



# RFCI

## NEWSLETTER

TAMPA BAY CHAPTER of the  
RARE FRUIT COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL INC

Nov 2006

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RFCI WEBSITE: [www.rarefruit.org](http://www.rarefruit.org)

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

NEXT MEETING: NOV 12

PROGRAM: OUR SPEAKER THIS MONTH WILL BE ERIC TIETIG, VICE PRESIDENT OF PINE ISLAND NURSERY. He will be speaking on their specialties, namely tropical fruits and spices. This should be an interesting and entertaining program for all our members. We will also have our usual plant raffle of fruiting plants and trees, our Farmers Market and fabulous spread of exotic and delicious dishes, so cook up your specialty for us all to enjoy. The meeting, as usual, will be at the Tampa Garden Center on Bayshore at 2:00 pm. (See map on page 06-80.) For cleanup and setting up tables, we can always use a few extra hands around 1:00. Looking forward to seeing you there.



### WHAT'S HAPPENING

Oct-Nov 2006

by PAUL ZMODA

Pecans! I was checking our grafted 'Moreland' tree for twig girdler beetles the other day and spied a cluster of four fat nuts. This healthy 20 ft. tree was planted in 1998 and I've been patiently waiting and watching. I climbed up to bag these treats so squirrels won't find them and discovered a dozen more hanging among the leafy branches.

Since I dearly love fresh, dried and shelled pecans, I must do everything in my power to keep the rodents at bay, lest they steal our crop. All aerial access is denied due to planting the tree out in our open orchard with no nearby trees to provide a launching pad from which to jump to our precious nut tree. Fairly isolated on its planting site, the pecan tree can be watched more closely by our resident red shouldered hawks which I've observed attached squirrels.

I've been foliar feeding many of our fruit trees these days. This technique gives a fast response - no waiting for rains to dissolve traditional fertilizers, carry them to the root zones and then wait for them to be translocated to the leaves. My favorite mixture is fish emulsion, with or without magnesium sulfate (epsom salts), liberally sprayed over both the upper and lower surfaces of the trees' leaves.

Juicy, orange palm fruits are available now on Pindo or Jelly palms. Worth waiting for, these fruits are delicious and thirst quenching, reminding me of a flavor mix of strawberries, pineapple and citrus or mango. It's a shame that many people have their lawn service workers cut off the fruit clusters as they appear.

Star fruit (carambola) trees are flowering now and one can see the profusion of tiny, pink flowers from a distance. I expect a huge crop this year.

New plantings: Pomegranates, hybrid plums, pole beans, lettuce, broccoli, herbs, onions, mustard, bay tree, passion flowers.

From the President  
Charles Novak

What a great club we have! I want to **thank** all the members who contributed their time and hard work to make the Fall USF Botanical Garden Plant Festival a success for the club. The weather was nice and we were busy both days. 430 cups of juice were served. We always have a wide variety of rare and unusual fruits on display and many people stop by just to see the display. A special 'Thanks' to Al Hendry for the great job he does in telling people about the fruit on display and answering their questions. We have 21 new memberships. Let's all welcome the new members to our club.

You should plan to attend the November 12 meeting. Erik Tietig, Vice President of Pine Island Nursery in Homestead, FL, will be our speaker. Also, he will be bringing some fruiting plants for members who would like to purchase them. If you get down to the Homestead area be sure to visit their Nursery.

Remember the RFCI Holiday Social this year will be at the Tampa Garden Club, Dec. 10. The club will provide the turkeys, hams, drinks and tableware. Members are asked to bring side dishes (salads, casseroles, vegetables, desserts, etc.). The festivities will begin at 1 P.M.

This is your club. If you have any ideas and suggestions to improve the club please talk to me or one of the other board members. There will be a board meeting after the regular meeting in November. Members are welcome and encouraged to attend board meetings.

**Scheduled programs/speakers:**

**November 12:** Erik Tietig from Pine Island Nursery  
**December 10:** Holiday Social at the Tampa Garden Club

**Volunteers needed:** We need several members to arrive at the Tampa Garden Club early to help set up for our meetings (to tidy up if there was a wedding the previous evening and to arrange chairs, etc.) If you are available to help, please arrive at the Tampa Garden Club between noon and 12:30 P.M.

