

RFICI

NEWSLETTER – August 2009

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

<http://www.rarefruit.org>

Upcoming Programs and Events

Please plan to join us for the following:

August 9: James Price - Insecticide Resistance

September 13: Ed Hobin - Water Conservation

October 10 - 11: Fall USF Botanical Garden Plant Festival

New Members

Welcome to our newest members:

Jennie Lane – Temple Terrace

Rex Miller – Temple Terrace

A Farewell Note from Bob Heath

The official beginning of the Tampa Rare Fruit Council is May 8, 1979 when it became an official chapter of the Rare Fruit Council International of Miami. The official beginning of our monthly newsletter is February 1, 1981, the date of our first newsletter, edited by Ray Thorndike. Ray edited the newsletter until July 1984, when he turned over the responsibility to Bob Heath and three other members, Tom Goldsworthy, Arnold Stark and Lillian Stark. I have remained on the newsletter editorial staff until now, with this, the August 2009 newsletter. With this date, and after 25 years, I am turning over the fun of editing the newsletter to Gloria Sciuto, Charles Novak and Linda Novak, and anyone who wishes to join them in this important endeavor. It may be a propos at this point, to mention that Paul Zmoda has been writing, "What's Happening" since June 1992, every month for 17 years. I am laying down my pencil at this time to let some new blood take over this important function, "Our Monthly Newsletter."

Editors Note: A huge thank you and best wishes to Bob Heath and his daughter, Paula Hardwick, who has supported her Dad with word processing services. We appreciate you and your contributions to making our newsletter the valuable tool that it is today.

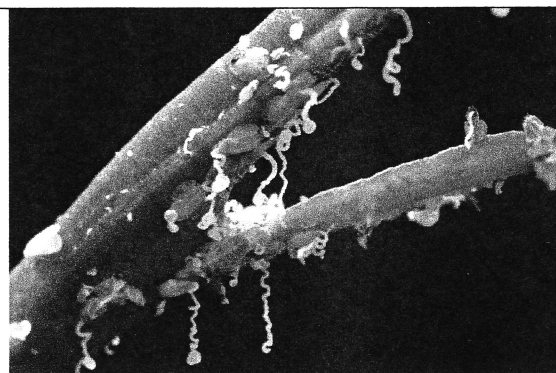
Thank you to Charles and Linda Novak, who will handle the printing and distribution of the newsletter. Over the coming months, you will see changes as we move to a more electronic version. We also congratulate "What's Happening?" columnist, Paul Zmoda for this tenure of 17 years. Paul, we look forward to your continuing support of RFICI and its membership.

Want to know more about

Citrus Greening?

Log on to this interactive Green Training from the University of Florida:

<http://www.citrusgreeningtraining.org/>



Meetings are held the second Sunday of the Month at 2:00 P.M.

President: Paul Branesky

Editors: Gloria Sciuto, Bob Heath; Production & Distribution: Charles and Linda Novak

