



# NEWSLETTER

MARCH 1991

**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 PM.

NEXT MEETING      MARCH 10, 1991

MEETING PLACE - - - - - HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS  
CENTER. (COUNTY AG. AGENTS' BUILDING, SEFFNER)  
Take I-4 to Exit 8 South, S.R. 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 is in  
rear of building. Main door will probably be  
locked. Walk around.

PROGRAM - - - - - DR. WILLIAM GRIERSON, PROFESSOR EMERITUS CREC,  
Lake Alfred. Dr. Grierson will speak on his  
experience as a citrus and tropical fruit scientist  
and researcher.  
We will also have our usual tasting table and  
plant raffle.

## ANNUAL ELECTIONS

In March we will have our election of board members from the membership attending the March meeting. The nominating committee has made a list of nominees, those who are willing to serve on the Board for the coming year. At this time we have 13 nominees and the by-laws allows us to have as many as 15. Anyone who wishes to serve on the Board may contact the nominating committee to offer their services, or make your decision known at the March meeting. Very little effort is required in being a board member. Mainly attendance at most of the meetings during the year is the only requirement, but it does permit one to be involved with the operation of their club, and what's the point of being in a club if you can't be involved?

### NOMINEES

Alice Burhenn  
Frank Burhenn  
Jo Ann Cimino  
Edith Freedman  
Bob Heath  
Al Hendry  
Frank Honeycutt

Charles Novak  
Arnold Stark  
Lillian Stark  
Frank Tintera  
Walter Vines  
Paul Zmoda

PLANT RAFFLE :FEBRUARY

<u>PLANT NAME</u>	<u>DONOR</u>	<u>WINNER</u>
Ice Cream Bean	D. Pearson	Jules Cohan
Rollinia Mucosa	R. Holveck	Bruce Pearson
Mamey seedling	R. Holveck	Louis Figueroa
Barbados Cherry	R. Holveck	A. Mendez
Persimmon	E. Freedman	F. Honeycutt
Chayote	C. Novak	A. Mendez
Chayote	C. Novak	B. Heath
Chayote	C. Novak	Janet Conard
Chayote	C. Novak	Glen Myrie (X3)
Chayote	C. Novak	Max Means (X2)
Chayote	C. Novak	Jules Cohan
Chayote	C. Novak	?
Chayote	Stark	? (X5)
Carambola jelly	Bruce Beasor	B. Mendez
Carambola jelly	Bruce Beasor	Bruce Pearson (X2)
Carambola jelly	Bruce Beasor	Leo Cotter
Papaya (2)	Heath	Bruce Pearson
Guava	Heath	Bruce Pearson
Passion Fruit Hybrid	Paul Zmoda	B. Mendez
Passion Fruit Hybrid	Paul Zmoda	M. Seleznick
Carambola fruit	F. Honeycutt	M. Seleznick
Surinam Cherry	F. Honeycutt	Bruce Pearson
Tamarind Seedling	F. Honeycutt	?
Spanish Lime	F. Honeycutt	Burhenn
Papayas (4)	Janet Conard	Stark
White Mulberry	Al Roberts	Jack Perman
Loquat	A. Roberts	Nancy McCormack
Loquat	L. Shipley	Paul Zmoda
Lemon Grass	L. Shipley	B. Mendez
Pandanus	Al Hendry	L. Shipley
Papaya	Al Roberts	Nancy McCormack (X2)
Papaya	Al Roberts	Max Means
Papaya	Al Roberts	Burhenn
Papaya	Al Roberts	Heath

Hospitality Table: February

Bruce Pearson: Surprise Pie

Bob Heath: Star fruit

Pat Jean: Texas Tornado Cake

Alice\_Burhenn: Cranberry Muffins, Chocolate Donuts

Glen &amp; Flo Myrie: Raisin Cake; Fruit juice

Janet Conard: Banana Nut Bread

Lottice Shipley: Apple &amp; Pineapple juice

Recipe of the Month: Surprise Pie (Bruce & Sherry Pearson)

2 containers La Creme whipped topping

14 oz coconut

1 20 oz can + 1 8 oz can crushed pineapple

2 cups chopped pecans (or walnuts or other nuts)

1 large bottle maraschino cherries, chopped (optional)

Mix all ingredients and spoon into two large graham cracker pie crusts. Let set in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours.