**Welcome to our New Members:**

Robert Barnett	Dade City	Herbert Law	Lutz
Robert & Jennie Berman	Thonotosassa	Skip Kincaid	Tampa
Jennifer McCarthy	Thonotosassa	James McKay	Tampa
Greg & Catherine Bunn	Thonotosassa	Laura Kowal	Wimauma
Judith & Lee Champagne	Brandon	Anne Pidgeon	Wimauma
Dale Deford & Suzy Saraceno	Riverview	Cathron Harris	Tampa
Ivan & Mila Doskocil	New Port Richey	Mary Bronson	Tampa
Briana Kilgore & Noel Rizzuto	Tampa	Celinda Evitt	Tampa
David & Banni Miller	Tampa	James Skipper	Leesburg
Julie & Louie McKell	Wesley Chapel	Era Soekotjo	Tampa
Barbara Fincher & Stephen Skrzypkowiak	Pinellas Park	Laura Massie	Dover
Guy Manteau & Karen Newton	Tampa	Jaffrey Hashimie	Tampa
Ciro & Ronnie Sinagra	Tampa		

## November is a Great Month for ...

*by Terry Lee*

Well, here it is November already. Are your fruit trees ready for their Winter snooze?

Things you can do to prepare ...

**Raspberries.** If your raspberries have finished their current crop, prune them down to soil level for the late spring crop.

**Citrus.** Give citrus and other fruit trees a last fertilization of the year, giving new growth time to mature before the cold weather sets in. But wait until just before Spring to prune citrus trees. The University of Florida Extension Service recommends waiting until the danger of freezing temperatures is past and just before spring growth to severely prune.

**Loquats.** While most fruit trees can be thinned when the fruit is in the very early stages of development, loquats should be thinned at the flower stage by removing every other flower cluster.

**Strawberries.** Wait until next month to plant strawberries.

**Persimmons.** Oriental persimmons ripen now through December. Pick them when color has developed to the yellow/orange/red stage and most or all of the green is eliminated. Unblemished fruit will keep at room temperature for up to thirty days.

**Water.** Even though it's cooled off, don't forget to water. Even though they're not actively growing, plants, lawns and fruit trees still need water every couple weeks if the weather is dry.

**Mulch.** One of the best thing a gardener can do to better their soil is add organic matter. Not only does it provide nutrients and increase biological activity, a good fall mulching acts as an insulating blanket, protecting your plants from repeated freeze and thaw cycles.

**Monitor Temperature.** If you have frost-sensitive or tropical fruit trees and plants, consider signing up for a free weather alert. One example is AccuWeather, <http://www.accuweather.com/iwxpage/alerts/index.htm>, which sends out 7-day forecasts you can use to plan all of your activities, and severe weather bulletins to keep you informed of potentially dangerous weather. You can get weather alerts sent to your cell phone or email address. Based on historical data, there is a 10% chance of a freeze by December 3<sup>rd</sup> and a 50% chance by January 3<sup>rd</sup>. [http://www.coaps.fsu.edu/climate\\_center/includes/sections/specials/freezetab.html](http://www.coaps.fsu.edu/climate_center/includes/sections/specials/freezetab.html).

**New Plantings.** Even into November you can continue planting fruit trees and shrubs. Just remember that new plantings require water for root growth.

**Pruning Tip/Trick.** If you have many types of fruit trees, tie a ribbon to each tree after it's finished producing. This way, when you do decide to prune, you won't mistake a mid-season avocado that hasn't bloomed yet for a late season variety that's done.

Okay, it's your turn! How do you prepare your yard and fruit trees for Winter weather? What fruit-tree-specific tricks have you learned along the way that you'd be willing to share with your fellow members? Send me an email at [tampa-terry@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:tampa-terry@tampabay.rr.com), and we'll publish your contributions in next month's newsletter.