RFCI Plant Exchange

Plant	Donor	Winner
Custard Apple	Bob Heath	Novak
2 Carissa	Bob Heath	Vic Gamboni
Passion Fruit	Bob Heath	Mark Frank
Rangood Creeper	Bob Heath	Vic Gamboni
Sugar Apple	Bob Heath	
Pineapple	Bob Heath	
Blackberry Jam Fruit	Bob Heath	Tony Ferreira
2 Surinam Cherry	Bob Heath	Neal Halstad
Barbados Cherry	Charles/Linda Novak	Laurel Frank
Coffee	Charles/Linda Novak	Mary Lear
Mango Seedling	Charles/Linda Novak	
4 Tennessee Potato	Bill Vega	
4 Unknown Citrus	Bill Vega	Foltarz, Hickey, Andrews
Blackeye Peas	Bill Vega	Beth Reddicliffe
2 Papaya Red	Paul Branesky	R. Seligman
2 Ube Purple Yam	Paul Branesky	Tammie Ullery
Ramrutan	Paul Branesky	
Banana	Paul Branesky	James Oliver
Praying Hands Banana	Paul Branesky	Vega
2 Tabebuia Ipe Tree	Beth Reddicliffe	Sciuto
Soy Bean Plant	Beth Reddicliffe	Tony Ferreira
Fig	Tony Ferreira	Michal Mizan
Jackfruit	Tony Ferreira	
Java Blue Banana	Roshan Premraj	
6 Papaya	Kirby	Oliver, Vega
Banana Pepper	Weekley	
Orchid Princess	Drekel Jackson	
2 Broadleaf Oregano	Jose Diaz	Grigshop
Poha Berry	Jose Diaz	Sally Lee
2 Papaya	Jose Diaz	Beth Reddicliffe
Scottish bonnet Pepper	Judy C.	Kirby
Pomegranate	Bob Klinge	Nizan
Phoenix Palm	Mike Sweet	
Jackfruit	Mike Sweet	Mary Lohl
Hibiscus	Dyalma Ocasio	
Citrus	Dyalma Ocasio	Mike Hickey
Citrus	Dyalma Ocasio	Chris Andrews

July Tasting Table

Thank you to the following folks for their tasty offerings and to all of our anonymous donors who did not sign the sheet. If you are a member, please remember to ask for your free plant raffle ticket.**

Name	Item	Name	Item
Vega	White rice & chicken stew	Coronel	Maja blanca mais
Reddicliffe	Tropical ambrosia	Lohn	Fruit
Sawada	Hiyashi chukka	Branesky	Noodles
Johnston	Tropical fruit cobbler	Grieshop	Muscatine grapes
Zmoda	Fresh apple cactus fruit	Kirby	Sweet potato croquettes
Ferreira	Macaroni & shrimp salad	Foltarz	Double eggs
Beeker	Carrot cake	Terenzi	Chocolate rum cake
LaValette	Yellow rice & curry	Sweet	Lasagna
Shigemura	Pork tamales, chicken tamales, dessert trays		
Novak	Blueberry cheesecake, chicken pasta salad, mango cake, jaboticabas, juices		

**Members who donate plant(s) for the Plant Raffle may now receive a free ticket for the plant raffle.

What's Happening – July/August 2009

By Paul Zmoda

I have been watching our dragon fruit cactus weekly. It is growing like wildfire in full sun and should flower soon. I planted it so it could clamber over the huge oak stump by our driveway and it really seems to like that situation, especially since the rains began in earnest. One day, I noticed three large green buds – tightly closed and adorned with long, fleshy projections. The evening of July 8th, Luisa called me at work to say they were opening. I got there at 11:00 P.M. to see a beautiful sight. All three were fully open and presenting a most magnificent sight to behold. These flowers are very large and showy in white, ivory and yellow colors. It was the scent, which I was not expecting, as all my other cactus species' flowers do not possess any really noticeable smells. I would describe the aromas as a mix of honeysuckle and jasmine. It was an exotic experience for our senses as we took many pictures. I then manually transferred pollen in the hope that fruit set would occur.

I gave our sapodilla tree a good beating with a metal pipe. In a few weeks, I spotted 36 flower buds among the branch tips. RFCI member, Jerry Coronel slashes his tree with a machete to induce blooming, I disfigure my specimen and create open wounds that way.

New plantings: giant jaboticaba and a pineapple crown.

Go Green – Plant Something!

Grafting Made Easy

By Charles Novak

Terms Used in This Article:

Scion: The part of a plant used for grafting upon the rootstock.

Rootstock: The root-bearing plant on which the scion will be grafted.

Parafilm M: A stretchable, wax-like tape. The product has been widely used for routine laboratory work for many years.

Why Graft?