# SUBSTITUTE SPEAKER

Our speaker for this month was forced to cancel but we were lucky enough to have good ole' Al Hendry to stand in for him. Al gave us a little input on deciduous fruiting trees and opened the meeting to questions from the gallery.

He discussed briefly the problems involved in bringing in plant material to the United States from foreign countries. This material has to go through customs and it is frequently quarantined and sometimes confiscated depending on the specific plant varieties involved. The quarantined material is kept for various lengths of time and is frequently not treated very kindly. It is relatively simple to sneak in plant material past customs but we have witnessed the result of this kind of activity many times in the past with undesirable insects, fungus and other life forms being brought into the country to cause untold damage to our horticulture. Most things obviously wouldn't cause any trouble but now and again someone brings in a medfly or some other pest inadvertently.

There are three classes of importation of plant life; unrestricted, restricted and prohibited. Most of the fruiting plants are prohibited or restricted. Not to say that the prohibited items cannot be brought in but they must be brought in under very strict control, deposited at a USDA station and kept under quarantine away from any domestic plantings of similar species. Restricted items will have to be put under quarantine, although the quarantine may be restricted to your own back yard. And non-restricted items are very few, one of which is the pineapple.

Seeds are generally admitted if they are clean of all the surrounding material but there are seeds that are prohibited and usually for good reason. Another thing that the North American Fruit Explorers membership (NAFEX) does is provide test gardens of various fruit. One of the things they are presently involved in is the upgrading of the American persimmon. Their long range goal is a persimmon 3" wide, seedless and non-astringent, hardy to the Chicago area and with a shelf life of the fruit of three weeks. Good luck to them on that, but they are aware that it's going to take a long time and many generations of persimmons. At present, the American persimmon is one of the fruit with which very little has been done and which Al likes better than the Japanese or Oriental persimmons for flavor.

They are also interested in the pawpaw. Among native American fruit, the pawpaw is one more with which very little has been done in the way of improving the quality. The pawpaw is generally a rather nondescript, bland fruit but there are some excellent cultivars available at this point and there is still much room for improvement. The Fruit Explorers are also interested in jujubes and mayhaws. The mayhaw is another American fruit and makes one of the best jellies available. Mayhaws grow wild all over the southeastern United States and even in this area. There is a tree at the Museum of Science and Industry and the University of South Florida. They are afflicted with the cedar apple rust which is a disease that bounces back and forth between the mayhaws and other members of the rose family, and the pine and cedar family.

Another group similar to the American Fruit Explorers is the Southern Fruit Fellowship and for cheapskates, it may be one of the best things around because the membership is only \$5.00 a year. They are primarily interested in low chill temperate fruits because most of their membership comes from Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Texas, Louisiana, etc. They are interested in a lot of things such as the growing of persimmons and figs, low chill peaches, plums, apples, pears, the grafting of mayhaws and things of this nature. Their meetings are frequently very interesting if you are interested in deciduous fruits. One of the things that deciduous fruit growers need to know about

here is chilling hours, and that is the number of hours in the winter that the temperature is below 45 degrees. Most temperate fruit require some chilling hours to produce, some as little as 100 hours; others may require up to 1,000 hours. In central Florida, we can expect an average of about 200 hours. This year we've had very few chilling hours, or hours below 45 degrees. In Tampa, the temperature has gotten down to 40 degrees maybe six or eight hours this year. So some of those deciduous fruits that require 200 chilling hours may not do very well this year, and to add to that problem is the fact that several of them had a bloom a month or so ago, and did not set any fruit. This is one of the problems that we have with those deciduous fruits that require a number of chilling hours.