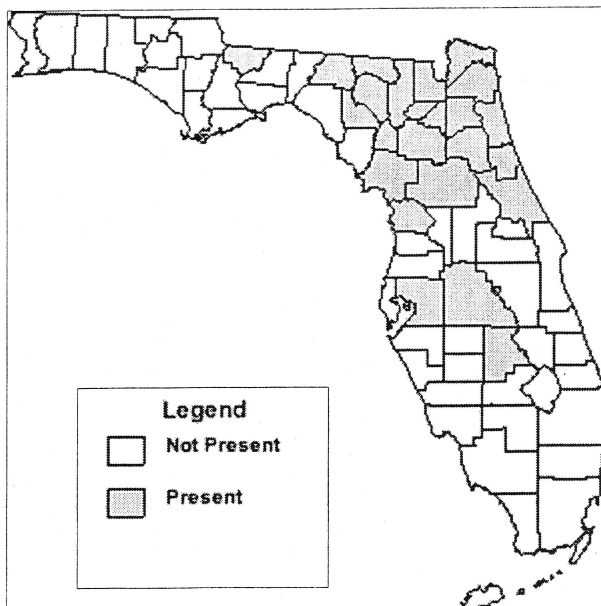
Rare Fruit Q & A  
by Terry Lee, Rare Fruit Detective

**Q:** What's shaped like an overweight banana, tastes kind of like a mango and is in danger of becoming forgotten?

**A:** The pawpaw, the largest edible fruit native to North America. (In the Eastern United States, pawpaws can weigh up to 16 ounces and grow up to 6 inches in length.)

Cultivars grown in Florida:

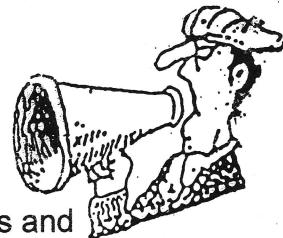
- \* *Asimina angustifolia* Raf. - Slimleaf Pawpaw. Florida, Georgia, and Alabama.
- \* *Asimina incana* (W. Bartram) Exell - Woolly Pawpaw. Florida and Georgia.
- \* *Asimina obovata* (Willd.) Nash - Bigflower Pawpaw. Florida.
- \* *Asimina parviflora* (Michx.) Dunal - Smallflower Pawpaw. Southern states from Texas to Virginia.
- \* *Asimina pygmaea* (W. Bartram) Dunal - Dwarf Pawpaw. Florida and Georgia.
- \* *Asimina reticulata* Shuttlw. ex Chapman - Netted Pawpaw. Florida and Georgia.
- \* *Asimina tetramera* Small - Fourpetal Pawpaw. Florida Conservation status: Endangered.
- \* *Asimina tetrapetalum* - an endangered species restricted to scrub in coastal SE Florida.
- \* *Asimina triloba* (L.) Dunal - Common Pawpaw. Extreme southern Ontario, Canada, and the eastern United States from New York west to southeast Nebraska, and south to northern Florida and eastern Texas.



Distribution Map, Based on Vouchered Plant Specimens only.

### Members' Corner:

**Wanted:** Cuttings of Yuzu citrus, seeds from the Turpentine mango, 1 gallon pots and hanging containers. **Free:** Older, working computer. Can be used for kids games or for the internet. Charles Novak at (813) 754-1399



**pH Soil testing:** If you would like the pH of your soil tested, obtain soil samples from 6 to 8 sites within the area you want tested. Mix the soil together; put into a plastic bag and bring it to the next meeting. **You will need at least 1 cup of moist soil.**



## THE PAWPAW by Bob Heath

Picking up pawpaws.  
Putting them in my pocket.  
Down at the pawpaw patch.

This little ditty comes to us from up in pawpaw country. Unfortunately, the pawpaw itself has never made it to central Florida. Its natural range is from the Georgia-Florida line up to Canada, including Louisiana, Missouri, Arkansas, Texas & California. Yet almost no one I know, including my northern friends, has ever even seen a pawpaw, let alone eaten one. This isn't hard to understand since it looks so unappetizing. It is greenish-yellow with a potato shape and brown smudges, but the delicious orangish flesh is as smooth as egg custard and the flavor suggests peach, mango or banana. The tropical looking trees have large droopy leaves, strange 2-petaled maroon flowers in the spring, and the largest fruit of any tree native to the continental United States.