- Some varieties of plants do not come true from seeds.
- Difficult or impossible to reproduce from cuttings or other propagation techniques.
- Using a rootstock better adapted to the prevailing soil and climate than scion produced naturally.
- Dwarfing rootstock can be used to greatly reduce the size of the tree.
- To increase the supply of new varieties rapidly.
- Change a tree from an old to a new variety.
- Grafted fruit trees have earlier fruit productions.
- Multiple grafts to produce a tree with several varieties or flowering plant with several different colors of flowers
- Rootstock can be selected for characteristics that the scion may not have, such as resistance to root rot or is tolerance to parasitic organisms; such as nematodes, insect larvae or other subterranean pests.

What is Grafting?

Grafting is the process of joining two or more different plants and enabling them to grow as one. The upper part of the graft (the scion) becomes the top of the plant; the lower portion (the rootstock) becomes the root system or part of the trunk. Although grafting usually refers to joining only two plants, it may be a combination of several.

What are the limitations?

Not all plants can be grafted. Plants of the same botanical genus and species can usually be grafted even though they are not the same variety. Plants with the same genus but of a different species may often be grafted.

For the most successful grafting, only chose closely related plants to form a compatible union. Generally, this means apple-to-apple, rose-to-rose.

Incompatible grafts may not form a union, or the union may be weak. A poor union results in plants that grow poorly, break off or eventually die. Trial is the only way to determine plants' compatibility. Some rootstock and scion materials are difficult to get, and some plants are not as easily grafted. This can often result in a quite high percentage of loss. This explains why some grafted trees are more expensive.

How to Collect and Store Scions?

Scion wood can be collected when available. It should have a diameter of 1/4 inch to 3/8 inch. The length of scion can be from a few inches to more than 2 feet. **Defoliate the scion and wrap the entire scion - cuts, buds, and stem in stretched Parafilm M.** Wrapping scion with Parafilm M beneficially conserves the internal moisture of the plant tissue. Parafilm M stretches; therefore, a little goes a long way.

If the scion cannot be grafted when obtained, store the scion in a plastic bag in the refrigerator with moist paper towels until performing the graft. If wrapped in Parafilm M, the scion can be stored for many weeks. Do not store the scion in a freezer.

When to Graft?

It is best to graft in the spring, from the time the buds of rootstock trees are beginning to open, until blossom time. The usual time is April or early May. But this should not limit you from grafting at any time of the year. Graft when scions become available.

What Tools and Materials are Needed?

- Knife. A good quality knife, able to hold a sharp edge, is the key to good grafting. Special grafting and budding knives are desirable. Keep material to sharpen the knife handy.
- Pruning shears.
- Grafting tape.
- Parafilm M.
- Fungicide – Spray bottle of Alcohol. Label the spray bottle.
- Clothes pins.
- Label for identifying the rootstock and scion (Name, variety, and date of the graft).

