



NEWSLETTER

SEPT. 1998

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

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: BOB HEATH, THERESA HEATH, ARNOLD STARK, LILLIAN STARK

PRESIDENT: CHARLES NOVAK

CHAPTER MAIL ADDRESS: 313 PRUETT RD, SEFFNER FL 33584
(Including Renewals)


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

NEXT MEETING: SUNDAY, SEPT. 13, 1998

PROGRAM: WHAT AN INTERESTING PROGRAM WE HAVE SCHEDULED! IT'S NOT EXACTLY RARE FRUIT WHEN JODY VENN SPEAKS ABOUT GROWING EDIBLE MUSHROOMS BUT IT IS SOMETHING VERY TASTY & VERY POPULAR AT THIS TIME. Mushrooms, of course, are a fungus and a member of a very varied plant species, the plant we call mushrooms being only a small part of the total fungus family. There are a great number of different mushrooms, the majority of which are edible, only a few of which are poison. A number of delicious wild varieties grow throughout Florida and may be harvested in the field by those who know which ones are safe to eat. We will also have our usual tasting table and plant raffle so please contribute, come and enjoy.

FOOD ALLERGIES & REACTIONS. . .

One of our members may have had an allergic reaction to our tasting table goodies after the last meeting. As an extra burden to those who are good enough to bring food for the tasting table, would it be possible to have an ingredient list for each item so anyone who may be allergic to certain foods can abstain from those particular items? We know this is asking a lot to benefit 1 or 2 members, but for them it may be critically important, and it is certainly a good will gesture.



Tasting Table: August 1998

Novak: Muscadine Upside-down Cake,
Fig jam, Banana Cookies, Fruit Punch

Paul Zmoda: Muscadine Grapes

Al Roberts: Naval Orange Juice

Steven Branesky II: Pickled Mango, Dried Cherries; Juice

Beth Reddicliffe: Raspberry Creme Cake

Musgraves: Lemon Poppy Seed Muffins

Lanny Brooks: Bread Pudding

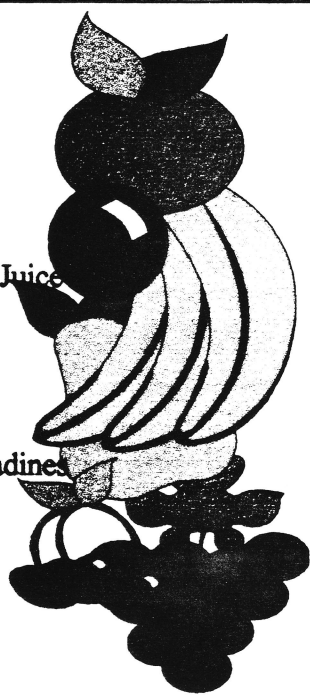
Lillian Smoleny: Fresh Home-grown Pineapple

Betty Morris: Muscadine Jam on Pound Cake, Muscadines

Burns & Catherine Creighton: Baked Cushaw,
Sweet Cushaw Casserole

Lillian Stark: Lemonade

Janet Conard: Banana Cookies



RECYCLED WOOD PRODUCTS by J.D. CATHER

J.D. began his presentation with an eight minute video of the company he works for and how they recycle wood products. One of their products is what they call black gold compost, a humus soil builder high in nutrients and nitrogen, which is marketed to state and local agencies and to private landscape companies. He indicated that we need to do something with all the refuse plant material that is produced every day. used to be, all these wood products were placed in landfills or incinerated. Some of that is still going on today in the country but thankfully in Florida it is now illegal to dump wood in landfills or incinerators. So several companies have gotten into the recycling of wood products.

J.D.'s company, Recycled Wood Products, is about 20 years old, beginning in California, an outgrowth of a company that made compost equipment & machinery, so this was just a natural for them. Today they have several plants throughout the country. The video was made at their South Tampa plant & shows some of the processes and machinery used. One of the most exciting things shown was the recycling of yard waste, leaves, grass, brush and tree limbs. Taken together, these landscape trimmings make up approximately 25% to 30% of our municipal garbage, all of which can be effectively recycled into mulch and compost that can be returned to the earth to enrich the soil.