The northern pawpaw, *Asimina triloba*, is the only temperate member among the 850 or so species of the Annonaceae family, which contains several delicious fruits native to South America, such as the sugar apple and atemoya. We grow several members of this family here in central Florida, such as the sugar apple, cherimoya, custard apple, etc., all of which are cold tender and suffer damage at temperatures below 30 degrees.

The northern pawpaw, being cold hardy, has certainly piqued the interest of several of our Rare Fruit Council members. We are hoping that we may be able to coax it down to central Florida if we treat it real nice.

Some of our members have joined the PawPaw Foundation, headquartered at Kentucky State University under the direction of Dr Kirk Pomper ([www.pawpaw.kysu.edu/](http://www.pawpaw.kysu.edu/)).

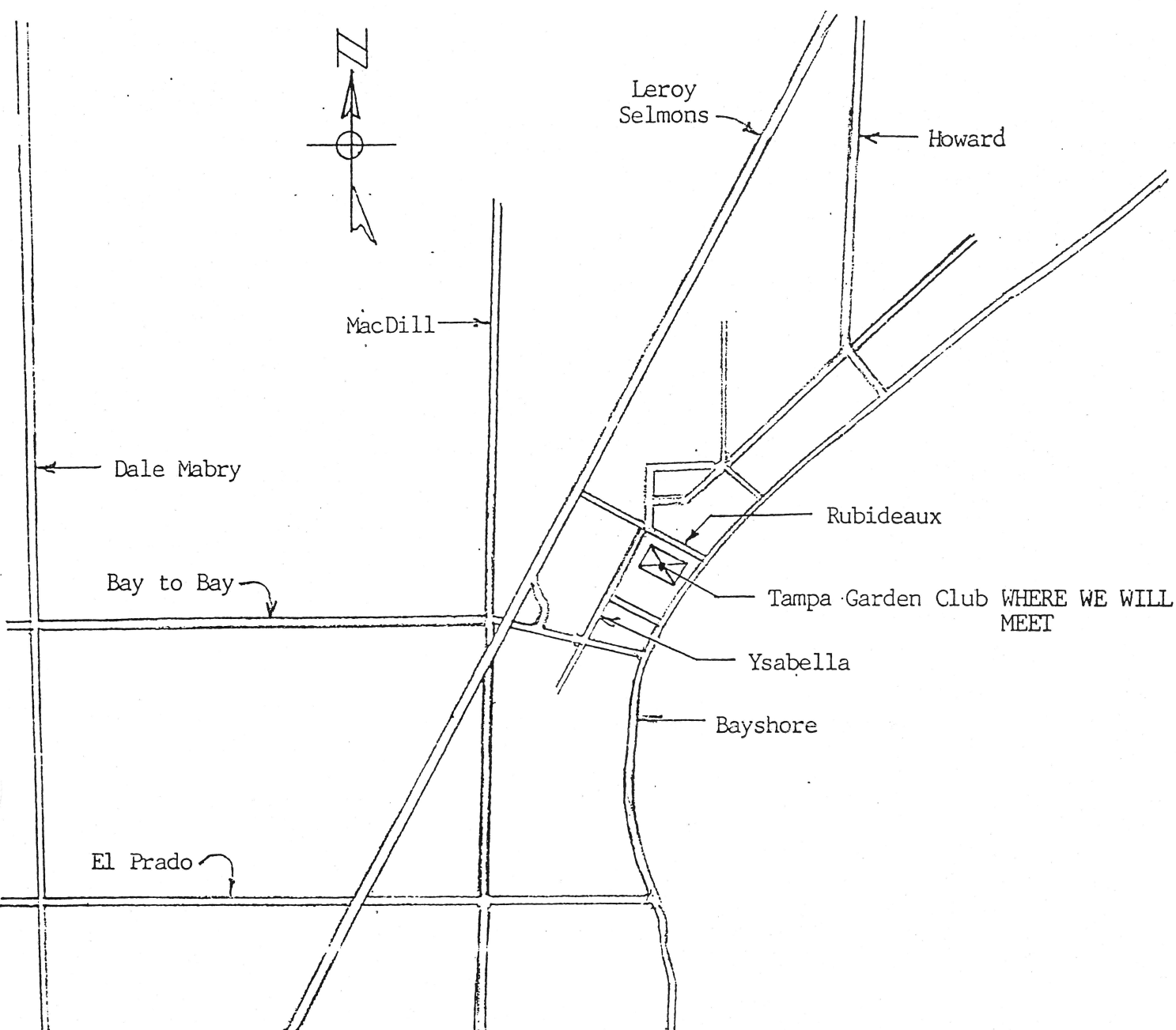
Our efforts to acclimate the northern pawpaw to central Florida have led us on expeditions to north Florida to South Georgia to talk to pawpaw growers and taste some of the better quality fruit they are growing. We visited Mrs Collins in Tifton, GA, who grows a variety of pawpaw trees and collected pawpaws there for the seeds. We also visited Jone Stalcup & his wife in Marietta, GA, where we collected more pawpaws to eat, as well as seeds & cuttings from a variety of different trees.

