



NEWSLETTER APRIL 1994

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

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: BOB HEATH
THERESA HEATH
ARNOLD STARK
LILLIAN STARK

PRESIDENT: SHERRY BAKER

CHAPTER MAIL ADDRESS: 313 PRUETT RD, SEFFNER FL 33584
(including renewals)

MEETINGS ARE HELD THE 2nd SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 2:00 p.m.

NEXT MEETING - - - - - APRIL 10, 1993

MEETING PLACE - - - - - RARE FRUIT COUNCIL CLUBHOUSE, 313 PRUETT ROAD,
SEFFNER. Take I-4 to Exit 8 North, S.R. 579,
go one mile to Pruett Road. (See McDonald School
sign.) Turn right (EAST). Go one mile. See
Clubhouse on left immediately past McDonald School.

PROGRAM - OUR PROGRAM THIS MONTH WILL BE AN INTERESTING VCR FILM ON WATER CONSERVATION BY SWFWMD. From it, we may learn the problems that Florida faces from an ever-increasing population and an ever-decreasing water supply. Until recently, water has been an abundant resource in Florida and probably poorly appreciated by the population. As the saying goes, we never miss the water til the well runs dry - and you can believe the well is running dry. So it is important that we know what the future holds and how we can contribute to the conservation of water in the state of Florida. In addition, we hope the membership will contribute to our plant raffle and tasting table for the enjoyment of all.

Our most sincere and heartfelt condolences go out to member Frank Honeycutt on the passing of his daughter, Deborah Williams.



Tasting Table: March

Janet Conard: Spinach Balls

Al Roberts: Papaya Juice, Loquat Pie

Pat Jean: Apricot Coffee Cake

Walter Vines: Lychees (canned)

Bob Heath: Carambola Preserves

Frank & Alice Burhenn: Oatmeal Raisin
Cookies

Samm Philmore: Organic Strawberries

Charles Novak: Loquats

Rome Vaccaro: Butter Wafers

Thank You Thank You Thank You

To Roy Gear, for fixing a problem with the oven door.

Officers for 1994-1995

President: Sherry Baker

Vice Presidents: Bob Heath, Frank Burhenn

Secretary: Edith Freedman

Treasurer: Alice Burhenn

ORGANIC GARDENING by Samm Philmore

Samm began his talk by indicating that he was a member of the Organic Society of Greater Tampa Bay, which is temporarily inactive, and also a member of the Organic Gardening Group in Pinellas County. He invited anyone interested to come to the next meeting, details of which are available by calling Samm. Samm indicated that organic gardening is an art and there are many ways of approaching organic gardening. He indicated that one must be aware of the micro climate in which one is trying to garden and to develop one's own techniques for various and sundry approaches.

For a little history, he mentioned the father of organic gardening as Sir Albert Howard, who was a mentor to Rodale, probably the most renowned organic gardener in America. Sir Howard worked among the lower caste, the poor people in India where there are an abundance of cattle and where the cattle are considered sacred. He taught the peasants to compost the cattle manure for fertilizer to support their gardens. Of course the use of animal manure as fertilizer is ancient knowledge, going back many, many centuries. However, around the time of Sir Howard, there was a German chemist who sought to analyze animal waste to determine the chemicals that were involved in accelerating plant growth and to discover those elements that plants need for growth. Out of his work of separating the elements in animal waste necessary for plant life, grew the present day chemical fertilizer industry. The chemical fertilizer industry today produces unlimited numbers of different fertilizer combinations with some or all of the elements needed by plants and gardening results are frequently very spectacular. However, Samm indicates that there are certain problems with chemical fertilizers, in that extensive use leaches some of the chemicals into the aquifer and allows some to run off into rivers and streams and end up in the gulfs and bays of our cities. Excessive applications of chemical fertilizers and insecticides produce pollutants that do not result from the use of natural organic products. In addition to the use of natural organic fertilizers, organic gardening is involved with natural organic pest control in lieu of our chemical pest controls, some of which have been proven to be very dangerous to the environment (such as DDT).

