



NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2006

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

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MEETINGS ARE HELD THE 2nd SUNDAY OF THE MONTH @ 2:00 PM

NEXT MEETING: JANUARY 8

PROGRAM: OUR PROGRAM THIS MONTH IS ON A VERY IMPORTANT SUBJECT, MAINLY COLLECTING SEEDS OF RARE FRUITING PLANTS, BY ALAN CARLE. Alan will give us some pointers on how seeds can be collected from these rare tropical plants. Seeds, of course, are the name of the game for our club. In many cases, collecting seeds is the only way to get new plants into our gardens. In addition to an interesting program, we will also have our tasting table, our plant raffle and our farmers market. Let's get the year off to a great start with an enthusiastic attendance for a happy new year!

*** MEETING WILL BE AT THE TAMPA GARDEN CLUB, 2629 BAYSHORE BLVD, TAMPA ***

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Dec-Jan 2006

by PAUL ZMODA

2005 was a fantastic year for fruit growing, or growing anything, for that matter. We experienced many "first fruitings" of quite a few plants. The weather was mostly ideal as well as merciful. Our vegetable gardens are still providing well and our daily menus are varied and satisfying to show for it.

I had been waiting and waiting for our pigeon peas to make seeds. Now we have such a huge excess! What shall we do with all these peas? After a thorough picking, the plants still look unpicked. Better to have too much than not enough.

I contacted the owner of a fruit stand on Route 301 in Riverview. He is happy to buy our excess citrus, star fruits and whatever. He gets to offer his customers new and exciting fruits and we make a little extra money while not allowing much to go to waste. It's a win-win situation.

My first ever paid article appeared in the December issue of Florida Gardening magazine. The topic is home grown tea. Watch for it at book stores and news stands.

Pruning season is upon us. Don't forget this important procedure. I have lots to do in this regard, mainly grapevines. Pruning correctly will help ensure a bountiful, healthy crop in 2006.

Happy New Year from Flatwoods Fruit Farm!

DECEMBER PLANT EXCHANGE

PLANT	DONOR	WINNER
Surinam Cherry	Heath	Marilyn Chavez
Gabeluda	"	?
Loquat	"	?
Rose Apple	"	Susan McAveety
Pineapple	"	?
Passion Fruit	"	Ed Andrews
Papaya	"	Rachel Beauvais/John Berning
Carissa	"	?
Rangoon Creeper	Heath	?
Fruit Basket	Lee	?
"	"	?
"	"	?
"	"	?
"	Lee	?
Hot Pepper	Weekley	?
Hot Peppers	Ledesma	?
Crimson Angel Lily	Reddicliffe	Louise Shapiro
" " "	"	Chris Andrews
" " "	"	?
Red Kalanchoe	"	Chris Andrews/Sherry Saffer
" "	"	Chris Storch
Surinam Cherry	"	?
Indian River Red Grapefruit	"	?
" " " "	Reddicliffe	?
Namwah	Walt Yoblonski	Debbie Butts
Hot Pepper Seedlings	Weekley	?
Aloe	Connie White	John Berning
Plumeria starts	Zmoda	Linda Smith
" "	"	Teri Worsham
" "	Zmoda	?
Walking Iris	Iris Helveston	Peggy Mann
Loquats (4)	Ron Watkins	Karin Yoblonski/Teddy T.
Papaya (2)	Tony Ferreira	?
Lychee	Paul Branesky	Ed Musgrave
Crocosmia	M. Brandt	?
Vine	"	?
Orchid	"	Chris Storch
Orient Pear	"	Ron Watkins
Avocado	Walker	?
Hibiscus	Gustin	?
Butterfly Bush	"	?
Heather Bush	"	?
Longan	Walker	B.J. Vosburgh
Azalea	Gustin	?
Orient Pear	Harris	Steve Lohn
Gerber	Louise Shapiro	Sandi Blackadar
Table Gift	?	Walsh
"	?	Verna Dickey
"	?	Luisa Zomada
"	?	Mark Lohn
"	?	Maryann Braneski
Mexican Heather	?	Sonia Biglow
Lady Palm	Chris Storch	?
Table Gift	?	Beth Cook
White Sapote	Maria Theryo	Sal Russo/Bill Marler

Dec. Plant Exchange continued:

PLANT	DONOR	WINNER
Bromeliad	?	Sandra Worsham
Dwarf Canna	Harris	?
Pear	"	Judy Cimafranca
Loquat	"	Herman Greenberg/Bobbie Parker
"	"	Norma Estes
"	"	Larry Helveston
Lady Finger Palm	?	Sheldon Sumner
Table Gift	?	Mike Gustin
"	?	Sharon Walker
Bromeliads	?	Roberta Harris
Table Gift	?	Barb Ritter
Fruit Basket	?	Susan Reed
Table Gift	?	Iris Helveston
Bread Basket from Table	?	Debbie Campani
Table Gift	?	Tom Shaefer
Mamey Americana	Cimafranca	Shane Smith
Loquat	Harris	Lily Iskandar
Ginger	?	Amyot
Garlic	?	Amyot
White Sapote	?	Sal Russo
Table Gift	?	Bobbie Parker
Ginger	Pat McGauley	Maria Theryo
Red Caribe Papaya	"	?
4 plants	"	?

RFCI HORTICULTURE DISPLAY AT THE FLORIDA STATE FAIR: February 9-20, 2006

We will need members to man the club's horticulture display. Free admission tickets will be given to members who volunteer to man the exhibit. A sign up sheet will be available at the January 8 meeting; or contact Charles Novak (813) 754-1399 to volunteer.

Tampa Bay RFCI Board of Directors Election in March: Please give some thought to serving on the Board of Directors. Directors serve a one-year term and will assume their respective offices immediately after the March meeting. The board meets monthly or at such times as deemed necessary. The Board is responsible for the policies, finances and direction of the Chapter. A nominating committee will be appointed at the January Board meeting and members interested in serving on the Board may contact a member of the nominating committee. The list of candidates will be published in the March newsletter and will be presented at the March meeting. Additional nominations may be presented from the floor. The Board of Directors will be elected at the March meeting by a majority vote of the membership present and voting.

NEW MEMBERS:	JR Ebanks	Sun City Center	Sal Russo	Valrico
	Larry & Iris Helveston	Dade City		

From the President
Charles Novak

Happy New Year! I hope it will be a happy and prosperous year for all our members. 2005 had it ups and downs; at least we didn't have any hurricanes in our area. Let's hope our luck holds through 2006.

I want to **Thank** Burns & Cathy Creighton for hosting our Holiday Social for the 7th year at their wonderful farm in Lithia. Approximately 135 members and family attended. A big **Thank You** to everyone for bringing the delicious food and wine; and for the plants, fruits and gifts for the free raffle and silent auction. You are the reason we have a great club. Thank You!

Sign up sheets will be available at the January 8 meeting for the State Fair Citrus Tasting and for manning our horticulture display. Please plan to help with the Citrus Tasting event at the Florida State Fair on Sunday, February 12. Also, volunteers are needed to man our horticulture exhibit at the State Fair - February 9 - 20. We receive many questions and comments from the public and you will enjoy your time talking with them about growing rare and tropical fruit. If you are asked questions you cannot answer you may refer them to our club web site where they can e-mail their questions and receive answers.

I am looking for someone to take over the Seed Board. I have held this position for over 8 years and it is time for someone new to take over. Someone, please volunteer. I will help you get started and offer suggestions as to where new seeds can be obtained.

There will be a Board of Directors meeting after the regular meeting on January 8. Members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Scheduled Speakers/Events:

January 8:	Collecting seeds of rare fruiting plants by Alan Carle (on DVD)
February 9 - 20	Horticulture display at the Florida State Fair (manned by members)
February 12:	Citrus Tasting at the Florida State Fair. No regular meeting.

CITRUS TASTING AT THE FLORIDA STATE FAIR; SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2006

This will be our 5th year hosting this event. It has been very popular with the public as it gives them the opportunity to sample many varieties of citrus. Please plan to help with this event. We need volunteers to pick fruit and to prepare the fruit for sampling. A sign up sheet will be available at the January 8 meeting, or you may contact Charles Novak (813) 754-1399, Bob Heath (813) 289-1068 or Jimmy Lee (813) 982-9359 to volunteer or if you have questions. Also, **please contact Charles, Bob or Jimmy if you can donate citrus fruit for this event.** There will be fewer varieties of fruit available this year. Therefore, it is very important for members to contribute fruit for the citrus tasting. There will be more information in the February newsletter. Thanks in advance for your help.