Eric Duckworth's small nursery in Palatka, FL, is the southernmost location we know of where the northern pawpaw is cultivated with some success. Several of the northern pawpaw trees being grown by Jetry Amyot, Charles Novak & others were obtained from Eric Duckworth.

A lone pawpaw tree, planted several years ago at the USF Gardens, produced some fruit after being hand pollinated by Paul Zmoda. Unfortunately, that tree (*A. triloba*) has died because of excess flooding during our recent heavy rains. The dwarf pawpaw, *A. parviflora*, grows in central Florida. The fruit is much smaller and seedier than that of its larger cousin, but tastes much the same. We had hoped to cross the *triloba* with *parviflora* to get a large fruit more acclimated to central Florida. Those hopes were dashed when the tree at USF died due to flooding. Don't hold your breath, but one of these days we will be growing the northern pawpaw here in Florida. For the present, unfortunately, Mother Nature is reluctant to give up her secrets.



# Happy Thanksgiving



### Directions to the Tampa Garden Club: 2629 Bayshore Blvd., Tampa

#### FROM NORTHEAST:

Take I-275 to Armenia Ave / Howard Ave exit (Exit 42).  
 Take Armenia south to West Swann Ave (1.2 miles).  
 Turn Left (east) on W. Swann Ave. Go 0.1 mile to first light (South Howard Ave).  
 Turn Right (south) on S. Howard, go 0.8 mile to Bayshore Blvd.  
 Turn Right (west) on Bayshore Blvd. Go 0.4 mile to the Tampa Garden Club.  
 Parking is in the rear. PARKING DIRECTIONS: Turn Right (north) on West Rubideaux St., go one block to Ysabella Ave. Turn Left (west) on Ysabella. Enter parking lot at the second gate on Left side of street.

#### FROM NORTHWEST OR SOUTH:

Take Dale Mabry or MacDill, turn East on Bay to Bay Blvd.  
 Pass under Leroy Selmon Expressway.  
 Turn Left (North) on Ysabella.  
 Enter Tampa Garden Club after Barcelona, before Rubideaux St.