Samm showed us some slide projections of the contaminants that are showing up in vegetables and fruit that we purchase in the local supermarkets. He explained that sometimes vegetables grown with chemical fertilizers and pest controls are prettier than those grown organically, but those grown organically are not contaminated as much as those grown chemically. Samm also showed us 6 quarts of organically grown strawberries which he was contributing to the club for tasting table and raffle. He also commented that some of the contaminants could be washed off but that some are systemic and invade the fruit. On some products, such as strawberries, it's very difficult to wash off any contaminants because of the soft body of the berries. Also, he indicated that some pesticides which are outlawed in the United States are shipped to other countries where they are used on edible crops which are shipped back to the United States for sale in our stores.

What is organic gardening? Samm described it as the way nature does it. You go into the forest and see things growing; they're all growing organically. An acorn that falls from an oak tree into a desirable location will sprout, put down its roots, grow eventually into a great oak tree; that is pure organic. Every year the oaks shed their leaves which fall to the ground and decompose to provide the organic matter for plants to grow. That is organic. Earthworms, pill bugs, fungus, bacteria, all break down the organic matter into humus and put the minerals back into the soil; that is organic. And that is one of the tenets of organic gardening. We collect the organic matter and pile it in one place and provide moisture so it can heat up and decompose much more rapidly. This process called composting provides us the mulch, compost and humus for use in our own gardens.

In connection with composting, Samm discussed the use of natural fertilizers, animal manures. The most common and readily available are the cow and horse manures from dairies, farms and horse stables. Rabbit manure and chicken manure are also in ready supply, and chicken manure is particularly high in nitrogen. All these sources of natural fertilizer need to be composted before use.

Under the OGIA Standards, you cannot use raw manure of any kind on annual vegetables or any edible plant that is going to mature and be harvested in less than 120 days. For these kind of food plants, it is not acceptable, if you are a certified organic gardener. Manures must be aged or matured for 120 days to be acceptable to the OGIA inspectors.

Samm discussed at some length the danger of pollutants in the air and in the soil, from chemical fertilizers, insecticides, airborne pollutants from automobiles and factories and power plants, and less obvious things such as pressure treated wood, galvanized steel and cleaning materials.

Samm went on to the procedures for performing organic gardening. First, he indicated that one needs to select a spot for his garden, just as one would select a spot for a conventional garden. One must have a relatively level area in a sunlit location, free of rocks and boulders. One should observe the sun pattern because gardens need over half a day's sun, so if the area is shaded by a tree, the tree may be cut down or trimmed back to provide for sun. Next, one should consider a windbreak if it is in a very open area; plant a hedge or some barrier on the north side. Next, one should consider the soil, its qualities and workability. Most Florida soils are very porous and sandy and need to be improved unless one happens to be in a low area where rain water tends to pond. Then one must consider using raised beds to prevent flooding. In any event, the chances are the soil will need to be improved, and loosened if it is hard packed. With sandy soil, this will require the addition of voluminous amounts of organic matter; compost, animal waste, green manure, and such to provide humus to the soil and increase its workability and moisture holding capacity. If the chosen plot is a grassy area, the top soil may simply be turned under and the grass will add organic matter to the soil. If it is a weedy area, the weeds need to be removed, after which organic matter can be layered on the top and turned under. The ideal method of adding organic matter to the first garden use is to double dig the site. Double digging is a procedure by which the top soil is buried beneath the medium depth soil. This is done by digging a trench across one end of the site and depositing the soil at the opposite end of the site. Then you take a pitchfork and loosen the soil at the bottom of the trench and add composting material, animal waste, green manure, composted plant material and spread it evenly over the top of the loosened soil, then you dig another trench right beside the other one, piling the dirt removed into the first trench. With your pitchfork and compost, you prepare the bottom of the second trench and proceed similarly to the other end where you finally add the soil from the original trench into the final trench. At completion, you'll find that the bed is now a raised bed and may be enclosed with 2 x 4's or 2 x 6's and at this point, it is ready to plant.

* * *

What is the wisest fruit?
How about the elderberry!

* * *

What tree is always happy?
Maybe the hawthorne!?



