



NEWSLETTER APRIL 1995

**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 ON THE 2nd SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 2:00 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: APRIL 8 & 9, 1995 (see Program below)

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...

U S F BOTANICAL GARDEN SPRING PLANT FESTIVAL

The RFCI will be participating in the USF Plant Festival on April 8 & 9, 1995. This is an important fund raiser and all the members are invited to attend, to assist in the sale, to sell plants, to enjoy the camaraderie and to visit other groups.

Our participation will begin about 3:00 Friday afternoon, April 7, setting up tables, arranging plants and posters.

On Saturday, April 8, the Gardens will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. for our final preparations.

From 9:00 until 9:30, participants in the Festival will be given the opportunity to shop from each other before the gates are opened to the public.

All vehicles must be out of the Gardens by 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, and by 10:00 a.m. on Sunday.

The front gate will close at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday and 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, and participants will have to enter by the side south gate after the front gate closes.

From 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. on Saturday and from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, traffic will be one way, in the front gate and out the side gate. The Festival will end at 3:00 p.m. on both days, and only after 3:00 p.m. will we be allowed to bring vehicles in to remove plants or re-supply.

All participants must have identification. An RFCI T-shirt or a name badge labeled RFCI will do.

Parking for participants not bringing supplies or plants is across the street from the front entrance to the Gardens.

Food and drink will be for sale by caterers, or you may bring your own.

The USF Botanical Gardens takes 10% of our gross sales; the remaining 90% will be split equally between the participant and the RFCI, so mark your plants accordingly, remembering that you get 45% of the selling price.

* * *

New Members:

Elaine Sarrasin 18229 Hanna Road Lutz, FL 33549 (813)948-3419

EDIBLE FRUIT OF BRUNEI

by Dr. Bobby Tee

Brunei is a small country in the northwest of Borneo in the Far East. It is much smaller than the state of Florida with only 270,000 people, but is blessed with a great diversity of interesting and delicious fruiting plants. Part of the country is mountainous and much is covered with a tropical rain forest. The country is rich in oil and gas and has not been concerned with the development of its fruiting trees. For economic reasons, it has been concerned with its cash crops such as palm oil and rubber. For the development of these cash crops, they are destroying the rain forest. Dr. Tee is concerned with exploring the diversity of fruiting trees before they are completely destroyed. Some of these fruits may be adaptable to this part of the world and could become cash crops here, where we have the luxury of devoting part of our energies to things like fruiting trees. Dr. Tee spends a lot of his time in the rain forest searching for various types of fruit and different species. He entertained us with a slide presentation of such fruit.

His first slides were devoted to the seven varieties of durian. The durians range in size from an orange to a football, but look like a chestnut in the green stage with a thorny outside skin. Inside the shell are four or five segments with one individual seed in each segment. The flesh is bright red to pale yellow in color, and in some varieties is very delicious. His slides showed this great diversity in color. The trees are large and flower profusely and are very beautiful in flower and also as the fruit ripens. The fruit may be green or brown or shades in between. The red fleshed variety is one of the best and from the red variety comes the seeds that have been sent to us for propagation. Some work is being done in Brunei to hybridize between species to develop better durians. Much additional work needs to be done to develop it for commercial use in the tropics. It will probably never be a commercial crop in the United States because it is very susceptible to cold injury. Most of the flowers on the durian are white but some have beautiful red flowers which develop around the lower trunk close to the ground, such that the developing fruit actually lays on the

ground in some cases.

After an extensive introduction to the various durians available in Brunei, Dr. Tee went on to the mangosteen, *Garcinia mangostana*, which is reported to be a very excellent fruit. There are five varieties of mangosteen in Brunei. Some are excellent and some are only used for condiments. Another member of the *Garcinia* family, *G. hombrioniana*, produces beautiful red fruit which is green when immature, turning yellow and then bright red as it reaches maturity. It is a large upright tree and is very ornamental. He also had some slides of unnamed *Garcinia*s, which he was not sure of the species, and *Garcinia primiana*, which is very common in Brunei. The fruit has an almond taste and is very delicious. Another interesting fruit is the *Garcinia parvifolia*, which is called the Cherry of Brunei; a delicious fruit for making jams and jellies. Also, it is claimed to contain an acid which contributes to weight loss. At present there is much interest in the Cherry of Brunei.