# Recommended Fertilizer Practices for Young & Mature Tropical Fruit Trees

## University of Florida, IFAS

*Jonathan H. Crane, Carlos F. Balerdi and Michael S. Orfanedes*

Atemoya	Y: 1/4 lb. per tree bimonthly - increase amount with tree size. M: 1-3 lbs. per tree, 3-5 applications per year; maximum per year, 15-18 lbs.
Avocado	Y: 1/4 lb. per tree bimonthly - increase amount with tree size. M: 4-5 lbs. per tree, 3-5 applications per year; maximum per year, 20-25 lbs.
Banana	Y: 1/4-1 lb. per tree bimonthly - increase amount with tree size. Use a 6-2-12 or similar fertilizer. M: (after plants are 10-15 months old) 5-6 lbs. per tree bimonthly; maximum per year, 10-12 lbs.
Caimito	Y: 1/4 lb. per tree bimonthly - increase amount with tree size. M: 4-5 lbs. per tree, 3-5 applications per year; maximum per year, 20-25 lbs.
Carambola	Y: 1/4-1 lb. per tree bimonthly - increase amount with tree size. M: 4-5 lb. per tree, 4-6 applications per year; maximum per year, 20-25 lbs.
Canistel	Y: 1/4 lb. per tree bimonthly - increase amount with tree size. M: 4-5 lbs. per tree, 3-5 applications per year; maximum per year, 15-20 lbs.
Jaboticaba	Y: 1/4 lb. per tree per month the first year, every 2nd month the second year, and every 3rd month the third year. M: 1-2 lbs. per tree, 3-4 applications per year; maximum per year, 3-8 lbs.
Jackfruit	Y: 1/4-1/2 lb. per tree every 6-8 weeks the first year - increase amount with tree size. M: 1-5 lbs. per tree, 3-5 applications per year; maximum per year, 20-25 lbs.
Longan	Y: 1/4 lb. per tree bimonthly - increase amount with tree size. M: 3-5 lbs. per tree, 3-5 applications per year; maximum per year, 15 lbs.
Lychee	Y: 1/2-1 lb. per tree every 6-8 weeks - increase amount with tree size. M: 3-5 lbs. per tree, 3-5 applications per year; maximum per year, 15 lbs.
Mamey Sapote	Y: 1/4 lb. per tree bimonthly - increase amount with tree size. M: 3-5 lbs. per tree, 3-5 applications per year; maximum per year, 20-25 lbs.
Mango	Y: 1/4-1/2 lb. per tree every 6-8 weeks the first year - increase with tree size. M: 3-5 lbs. per tree, 3-5 applications per year; maximum per year, 15-20 lbs.
Papaya	Y: 1/2 lb. per tree every 2-3 weeks. Increase the amount to 1 1/2 lb. per tree until plants are 7-8 months old. M: 1 1/2 lb. per tree per month; maximum per year, 18-24 lbs.
Passion Fruit	Y: 4-6 oz. per vine, 4-6 applications per year. M: 1-2 lbs. per vine, 3-5 applications per year; maximum per year, 6-12 lbs.
Sugar Apple	Y: 1/4 lb. per mo. per tree - increase with tree size. M: 1-4 lb. per tree, 3-5 applications per year; maximum per year, 15-20 lbs.
Tamarind	Y: 1/4 lb. per tree every 2-3 months - increase with tree size. M: 3-5 lb. per tree, 2-3 applications per year; maximum per year, 15-20 lbs.

1, Common fertilizer ratios may be used such as 6-6-6, 8-3-9, 8-2-8, 10-10-10, or similar materials.

2, Y, young trees; M, mature trees.

3, Apply minor elements (manganese, zinc) in a foliar spray 3-4 times during the growing season (April-Sept.). Apply iron in a soil drench (water plus iron) 3-4 times during the growing season (June-Sept.best).