THANKS

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THANKS

We wish to express our thanks to the following members who made the Sale in Pasco County a success by their work and attendance March 4, 5 and 6 at Concord Park. Several of the members transported plants and equipment to the site in Pasco County on Friday evening and set up tables and displays for the Sale. The Festival opened at 10:00 on Saturday and Sunday and ended at 5:00 in the evening. Attendance was somewhat sparse but continued throughout the two days, and the total gross sales amounted to \$1,107.00. The Festival was very interesting and we enjoyed a tour of all the booths and plant displays. We were able to enjoy extensive Indian arts and crafts, knives, beadwork, leather work, paintings, pottery, basketry and other interesting art. The Festival was mostly devoted to arts and crafts; relatively few horticultural groups were in evidence. In addition to the Rare Fruit Council, the Native Plant Society, Bonsai Society, the Orchid Society and Hibiscus Society were in evidence. We had good fellowship and great weather. We believe the following list includes all the members who worked at this Sale; however, if anyone has been left out, please let us know and we will include you in the next Newsletter.

Jerry Amyot

Bob Baker

Sherry Baker

Alice Burhenn

Frank Burhenn

Roy Grear

Bob Heath

Terry Heath

Charles Novak

George Riegler

Paul Zmoda

Arnold & Lillian Stark

We hope more of you will join us for the Plant Sale at U.S.F. on Saturday, April 30th!

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USF BOTANICAL GARDEN PLANT FESTIVAL

The RFCI will be participating in the USF Spring Festival once again this year. It is scheduled for Saturday, April 30th. This is an opportunity for our members and the RFCI to sell some of the plants that were left over from the Pasco sale or which they have otherwise accumulated. Ornamental or non-fruiting plants also may be sold.

We will begin our set-up at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 29th, and encourage all of our supplying members to try to be at the Botanical Gardens no later than 6:00 p.m. as there will be little time and much turmoil on Saturday morning. On Saturday morning, the gates will open for participants at 7:00 a.m. and close again at 8:30 a.m. It is important to get to the Gardens as soon as possible on Saturday morning because the tree sale for Festival participants will begin at 9:00 a.m. and the tree sale for Botanical Garden members at 9:30 a.m. The sale opens to the public at 10:00 a.m.

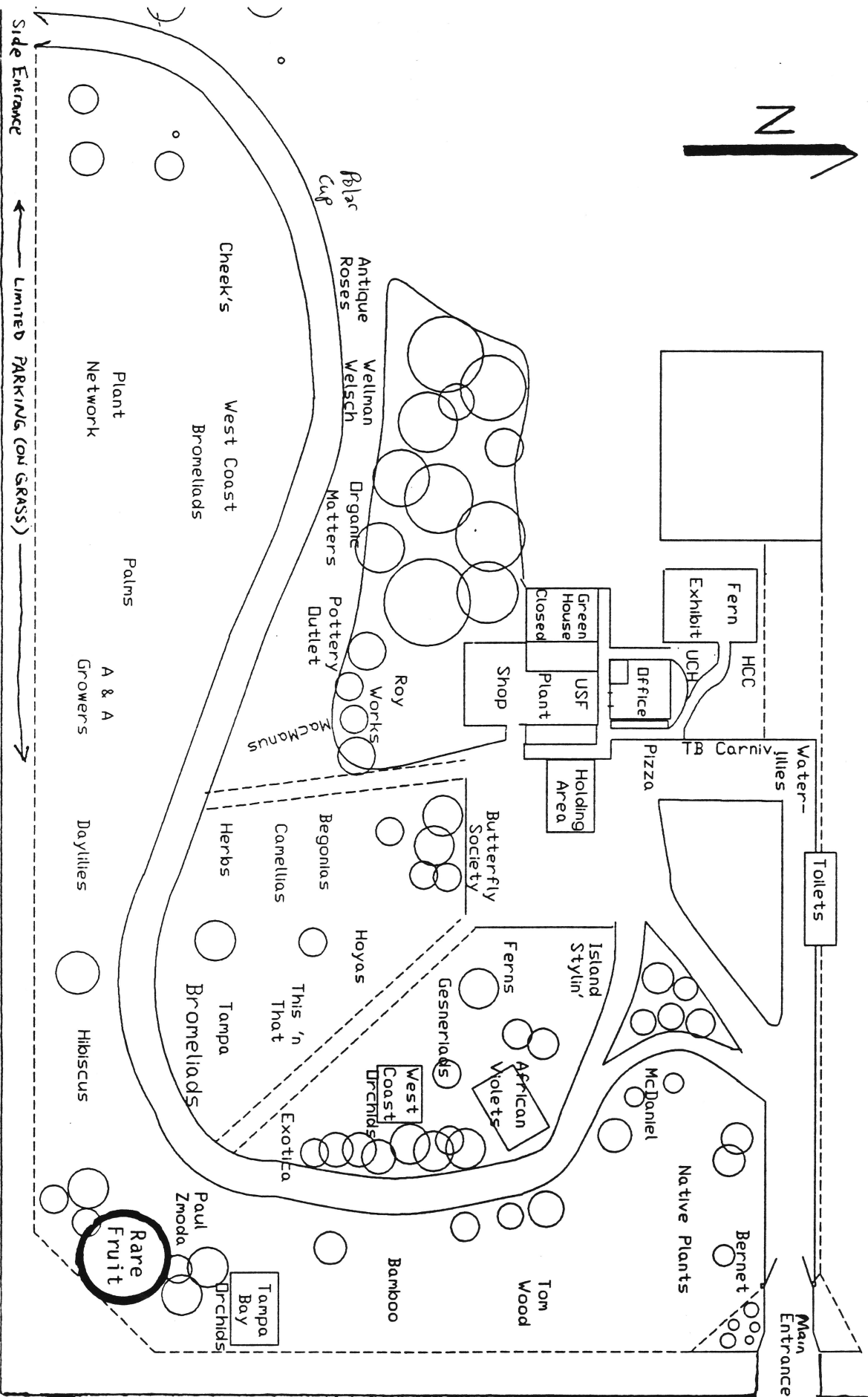
Two things are very important for all suppliers:

- 1) All plants should be listed on a manifest, priced and identified with name tags.
- 2) No participants will be admitted to the Gardens on Saturday before 10:00 a.m. unless they have identification. All participants are encouraged to wear their RFCI t-shirts.

For additional information, contact Bob Heath @ 289-1068 in the evenings or 879-6349 during the working day.

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USF Botanical Gardens Plant Festival LAYOUT MAP



To Bruce B. Downs Blvd.
(30th Street)

Pine Ave.

No PARKING

Pine Ave

To Shore

Alum Dri

To Rose Park

RFCI MEMBERS TREE SALE

The Club now owns a considerable variety of fruit trees which were purchased for re-sale at the March sale in Pasco County and the April 30 sale at the University of South Florida. Frank Burhenn and Bob Heath are presently holding these trees and caring for them until the April sale. However, they are available to club members at a 10% discount on our selling price at any time before the April 30 University of South Florida tree sale. A list of the trees, their location, quantities and sale price to general public and members is listed below. Members interested in buying any of these trees may contact Frank Burhenn or Bob Heath to arrange for the exchange.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Non-Members</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Location</u>
Hybrid Guava	1	\$ 18.00	\$ 16.20	Frank Burhenn
Pineapple Guava	1	15.00	13.50	886-4337
Black Sapote	6	12.00	10.80	"
Lychee	8	19.00	17.10	"
Carambola	1	15.00	13.50	"
Cinnamon	1	10.00	9.00	"
Cherry of the Rio Grande	2	10.00	9.00	"
Macadamia	5	17.00	15.30	"
Mango	8	20.00	18.00	"
Longan	9	18.00	16.20	"
Ruby Supreme Guava	19	12.00	10.80	"
Shogatsu Persimmon	3	12.00	10.80	"
Izu Persimmon	7	12.00	10.80	Bob Heath
Fuyu Persimmon	4	12.00	10.80	289-1068
Tanenashi Persimmon	10	12.00	10.80	"
Celeste Fig	13	6.00	5.90	"
Cattley Guava	1	10.00	9.00	"

We also have the following banana trees available for sale to the members: Apple, Pysang Raja, Red Iholene, Nino, Jamacian Red, Dwarf Jamacian Red, Praying Hands, Musa Velutina, Golden Aromatic, Valery, Ney Poovan, French Horn, Gran Nain. The prices on these bananas vary according to variety. You may call Bob Baker at 689-7031 to arrange for purchase.

RFCI MEMBER SALE TO MEMBERS

As a service to our membership, we will publish in the newsletter a list of plants which members may wish to sell so that members who might be interested may purchase the plants. Those interested in this service may contact Arnold or Lillian Stark or Bob or Theresa Heath with a list of plants, their price and the seller's telephone number so this may be published in the next newsletter after receipt of information.