THE MANGO

(NOTE: This article was taken from a 1985 publication. Since then, our weather has grown a little warmer and mangoes are less subject to damage from freezes than they were in 1985, especially near the coast in central Florida.)

It has been extremely difficult trying to grow mangoes over the last few years because of the cold. The fruit itself is still available in the supermarkets and vegetable markets. They are certainly a very economical buy considering their delicious taste and high quality. The mango is a treasure chest of vitamin A and other vitamins and minerals. It is native to southeastern Asia from India to the Philippines. The mango is classified as several different races, such as the Cambodiana, the Carabao, Pico, West Indian, Philippino, the Sandersha, the Pairi, the Alphonse and many others. It appears to have been cultivated in India for at least 4000 years. After the development of trade between India and the outside world, its cultivation spread to other countries and eventually to the tropical areas of the entire world. At present the mango is a fruit of greater importance to millions throughout the tropics than is the apple to temperate North America. It is reckoned by many as the most delicious fruit and the most wholesome of any in the world.

The Portuguese carried the mango to Africa during the 16th century, then to Brazil in 1700. It was first introduced to Barbados in 1742, reached Jamaica in 1782. The mango was introduced in Mexico early in the 19th century by Juan Antonio Gomez of Cordoba. Apparently Mexico received mangoes from two sources, some from the West Indies and others from the Philippines, brought by the Spanish galleons which traded in early times between Acapulco and Manila. The mango was even grown in greenhouses in Europe from about 1700 on. Henry Perrine introduced it into Florida in 1833 but his plantings died from neglect after his demise and it took 30 years for the mango to be re-introduced.

The name "mango" appears to be derived from the Portuguese "manga". The word actually originates from the Ceylonese name man-kay or man-gay. The name mango is used in Italian and German; the Dutch have adopted mango and the French mangue.

Sucrose is the principal sugar in mangoes and varies from 11 to 20% according to the variety. Protein is usually a little higher than is normal in fruits but acidity is lower than 0.5%. Mangoes have over 15% solids, 16% carbohydrates, 1% fiber, calcium, phosphorus, potassium, vitamin C and other trace elements, as well as a very great abundance of Vitamin A. The ripe fruit is very sweet and juicy and has been described as peach-pineapple, but it is sweeter than either. The aroma is tantalizing and inviting, the texture of the flesh smooth and clings to the seed. It is most often eaten fresh as a ripe fruit but when green may be prepared in several ways. It is put into curries and made into pickles, preserves and jellies. It may be cut in small pieces and put in salads or made into chutney. In addition, mangoes are canned in the same manner as peaches.

Central Florida has an ideal climate for cultivation of the mango except for the freezes which occur all too often. For good crops of fruit, the dry season must coincide with the normal flowering time of the mango which is the case in central Florida. Fruiting is not successful where there is much precipitation during the flowering season. Some of the seedling races will set fruit under these conditions but the choice Indian varieties are more exacting in their climatic requirements.

If you prefer to eat a mango out of hand, look for a golden ripe fruit that gives a little to the touch. Firmer fruit can be used in cooking and baking. A good way to enjoy this luscious fruit is to eat it as you would a banana. Cut the skin from tip to tip into 4 sections. Strip off the skin as you would a banana. Another

method of preparation is to cut the fruit in half crosswise, clear through to the seed. Holding the fruit with both hands, twist quickly and separate into halves. To remove the seed, insert a knife blade close to the seed and cut around. You now have 2 halves which can be eaten with a spoon.

The mango, like other tropical fruits, is subject to chilling injury if the fruit is stored below a temperature range of 48°F to 50°F. Skin blemishes, which may be associated with chilling, are noticeable with tiny brown and circular areas which eventually coalesce, resulting in the characteristic brown mottling of the skin. So store at a good temperature if need be. Otherwise plan to use your mangoes within a few days of harvesting them.

If fresh, enjoy as a salad along with seasonal fruits. Sprinkle with lemon or lime juice to prevent browning and to improve the piquant flavor. Otherwise, enjoy canned mangoes or packaged mango juice. Try a cereal of granola or any whole grain favorite in a bowl of mango juice. This combination gets you going. An easy mango fruit salad is made with sliced mangoes, strawberries, melon balls, bananas and your favorite dressing. Such a salad tastes great and is loaded with nutrients and enzymes.

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