Dr. Tee next discussed the rambutan and showed us several slides of the different varieties, indicating that there are unknown numbers of varieties of rambutan in Brunei and in Malaysia. The external color ranges from light yellow, orange through the pinks, reds and almost into violet. Inside, the flesh is white, sweet to sour and tart, depending on the variety. They have found many wild varieties in the jungle, but at this point, most are still only classified by number. They also range from extremely rough skinned, almost thorny, to perfectly smooth varieties. They grow from the lowlands up into the highlands, 1000 feet or more. He has sent seed of some varieties to us and is looking for other varieties to send seeds. The hope is that those from the highlands will grow and prosper here in central Florida or south Florida.

We next looked at the fruit and tree of the *Artocarpus odoratissimus*, common name tarap. It also makes a very large tree, but Dr. Tee was able to get fruit in five years from seed by using hormones. He found the tree growing and fruiting in the

lowlands and also up in the highlands to an elevation of 4000 feet. It is an excellent fruit, sweet, aromatic, with general appeal and a good source of iron and Vitamin C and a good potential for introduction into other areas. In flowering and fruiting, it is a very beautiful tree and very prolific.

He also discussed other members of the Artocarpus family, which includes the jakfruit, breadfruit and champedak, which are important sources of food for the native people in the country. But this family is suffering the same problem as other trees due to forest clearing. However, the jakfruit and breadfruit have been spread throughout the tropical world where they are an important crop.

Also, Dr. Tee had some slides of Pengalaban, an avocado relative which grows in Brunei. It is strange to find an avocado relative in Southeast Asia because the avocado is a Central and South American tree. Dr. Tee has sent some bud wood to Professor Meyer at the University of Riverside where he will attempt to graft it onto avocado and grow the tree in the United States. Dr. Tee has made no effort to send the seeds to the U.S. because they are very shortlived. The Brunei avocado may be used as a rootstock for the American avocado to advantage because it is not susceptible to phytophthora root rot. Hopefully, we will see the results of these experiments in the next few years. The tree is huge; it grows extremely tall and may result in a faster growing avocado using it as a root stock. The fruit is very similar to avocado in flavor but it is much smaller and inferior to the American avocado.

The next group we explored was the Mangifera. The Bruneian species of this group are resistant to anthracnose which is a serious problem for mangoes. In Brunei the Mangifera species grow in profusion and the diversity is enormous. Also, many exotic species and clones have been introduced into the country over the years. Together, these collections and wild species constitute a rich source of genetic diversity for crop improvement. One

is called the brown mango, or Bembangan, is an excellent fruit up to 2 pounds in weight and with a very light, almost white flesh underneath its brown skin. The tree is a close relative to the regular mango, which, of course, is from the same area of the world. The tree is very beautiful in bloom with pink or light red flowers, and produces fruit in prodigious quantities. There are many varieties of the Mangifera species in Southeast Asia ranging from small to large fruit and from sweet to sour. Some species are used for cooking and in salads and sauces. It is a fertile field for development.

We next looked at the Baccaurea family of fruit that is very common in Southeast Asia, Malay Peninsula and Indonesia, as well as in Brunei. They all produce prodigious amounts of fruit which range in size from about an inch in diameter to two and a half inches. The outside is brown, tan, green or brilliant red, depending on variety. Most varieties are sweet with a beautiful white flesh in their thick shell. There are many varieties, most of which have not received scientific names, and Dr. Tee is still exploring the jungles for different varieties. He has shipped some seeds to the United States, and some varieties may grow and fruit in south Florida.

We next looked at a very interesting group, the Brunei olive and its relatives, the Canarium group. The Brunei olive fruit is olive sized, produced in large clusters. The skin is white at immature stages and turns green as it matures and almost black when it's ripe, just like an olive. Like an olive, the entire outside flesh is eaten from around the seed and the kernel of the seed is also edible, as a nut. Dr. Tee has shipped some of the Brunei olive seeds to Charles and they are growing well.

We were also presented with several slides of some of the beautiful flowers that grow in Brunei, members of the Hoya family.

* * *

Member Glen Myrie has 3 large (12') Loquats to give away, free, if you will dig them. Call him at 685-2215

Member Arnold Stark has a 6' tall Corsican-type citron to give away, free, if you will dig it. Call him at 621-4987

What's Happening

March April, 1995

by Paul Zmoda

We are still assessing freeze damage which occurred February 9th and 10th. It was a short but severe freeze that ruined an otherwise mild winter. I recorded 31°F on February 9th and 33.5°F on February 10th. It did get colder then that, but I didn't stay up to see the ultimate low temperature. I have heard that 27°F was noted here in Tampa and as far south as Fort Meyers!