What's Happening

March-April 1994

by Paul Zmoda

It looks as if we have made it through a superb winter without any really **COLD** weather. For this we should be very thankful. I can't complain: I experienced only two light frosts of short duration with lows of about 35°F. We are "officially" in the clear as of April 1st as another great growing season gets underway. Currently we are enjoying mulberries, loquats, and all kinds of citrus.

I have seen two kinds of trees listed as "Tropical Almond" here and there over the years. The confusion may now be over; the one with the smooth leaves is probably the true Tropical Almond (*Terminalia catappa*), a semi-deciduous, large tree that can tolerate salt spray. It produces a thin nut that is reported to be quite difficult to remove from the husk, and is edible raw or roasted. The other "Tropical Almond" is most likely the Okari Nut (*Terminalia kaernbachii*), a large tree also, but with a rusty colored pubescence (fuzz) on it's leaves. It bears larger fruits-up to 10 centimeters long inside of which is a 5 to 6 centimeter long nut, said to be much easier to remove and of better quality. It is considered very valuable where they are grown.

Lychees seem likely to be pollinated by numerous ants seen crawling all over the tiny greenish flowers. Speaking of pollination, Frank Burhenn showed me a method of hand-pollinating pomegranate flowers: simply swirl the yellow anthers a few times with you index finger-easy enough!

Keep a good layer of mulch under your trees to protect the roots. Most species seem to benefit from this, however do not mulch citrus

trees-keep the area below free of weeds, grasses, etc., and occasionally loosen the soil. Don't cultivate too deeply so as to avoid damaging the shallow feeder roots.

The "Air Potato" (*Discorea bulbifera*) produces a good-sized underground tuber that not only looks like a regular potato, but tastes like one too. I was pleasantly surprised at the flavor. *D. alata* is similar, but not as good.

My "Mora" or Colombian Blackberry (*Rubus glauca*) has been bearing large, reddish-black, juicy berries all winter. It took two years from seed and is now a pretty vigorous bramble growing in a half-drum in lots of sunlight. Watch for various cacti blooming: can edible "tunas" be far behind? New plantings include an Eggfruit or Canistel (*Pouteria campechiana*) and a Tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*).



Special note about raffle plants: I was somewhat shocked to see a poisonous *Jatropha* plant on the raffle table. It was unlabeled. Let's not endanger our members, folks-not everyone could know it is not to be eaten. If you're not sure what you've got, please ask. This is not the first time I've seen inedible plants on the raffle table.



WANTED: 50-100 taproot pots. These are tall and narrow. Will buy or trade for rare plants or ??? Contact Paul Zmoda, (813)932-2469



FOR SALE: RFCI TEE SHIRTS AND CAPS

Tee Shirts: \$10.00 without collar

\$15.00 golf shirts

Shirts are Small, Medium, Large, X-Large, 1X, 2X, 3X.

Caps: \$7.00 - One size fits all.

(SHIRTS ARE FOR MEMBERS' USE ONLY.)

Raffle: March

Plant Name	Donor	Winner
Ceylon Gooseberry	Charles Novak	Vern Reddicliffe
Ponderosa lemon	Charles Novak	Heath
Ponderosa lemon	Charles Novak	Beth Reddicliffe
Ponderosa lemon	Charles Novak	Kimberly Hunt
Wampi	Heath	F. Pupello
Tamarind	Heath	J.D. Jones
Tree Basil	Heath	Frances Wagenseller
Ruby Guava	Heath	Kimberly Hunt
Ruby Guava	Heath	?
Celeste Fig	Heath	MaryAnn Campbell
Celeste Fig	Heath	Christine Miranda
Tomatillo	Heath	J.D. Jones
Tomatillo	Heath	Beth Reddicliffe
Podocarpus	Roy Grear	Beth Rediccliffe
Podicarpus	Roy Grear	R. Lipman
Celery, Tall Utah (2)	Samm Philmore	?
Passon Fruit, purple	MaryAnn Campbell	Kimberly Hunt
Custard Apple	MaryAnn Campbell	Al Jean
Meyer Lemon	Reddicliffe	F. Pupello
Ruby Red Grapefruit	Reddicliffe	Al Jean
Ruby Red Grapefruit	Reddicliffe	G. Diaz
Papaya	Burhenn	Glen Myrie
Cherry of the Rio Grande	Burhenn	Gene Wagenseller
Grapefruit (3)	Zmoda	Al Jean
Strawberries (quart)	Samm Philmore	K. Hunt
Strawberries (quart)	Samm Philmore	Bob Baker
Strawberries (quart)	Samm Philmore	Burhenn
Strawberries (quart) (2)	Samm Philmore	?
Avocado seed	Janet Conard	F. Pupello
Avocado seed	Janet Conard	J.D. Jones
Avocado seed (3)	Janet Conard	Walter Vines
Avocado seed	Janet Conard	Beth Reddicliffe
Avocado seed	Janet Conard	K. Hunt
Avocado seed	Janet Conard	V. Rediccliffe
Basil (2)	?	Stark
Basil	?	C. Miranda
Basil	?	?