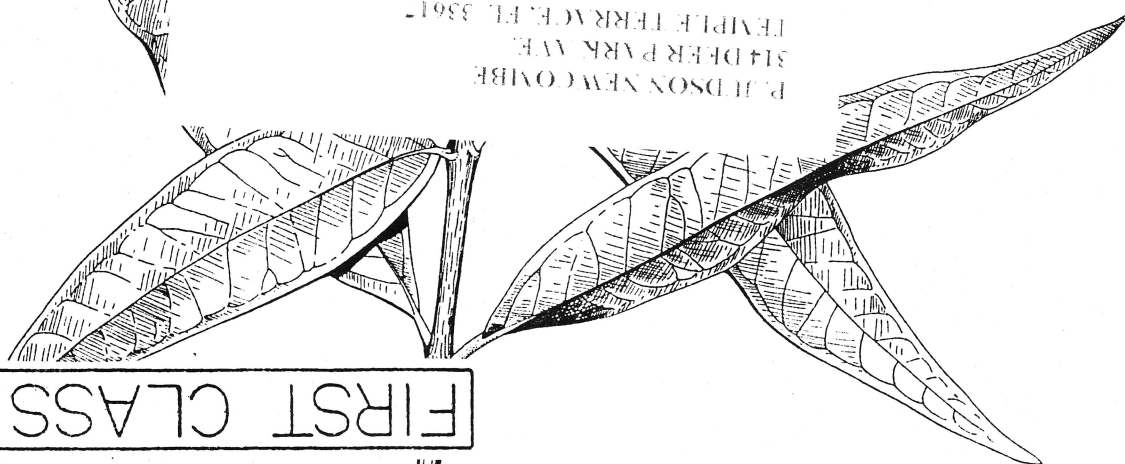
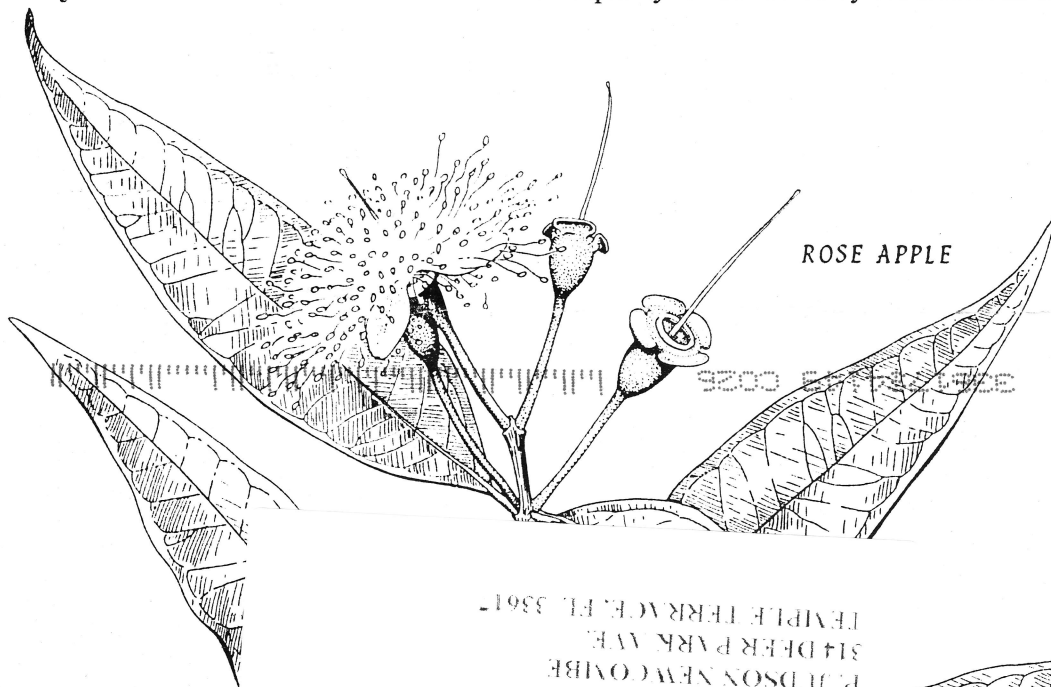


## PLANTS NEED ANTIBIOTICS TOO

by BOB HEATH

My Zimmer avocado tree produced prodigious amounts of fruit this year. The Zimmer avocado is a small fruit, 5 to 8 ounces, which turns deep purple or black as it ripens. It has a smooth thin skin and an excellent flavor. Unfortunately, the rats and squirrels seem to agree. Our tree is very tall and most of the fruit are up near the top, so picking the fruit before the animals get to it is not an option. For that reason, more than half of the fruit have been damaged to some degree by the rats or squirrels.

I've found that damaged fruit, left on the counter to ripen, will rot in 3 to 4 days, where undamaged fruit will take anywhere from 4 to 10 days to ripen, depending on their stage of development when they fall. Now, however, I have found a solution to damaged fruit. It's called antibiotic ointment. When I pick up a damaged fruit, I make a smooth cut below the damage and smear the exposed surface with an antibiotic ointment and leave the fruit on the counter. It doesn't rot, and in 4 to 8 days, it's ready to eat. I simply trim off the treated area and cut the little jewel in half to remove the seed. Flavor and quality is not altered by the antibiotic salve.



FIRST CLASS MAIL



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