Most low chill peaches have been developed in Florida and have Florida in their name, like Florida Sun, Florida Red, Florida Prince. These require chilling hours anywhere from 75 to 200 hours. So when buying deciduous trees, think about these things. Think about one that has low chilling hours; think about one that is self fertile and will pollinate itself, or get two that will pollinate each other. For instance, with apples, get an Anna and a Dorset which normally bloom at the same time. This is also very important. The Einsheimer would pollinate the Anna or the Dorset if it were blooming at the same time but it blooms later than the other two. This is also true with some of the plums, some persimmons, blueberries and some other deciduous fruit. And even those trees that are self fertile will do better normally if they're grown in pairs.

For commercial production, fruit and vegetables are developed not for their taste so much as for other factors such as ability to ship, ease of harvest, and beauty of the mature fruit as far as color and shape are concerned. All these factors are sought first rather than the flavor and quality of taste. Members of the Rare Fruit Council and North American Fruit Explorers and other groups like this are more interested in the quality of the taste, the flavor of the fruit, than such things as shipability and beauty. Frequently, many of the better varieties, both for back yard planting and for commercial use, have been developed in somebody's yard by accident.

Dr. Knight down at the USDA station, has worked at breeding mangoes the entire time he has been there off and on, and has failed to come up with even one good new variety. In fact, all the good new varieties that have come from the lower east coast have been developed in somebody's back yard, purely by chance.

Loquat is a good example of a fruit that has almost no market potential because the problems in harvesting, packing and shipping would make the fruit prodigiously expensive and the shelf life is very short. It is also a good example of an excellent door yard fruit in that you can plant the seed and in three or four years you will get loquats of some kind, although you never know what quality will result. There have been some good selections made and there are some excellent grafted varieties available if you know where to find them.

The fire blight is probably the most damaging problem with loquats and the loquat is also host for fire blight that affects apples and pears. If you have loquats with fire blight and apples and pears, you can expect the apples and pears to come down with it too. However, there are some local people working with pears to attempt to get a fire blight resistant species. Bemis Gordon in Brooksville is a good example; he has over 100 varieties of pear on his property and is checking them for fire blight resistance.

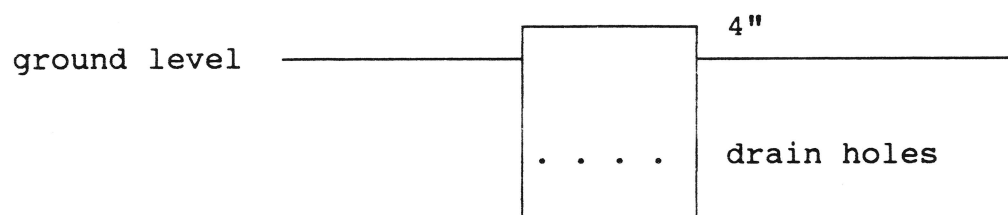
Another fruit which has relatively low marketability is the fig and for similar reasons as the loquat. However, like the loquat it is a very good door yard fruit. Recommended varieties for this area are the Brown Turkey, Celeste, Green Ishea and



Black Mission. One of the most important things in raising fig trees is to provide a deep mulch because fig trees are very susceptible to nematodes. As Al says, "Nematodes pack their suitcases and come from miles around when you plant a fig tree." But the deep mulch tends to discourage the nematodes and of course, it is wise to treat the soil for nematodes with Zapan or similar nematodeicide if you plan to plant a fig tree, and then provide a deep mulch to keep the nematodes out. Figs require a lot of water when they're fruiting which is most of the summer, but do not like to have wet feet. They are also a fast growing tree and require considerable amounts of fertilizer. It is also quite easy to graft a fig onto one of the native figs or a fig relative that is nematode resistant, but some of the available root stock is cold tender and the bottom half might die and the top, of course, is going to die with it when we have freezing weather.

Another problem with figs, which is not life threatening, is fig leaf rust. Usually it occurs late in the year and causes the leaves to brown and drop off prematurely.