New Members

Christine & Frank Miranda 8233 Riverboat Drive Tampa, Fl 33637 (813)985-3435

The Value of Organic Matter

Organic matter is the most important material we can add to the sandy soils common in Florida. A good soil in the mid section of our country can contain more than 5% organic matter while our sandy soils often have less than 1% organic matter.

Organic matter or humus in our soils has a tendency to bind loose sandy soils while it will make stiff clay soils more open and porous. Organic matter increases the water holding capacity of sands. It also makes the soil into a more favorable environment for the growth of plant roots and for the growth of beneficial soil microorganisms. , it often supplies certain catalytic agents and growth substances beneficial for plant growth.

Decomposing organic matter renders inorganic elements from our fertilizers more readily available to plants and thus increases soil fertility and the availability of essential elements such as iron, zinc, manganese and others.

Organic matter and clay greatly improve the buffering ability of the soil and thus makes it less likely to damage our plants by the excessive use of artificial fertilizers or by the inadvertent addition of some toxic material to the soil.

On an equal weight basis, humus far exceeds clay in its ability to combine and hold exchangeable bases. Since organic colloids are extremely active, an increase of 1% of organic matter can double the exchange capacity of a soil. The base exchange capacity of a soil is the ability of a soil to absorb and retain a group of elements such as calcium, magnesium, potassium, copper and zinc.. These are known as exchangeable bases.

Organic matter decomposes rapidly and completely in Florida soils. Therefore, we must continually add organic matter to our soils.

Another value of organic matter is that vegetables, flowers, fruit, and landscape plants growing in soils that are high in inorganic matter or that are covered with a heavy permanent mulch are less damaged by nematodes than are those growing in soils of low organic content.

Organic matter in the soil seems to contribute to the reduction of nematodes in several ways. Decomposing organic matter causes a great increase of soil microbes, fungi, bacteria, and actinomycetes. These are followed by a great number of organisms that feed upon them, including many predatory nematodes, mites, insects and fungi that capture and feed upon parasitic nematodes.

Also the decomposition of some organic materials and green manures have been shown to generate other chemicals that are directly toxic to nematodes and thus decrease their numbers.

(This article was written and kindly given to us for this Newsletter by Lewis Maxwell, a renowned botanical author.)

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

The Board meetings are open to the entire membership, and you are encouraged to attend.

REMEMBER OUR NEXT SALE IS SATURDAY, APRIL 30th, AT U.S.F., AND I WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOU THERE. Working members receive an excellent discount on all RFCI plants!!

We have new plantings at the Clubhouse, and are in need of a garden hose to water them. If anyone would like to donate a section of garden hose, please bring it to the next meeting.

HELP! HELP! HELP!

Volunteers are needed to mow the grass surrounding the Clubhouse. The Club has its own mower, so all we need is your assistance.

* * *

Recipe of the Month : Sweet Potato Soufflé (Cathy Creighton)

3 cups cooked , mashed sweet potatoes or yams

2 or 3 eggs

1/2 cup milk

1/2 cup sweet butter or margarine

1 tsp. vanilla (more to taste)

Beat above ingredients with an electric mixer until smooth. Place in a casserole.

Prepare topping by mixing together to form crumbs: 1 cup brown sugar, 1/2 cup flour, 1 cup coarsely chopped pecans (2 cups, if you love pecans!), 1/2 cup butter. Sprinkle topping on the potato mixture. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes at 350°F.

RFCI Tampa Bay Chapter
313 Pruett Rd
Seffner FL 33584



FIRST CLASS MAIL

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