent 'skinning' over. Butter insides of 6 1/2c. souffle dishes, and sprinkle with sugar. Beat 4 egg whites until frothy, then add 1/2t. cream of tartar, and beat until stiff but not dry. Using a plastic spatula, fold meringue into papaya sauce, 1/4 at a time. Spoon into souffle dishes, filling almost to top. Bake, uncovered, in upper portion of preheated 350° oven, for 10 minutes, until high and golden brown. Serve immediately with mamey sauce (1 pureed mamey sapote blended with rum, to taste).

\* \* \*

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

O.K.! So we have put our ninth Tree Sale to bed. And our bank account has grown by another bound. So where are we going? What's it all for? Sure the sales are exciting. Sure they're a great social event. We feel pride; we feel exhilarated! But what are our goals; our objectives? We need a plan and a schedule, some master objective to aim for.

The Articles of Incorporation say, "To be an active, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the progress of tropical pomology in the Tampa Bay areas - suitable for this purpose; to introduce, propagate, and distribute new species, improve varieties, mutations and clones of fruit plants; to conduct sales, fairs, displays, tours, lectures, television shows and other activities which will function to spread information and promote interest in rare tropical fruits, their breeding, culture, processing and use; and to issue such reports as are deemed to be of interest to members of other horticultural organizations. Funds collected in excess of operational expenses shall be used for furthering the above objectives."

Most of us probably didn't know we are doing all these things. And at present, we aren't. But we should. So what do we need?



We need two or three acres or more. We need a building with meeting room, kitchen, rest room, laboratory, and office. We need a greenhouse and potting shed and a storage room for grocery carts, lawn mower, pots, hand tools, etc.

So there is our goal for the near future. When we get there, we can think about a new goal, something even more impressive. How about it?

\* \* \*

From Miami RFCI Newsletter, Tropical Fruit News, August 1988 Issue:

## SAPODILLA

by Gene Joyner

The sapodilla (*Manilkara zapota*) is a large evergreen tropical tree native to Central America and Mexico. Although it is slow growing it is a recommended large shade tree because of its high resistance to breakage and uprooting by strong winds. The tree also has a high tolerance to salt and is often used in seaside plantings.

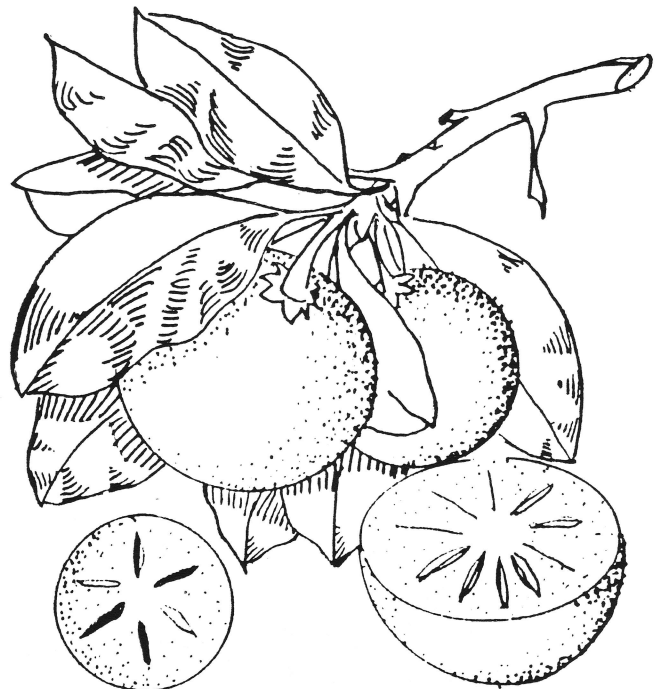
The sapodilla will adapt to a wide range of soil types and growing conditions but will be injured by low temperatures of 26 degrees or lower. The tree is quite drought resistant once it has been well established and will also survive short periods of flooding with no ill effects.

Young trees should be fertilized about every other month with a citrus or fruit tree type fertilizer and after the first year, trees only need to be fertilized two or three times a year.

Small inconspicuous 3/8 inch flowers are borne throughout the year and the large 2-4 inch, round or egg-shaped, brown fruit mature primarily during the warmest months, though some fruit may mature during the winter.

The flesh is usually light yellowish-brown with a texture that varies from smooth to granular and sweet pleasant taste. There might be no seeds at all or there could be as many as 6-10 hard, shiny, flat black 3/4" seeds. When fruits reach their maximum size they are usually picked and allowed to ripen off the tree. If you allow them to ripen on the tree, the fruit will often be destroyed when it falls to the ground.

The fruits can be used in a variety of ways as a fresh fruit but the latex in fruit is a problem when the fruit is cooked.



Sapodilla

Landscape nurseries offer sapodillas for sale but many of these have been propagated from seed and may be inferior in fruit quality and productivity. A number of seedling trees in South Florida produce good quality fruit and these can be propagated by grafting or air layering. Named varieties include "Prolific", "Brown Sugar", "Modello", "Russell" and "Martin". When selecting for fruit characteristics, trees of good quality can be grafted or air layered.

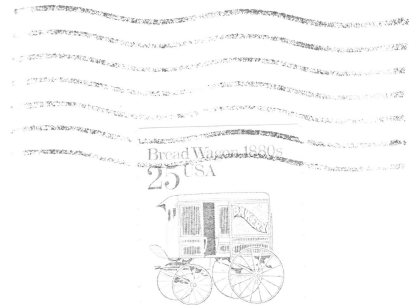
Sapodillas have very few pest problems. However, the mature fruit is attacked by the Caribbean fruit fly. It is important that the fruit be picked and not allowed to get too mature on the tree or else there will be severe damage to the tree.

#### CAUTIONS ISSUED FOR PURCHASE OF WATER PURIFIERS (From Florida Market Bulletin)

In Florida the Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services, working in conjunction with the EPA and the Dept. of Environmental Regulation, checks the water supply for nitrates and pesticides to assure our water supply is pure. Because of the concern over clean water in the past few years, the Division of Consumer Services has seen in our consumer crystal ball that another opportunity to spend valuable dollars on an unnecessary product may be beginning soon - water purification devices.

The EPA offers a fact sheet that explains some types of home water treatment units, what they are capable of doing and why only some of them are registered with the EPA. For a copy of the EPA's Study of Commercially Available Units, write EPA Public Information Center, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, D.C. 20460. The EPA also has a Safe Drinking Water Hotline which operates weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Hotline is staffed by information specialists who have technical backgrounds in the area of safe water. The number is 1-800-426-4791.

Tampa Bay Chapter RFCI  
P O Box 260363  
Tampa FL 33685



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