Casualties (dead or nearly dead) are: Mountain Soursoy, Blackberry Jam Fruit, Ice Cream Bean (15 feet tall), Pond Apple, Papayas, some Passion Fruits, Canistel, Rose Apple, Annona hybrids, Strawberry Tree, and Spanish Lime. Injured, but alive (almost complete defoliation): Bignay, young Carambolas, Sugar Apples, Colombian Blackberry, Bananas and Plantains.

Slightly injured: Lychee, other Passion fruits, Ilima, other Annona hybrids, Monstera, and Macadamia Nuts. Those that survived with little or no damage included Allspice, Eugenias, Jaboticaba, Downy Rose Myrtle, Cacti, Citrus, Cherimoya, Macadamia Nut, Pineapple, Tamarind, Wampi, large Carambolas, Avocados, Cattleya Guavas, Jujubes, Elderberry, Purple Passion Fruit, and Barbados Cherry. Some surprises here.

Ilima and large Cherimoya are leafing out and budding profusely. There are 25 to 30 flower buds on the 6 foot Cherimoya. Natal Queen Pineapples are all flowering. I grafted Siam Sweet Pummelo to my Pummelo tree and it is pushing out. Meyer Lemon is flowering (a 3 year old cutting), as is Allspice.

Rollinia fruit is starting to turn yellow and get soft, so I picked one. It is huge (4½ inches across and weighs 1 pound). Smooth and delicious, like lemon custard. We enjoyed a Smooth Cayenne Pineapple - very juicy and delicious. Sprouting seeds: Giant Grenadilla, Cattleya Guava, Black Sapote, Dates, Plums, Pecans, Papayas, Sapodilla, and Mayhaw.

When propagating Cuttings, many of us like to use rooting hormone products to increase success. I received an article on rooting hormones from a fellow grower of rare fruits in Pennsylvania. The paper states that you can extract a powerful hormone yourself from Weeping Willow twigs that you can use to promote rooting of your cuttings. This discovery comes from the work of the late Professor Makota Kawase at the Ohio Agriculture Research and Development Center. To make the extract, claimed to be better than any known substance, cut willow shoots from the current years growth. Remove the leaves and cut the pieces about an inch long. Put into a jar, bottom ends down, and add water to about ½ inch above the top ends. Cover and let sit about 24 hours before use. To use, soak your cuttings in the water for up to 24 hours before bedding in your preferred medium.

New plantings are a grafted Brogdan Avocado, Kampong Mauve and Sri Lanka Sugar Apples, and a Custard Apple.

Raffle: March 1995

Plant Name	Donor	Winner
Sour Orange	Janet Conard	?
Black Surinam Cherry	Janet Conard	?
Loquat	Janet Conard	Lillian Smoleny
Carambola Fruit	Heath	Yuku Tanaka
Passion Fruit & Vine	Heath	David Mitchell
Wampi	Heath	Pat Jean
Atemoya	Heath	David Mitchell
Cherry of the Rio Grande	Heath	L. Atkins
Trifoliate Orange	Zmoda	?
Italian Melon	Zmoda	Sally Starr
White Sapote	Ferreira	Sally Starr
Spondias Mombin cuttings	B. Ryland	L. Atkins
Carambola Fruit	B. Ryland	?
Black Sapote Fruit	B. Ryland	?
Chayotes	Monica Brandies	D. Canter
Grapefruit	S. Baker	Kass Scott Rivera
Dwarf Brazilian Banana	S. Baker	?
Custard Apple	MaryAnn Campbell	Pat Jean
Banana	Yuku Tanaka	D. Canter

EXCITING TIMES: by Charles Novak

Ray Jones from the Bradenton RFCI has been placing a garlic dispenser on most of his small citrus trees. Of the citrus plants where the garlic dispenser was placed, there were little or no leaf minor problems or other insect problems. What a good idea. Garlic has been used in the past to keep vampires away, so why not insects? The garlic dispenser can be purchased at the following address: Plant Pro-Tec Inc., P.O. Box 902, Balo Cedro, CA 96073. Phone: 1-(916) 547-5450. Cost: 250 for \$55.00 + \$4.85.