Planting tip: (Bruce Pearson suggested the following for figs to reduce nematode and other problems, and enhance production.) Get a wax barrel from a packing house. Cut off the top and bottom of the barrel and cut a dozen or so holes about 1/3 from the bottom. Dig a hole big enough for the barrel and put good sterile dirt in it, topping with mulch.



Tom Economou

## COSTA RICA FRUIT AND FLOWER SAFARI

July 18 - 28, 1991

11 Days -- \$980 Miami  
add \$170 for LA/NY



Gene Joyner

### PARTIAL ITINERARY:

**Day 1 Thursday** - Gene Joyner and Tom Economou will accompany you and help transfer to Hotel Europa. After check-in, we tour downtown San Jose- cool at 3,200 ft elevation. Group evening meal at our hotel restaurant to talk about our Costa Rican tour (paid).

**Day 2 Friday** - Take private bus thru beautiful farming countryside to the POAS VOLCANO NATIONAL PARK (good roads), a dwarf cloud forest. Few active volcanos are reached by highway in the American tropics that have active fumaroles at the crater's edge. Abundant bird life, small mammals -not easily seen, and special tropical plants are residents of this cloud forest -cool at 9500 ft-including the Quetzal, one of the worlds most beautiful birds. Later a typical Costa Rican lunch (paid) in an area of strawberry fields (fresh juice), leather ferns and cut flower nurseries.

## Partial Itinerary, continued:

Later down hill to large water fall, visit tropical fruit jelly factory, view different agriculture low-land fields. Arrive at unusual El Toucan Chalet and Country Club located on banks of river of volcanic origin, next to a rain forest, with river and thermal springs running thru our hotel- 5 miles from Quesada, largest city of the region -overnite at Chalet.

**Day 3 Saturday -Arenal Volcano**  
Smithsonian & Univ. of CR have a research station near this active volcano. Observe eruptions, intense, and seen nightly with vivid explosions. Bring raingear, swim suit, binoculars, camera & film! Through the countryside, we see non-traditional export items: ornamental plants, casava, passion fruit, citrus, papaya and pineapple plantations and cattle as we head for Sarchi, famous for its wood handicrafts. Time for lunch (paid), shopping, and explore Sarchi with late return to Hotel Europa in San Jose.

**Day 4 Sunday -Sapote Farmers Market**, the biggest weekly fair. Collect seeds & taste fruits look at everything that grows in Costa Rica that is worthwhile! Continue San Jose City tour & on your own, explore handicraft fair in downtown San Jose after lunch.

**Day 5 Monday - C.A.T.I.E.**

We drive to Turrialba to visit the largest tropical experimental farms in Latin America: partial tour of its 2200 areas of 1000+ coffee cultivars, 500+ cacao (chocolate), plus other trees such as macadamia nuts, annonas, nancy, jakfruit (largest fruit in world), pulusan, vanilla orchid, miracle fruit, black sapote, and more. The managosteen, king of fruits, is here. Taste fruit & collect seeds as permitted. Lunch at mountain country inn (paid). Drive to Port Limon for overnight.

**Day 6 and 7 Tues and Wed**

Morning on beach. Our bus departs Port Moin to take boat up volcanic canals to Tortuguero Natl Park to the Jungle Lodge across from the ocean-Caribbean/Atlantic beaches. Spend two days exploring rain forest, searching for the nesting green, leatherback, & hawks-bill turtles, monkeys small crocodiles, 3 toed sloths, iguanas, the mamatee and birds -parrots, toucans, & yellow oropendola. All Meals provided at the Lodge with private showers, bathroom, electric fans, lights, good accommodations for roughing it! (paid)

**Day 8 Thursday -** Leave jungle by river boat to Moin. Continue to San Jose by excellent highway thru Natl Park Braulio Carrillo, a cloud forest. Observe 1000s of large tree ferns, heliconias and bromeliads that can be seen everywhere from the road. Sleep in San Jose.

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