Composting is really the oldest form of recycling of nature's bounty, a system that uses valuable resources again and again for the creation of new life. Material for recycling normally comes from Parks Departments, landscape contractors and residents. Scrap wood and used lumber is also recycled. At J.D.'s company the material is loaded into a large tub grinder which pulverizes any wood based material into a coarse mulch, up to 40 tons per hour. The mulch is then placed in large windrows where nature's micro organisms can go to work. The condition of the piles is monitored on a regular basis to control the temperature & humidity at optimum levels. The piles are watered and turned as necessary to speed the process. After approximately 6 months when the decomposition process is complete, the material then goes through a screening process which sorts it into 3 separate sizes; large pieces which will be returned

to the grinder, and two finished products, a quality mulch and a nutrient rich fine compost. Both of these products come out weed free as seeds are destroyed by the high temperatures developed during composting.

J.D. emphasized that in their composting they do not use any pressure treated wood or creosoted wood such as railroad ties, or painted wood. Although the Federal Government has outlawed the use of lead in paint, there is still a lot of painted wood out there that was painted with lead based paint. Lead being a toxic substance that may be absorbed by edible plants, it is inappropriate to use painted wood. Also Creosote, as used on railroad ties, is a cadmium product. The cadmium compounds are very toxic, which is one reason why railroad ties use creosote: to decrease the insect damage. The green color of pressure treated wood is caused by an arsenic-copper compound which is also very toxic and may be absorbed by edible plants.

The industry is very heavily regulated by the Federal Government and by the Hillsborough County E.P.C., both of which require that composters submit samples for testing quarterly. They actually test for about 23 different chemicals in addition to lead, arsenic and cadmium.

J.D. indicated that their composting plant is at 6727 South Lois Ave. near Robinson High School. They sell the material to anyone but it is not bagged, it is sold in bulk and they will deliver for a fee.

J.D. stated that the 2 elements needed for good composting are moisture and oxygen. With these 2 items in proper balance, the pile will start to heat up and will maintain itself between 120° and 160° F. If the temperature inside the pile drops below 120°, it's an indication that the pile is probably too wet, the pile does not have enough oxygen, the microbes are dying and the pile will begin to stink. At that point the pile should be turned, aerated and allowed to dry out. Then we will see the temperature start to come up as the microbes begin to breed again. If the temperature rises above 160°, normally it's because there's not enough water; too much oxygen and the temperature starts to rise. If the temperature of the pile goes above

160°, it begins to dry out and begins to oxidize inside. If it gets dry and hot enough it may even spontaneously combust. For home composting, thermometers for checking the pile may be obtained from Omega Industries, or "The Worms Way" on 66th Street can order them. Also Sidney Brown at the County Extension Service can probably tell you where to get a good one.

J.D. said that he is a 3rd generation organic farmer in Bushnell, Fla. He doesn't farm commercially but only as a means of feeding his family with cheap and healthy produce. He says he does not use commercial pesticides nor commercial fertilizer.

Another form of composting that J.D. has been researching for the last couple of years is vermiculture. Vermiculture is

the use of earthworms to break down the organic matter into compost. Actually, if you check the Internet you'll find that vermiculture has literally taken the country by storm. J.D. uses all his kitchen scraps, all his junk mail, all his paper shredded up and provided to the worms. All this garbage is piled in the back yard and covered up with a little soil and injected with earthworms. If you don't have enough earthworms in your soil you can buy them at many locations in the area. J.D. encourages everyone to compost at home; it is much more interesting and cheaper than buying the material. He builds a bin out of wooden boards set directly on the ground. In the bottom he puts chicken wire to keep any moles from coming up into the bin; on top of that he puts a mat and about 4" of organic matter and garbage and shredded paper; then he

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What's Happening

August-September 1998

by Paul Zmoda

We've been eating well lately, thanks to hard work and a lush garden that is providing vegetables in return for lots of attention. Some evenings we don't even eat meat as there are so many filling dishes to make from what's in the back yard.