Our fruit data base is making great progress. We are seeking a grant to put the data base on the Internet. If we get our fruit data base on the Internet, our Club will be known world-wide. Currently we are standardizing the input by writing a standard input program. We need your help to make this project a lot better.

EXCITING TRIP: by Charles Novak

We are planning a fantastic trip to Gene Joyner's home and to The Mounts Botanical Gardens in West Palm Beach. Gene Joyner has been planting fruit trees and tropical plants for the last 27 years without any freezes during that time. His place is a tropical paradise. Over the years he has been mulching the paths very heavily and now they are almost 2 feet higher than the surrounding ground level. The Mounts Botanical Gardens in West Palm Beach has many bearing fruit trees. You may have an opportunity to sample some of the fruit you have heard about but never tasted. If we can get 40 people to sign up for the trip, we will be able to rent a charter bus. The cost would be less than \$20.00 per person. The trip is tentatively planned for the last Saturday in May (May 28). Club members who want to go should sign up before April 30. We will open the trip to other interested persons after April if we have not filled the bus. The bus capacity is 48 people. If this trip works out well, we may schedule other trips during the year. Call me at (813) 754-1399 in the evening to sign up.

Tasting Table: March 1995

Pat Jean: Lemon Squares

Tony Ferreria: Six Layered Cake

L. Atkins: Ladyfinger Bananas

Jud Newcombe: Carambolas & Coconut

M. Brandies: Pumpkin Bread, Cream Cheese

S. Baker: Pumpkin Bread

Lillian Wente: Raisin Puff Cookies, Papaya Upside-down Cake, Fresh Corn

Kass Scott-Rivera: Tea Punch, White Sangria, Tuna & Egg Salad, Apple & Peaar Butter

Gertrude Pierre: Candied Grapefruit, Shaddock, Cherries, Drink

Lillian Smoleny: Grapefruit Juice, Assorted Cookies

Paul Zmoda: Passion Fruit, Mamey Sapote, Soursop, Loquat

D. Canter: Pickled Vegetable Salad

Janet Conard: Banana Cokies

Al Roberts: Papaya Juice

Nancy McCormack: Apple Pie & Mufins

MaryAnn Campbell: Key Lime Pie

Walter Vines: Grapes & Pineapple Juice



RFCI MIAMI and TROPICAL FRUIT NEWS Special Offer to Chapters

The original Miami Rare Fruit Council is **40 Years Old** this year and as a part of the celebration wants to offer you, members of our Chapters, something special. If you are not now a member **TRY US OUT** for a year at the special anniversary rate of only \$20 for the year. This is \$15 discounted off our regular \$35 membership.

For your money you'll enjoy dual membership in the original RFC and the Tampa Bay Chapter. You will also receive the Miami RFC magazine Tropical Fruit News which is a respected source of information worldwide. Besides articles on fruit and techniques TFNews contains access to the RFC Seed Exchange and book, publication and product reviews. Each month for a year you'll receive Tropical Fruit News at your door. Give us a try, just send this form. Photocopy if you don't want to cut your newsletter.

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____
CITY/STATE _____ ZIP _____ TELEPHONE () _____ (TB)

Rare Fruit Council International, Inc. • P O Box 561914 • Miami, Florida 33256

Still not convinced? Send \$1 for a sample issue.

Your Board of Directors announces the officers elected to serve for the coming year:

President: *Paul Zmoda*
 Vice President: *Charles Novak*
 Vice President: *Frank Burhenn*
 Treasurer: *Alice Burhenn*
 Secretary: *Edith Freedman*
 Planting Chairman: *Bob Heath*
 Membership: *Lillian Stark*

Remember: the next regular meeting is on May 14.

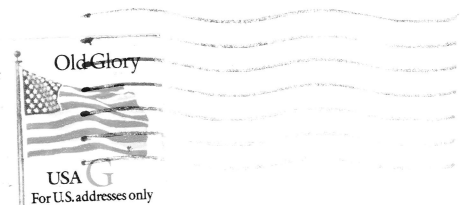
AND

We will be at the USF Botanical Gardens Plant Sale
 on **April 8 and 9**,
 which would have been our regular meeting weekend

Please come out to USF and bring plants for sale, or just join
 us in speaking with the public about Rare Fruits, our club, and
 plants in general. It is always an enjoyable time.



RFCI Tampa Bay Chapter
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FIRST CLASS MAIL

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