Yard-long beans thrive in the heat and give us thick handfuls of slender stringbeans. Should we miss a few at picking time, they grow plumper and a short time later we eat the shelling beans. Squashes are great baked; the huge 'Tahiti' lasts for several meals while 'Seminole Acorn' halved is just right for two. While toasted squash seeds make excellent snacks, stuffed squash blossoms are out-of-this-world at dinner time.

Prolific okra is also a heat loving vegetable. Briefly boiled and served with grated cheese and hot sauce, it is a simple dish that is hard to beat, except maybe by okra breaded and fried. 'Bride' eggplant (a long, white and pink one) is also nice fried or as part of a pasta dish.

Hot chili peppers are really growing lots of fruits. Those we cannot use immediately will dry easily to be used in the future. I made a batch of dill pickles by just

soaking our cut cucumbers in water, vinegar, salt, garlic, and dill flowers in the refrigerator for several days.

I love fresh spinach, but have never been able to grow it in the cooler weather. I recently grew some Malabar spinach instead, but we couldn't stand the taste, so what to do now? Amaranth filled the spinach void quite nicely. It tastes almost identical to spinach and is a very rapid grower. These pretty, leafy plants will also provide lots of tiny nutritious seeds to be sprinkled on your food, for example, on pancakes.

Back in February, I had planted a half dozen Burley tobacco plants. As the summer progressed, they grew faster and larger. I began picking the most mature leaves on a weekly schedule and have them hanging in the toolshed, speared on a wire through the thick ribs. Here they have dried to a brown, leather-like texture. They are beginning to smell like tobacco should. Processing tobacco is a complex art and if all goes well, I shall attempt to make a few cigars one day.

New plantings: Mulberry, red and yellow mombins and bitter melons..

From the President
Charles Novak

Summer will be over before we know it. Please start getting your extra fruiting plants together for the Fall Plant Sale at the USF Botanical Garden. You do not have to be there both days in order to sell your plants. A check will be mailed to you if you cannot be there on Sunday, October 11. You can bring your plants to the Garden on Friday afternoon, October 9th, or Saturday morning, October 10th, before 8 am. We will be giving demonstrations on plant propagation (grafting) at the plant sale.

A trip to Pine Island is scheduled for Saturday, September 26th, to purchase club plants for the sale. If you would like to go please contact me so I can set up carpooling for the trip. You will be able to purchase plants at a discount if you come with us on the trip.

J. D. Cather gave an informative program on soil development. I have had success using recycled soil for my plants; sometimes to much success - more plants that I know what to do with. Has anyone done more research on Sonic Bloom? If so, let me know so I can inform our club members of your results.

Start thinking about what you would like to do to help with the Citrus Celebration to be held in January. More details at the September meeting.

The following is a list of scheduled programs/speakers:

September 13	Jody Venn - Growing Edible Mushrooms
October 10 & 11	USF Fall Plant Sale
November 8	Sharon Garrett - (Tentative) Citrus Plant Specialist
December 13	Christmas/Hanukkah Social at Janet Conard's Home
January	Citrus Celebration

Hopefully, your plants for the club's exhibit at the State Fair next year are growing nicely. These plants will need to be very nice specimens and will require extra care.

Please return any library books. Do you know any E-Mail addresses that would interest our club members? Please let me know the address and I will put them in the club newsletter.

There will be a board meeting after the October club meeting.

Raffle: August 1998

Plant Name	Donor	Winner
Cuban Red Banana	J. Murrie	Paul Branesky
Mahai Banana	J Murrie	Lanny Brooks
Jaboticaba	Heath	Doug Harwood
Pineapple	Heath	Art Hedstrand
Rose Apple	Heath	Steven Branesky
Cos guava	Heath	?
Banana	Heath	Bob San Luis
Papaya	Heath	Bob San Luis
<i>Eugenia confusa</i>	Heath	Stark
Mulberry	Heath	Steven Branesky II
Annona (large)seedling)	C. Novak	?
Annona (large)seedling)	C. Novak	?
Black Sapote	C. Novak	Betty Morris
Soursop	C. Novak	Ed Musgrave
<i>Cherimoya</i>	C. Novak	Susan McAveety
<i>Snake plant</i>	C. Novak	Paul Branesky
Ginkgo	C. Novak	?
<i>Syzygium coolminanum</i>	C. Novak	Lillian Stark
<i>Syzygium coolminanum</i>	C. Novak	
Cinnamon	C. Novak	Ron Opat
Loquats	Jan Conard	Sam Ramirez
Loquats	Lanny Brooks	Ron Opat
Loquats	Lanny Brooks	Kathryn Castillo
<i>Tabebuia pentaphylla</i>	Lanny Brooks	Jerry Amyot
<i>Tabebuia pentaphylla</i>	Lanny Brooks	?
Ladyfingers Banana	R. San Luis	P. Zmoda
Ladyfingers Banana	R. San Luis	B. Reddicliffe
Ladyfingers Banana	R. San Luis	Susan McAveety
Ladyfingers Banana (3)	R. San Luis	???
Tamarind	G. Nemeth	Bob San Luis
<i>Bilbergia piramidalis</i>	G. Nemeth	Evelyn Moya
Orchid Ginger	Norwood Smith	?
Passion Vine	M.M. Court	?
Surinam Cherry	Betty Morris	Branesky
Papayas	Sam Ramirez	Ed. Musgrave
Raffinel	?	?
Cushaw	Creighton	J. Murrie

ARE YOU A "?" Please...please...please print your name on the Plant Exchange List when you bring a plant and when you get a plant.
It helps all of us know who is trying to grow what.

New Member:

J.D. Cather 160 28 Peach Orchard Road Brooksville, FL 34614 Tampa office #:(813)832-3634

injects that with worms and covers the whole thing with a tarp. Every few days he adds another 3 or 4 inches of organic matter. He places his worm bin in the sun or partial shade. If it gets too warm of course the worms go back down deeper into the soil, and in the cool of the evening and during the night they come up to work at the surface. J.D. also indicates that he will sell worms if you need them. They run about \$7.00 a pound and he uses what's called the California Red Tiger Worm, which are the most voracious of the earthworms. They actually consume half their weight a day of material.

J.D. is currently experimenting with screens to separate the compost from the worms so that you don't lose the worms every time you harvest your compost.

He is also experimenting with a process called sonic bloom, which uses sound waves or radio waves to increase the uptake of nutrient sprays on a plant. Anyone interested in this kind of process may contact J.D. for information on the equipment and nutrient sprays that he is presently experimenting with.

Recipe of the Month: Pan Cooked Cushaw by Catherine Creighton

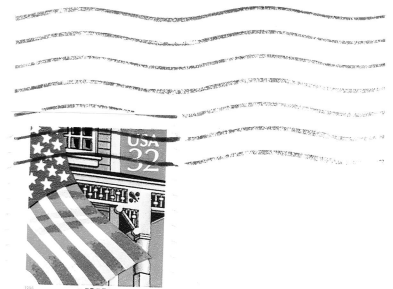
1 red bell pepper
1 green bell pepper
3 eggs

1 large onion
1 15 oz can stewed tomatoes
1/2 cup olive oil

1 large Cushaw (squash)
salt & pepper

Peel the squash and cut into chunks. Chop the bell peppers, onions and garlic. Saute all the vegetables in the olive oil until softened. Whip the eggs and add to the cooking vegetables. Stir well. Cover the pan and cook on a medium-low heat until done, stirring frequently. Tastes great served with italian style breaded and fried boneless chops (pork or veal), or just by itself!

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

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