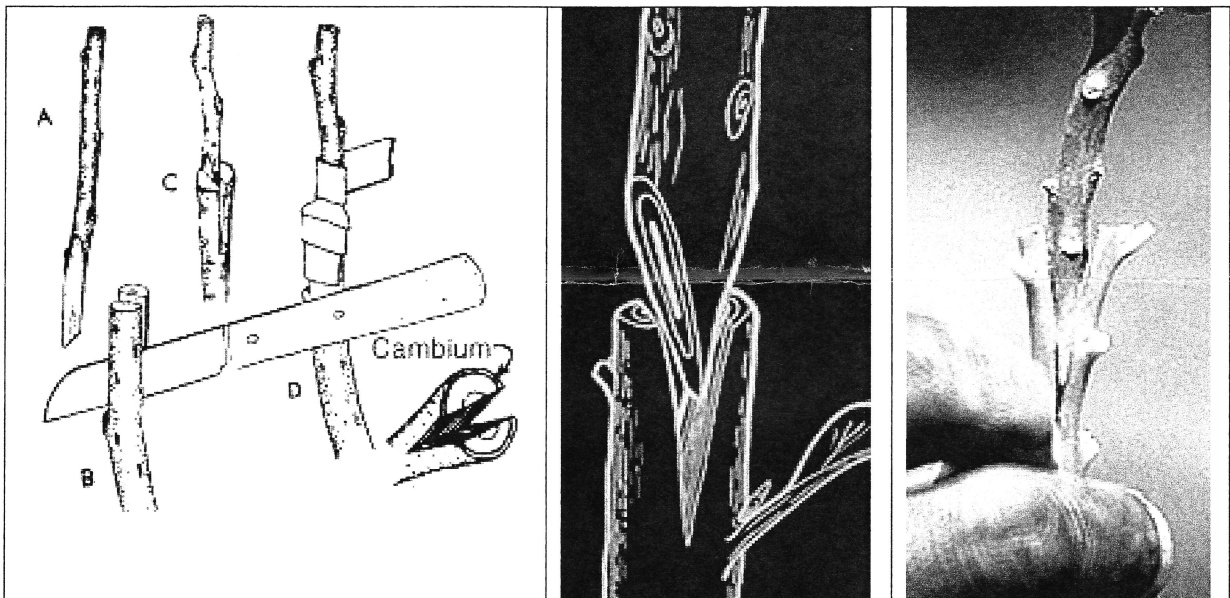
Grafting Techniques

Defoliate the scion and wrap the entire scion - cuts, buds, and stem - in Parafilm M. (Remember to stretch the Parafilm M.) The buds will grow through the Parafilm M without damage or restriction. (Note: Parafilm M is heat- and photosensitive and decomposes when exposed to direct sunlight for longer than a few minutes.) Store in a cool location.

There are many different types of grafting techniques. The cleft graft is one of the most commonly used and the simplest type of graft to perform. Here are the directions:

1. Fungicide tools and hands - spray hands, grafting knife and pruning shears with alcohol.
2. Match the scion and rootstock diameters precisely; this maximizes the chance of matching the cambiums.
3. The defoliated scion from a healthy plant should contain at least one completely dormant node on second-year wood which has had all soft, active growth removed.
4. The stock should be an actively growing seedling (do the grafting during the warmer months – in Florida grafting can be done year round).
5. (See diagram below) Cut the scion (A) and fashion its base into a thin, narrow wedge. A large contact surface area will increase the rate of healing. (Hardness part of a cleft graft) Do not touch the cut surfaces, or allow them to dry out.
6. Cut the rootstock at right angles to the stem in mature wood preferably close to a node. Make (B) a single vertical cut down the middle of the stem. The cut should be the same length as the wedge of the scion. Make sure that all cuts are straight and precise; use a very

- sharp grafting knife (Rock the knife back and forth – use care not to cut yourself). Do not touch the cut surfaces, or allow them to dry out.
7. Force (C) the wedge into the slit which was made in the rootstock; no gaps should be apparent. Always match the cambium layers on one side during the tying process; don't worry if both sides are not matching
 8. Wrap the graft with stretched Parafilm M. Ensure that all points are covered with Parafilm M. Air and water must be excluded from the graft-point if a successful union is to occur.
 9. Wrap the (D) graft **firmly** with Grafting tape, tying from just below the graft and working up. Care should be taken not to force the scion from the stock when traversing the join. Clothespins can help hold the graft together while wrapping with grafting tape.
 10. Label graft with name, variety, rootstock and date of the graft.
 11. Place the plant in a stress-free environment such as a shaded (50-90%) area.
 12. Examine regularly. The dormant nodes should burst in about 3 to 4 weeks. Remove any buds that develop below the graft point.
 13. Remove the grafting tape at a later date.



Some Reasons for Graft Failure

- Rootstock and scion were not compatible.
- The cambiums were not meeting properly.
- Scions were upside down. (Some plants can be successful grafted upside down).
- Grafting was done at the wrong time of the year (Most plant can be grafted year around).
- Rootstock or scion were not healthy.
- Scions were dried out or injured by cold.
- The scion was displaced by storm, birds, or other means.
- Insects or disease attacked the graft.
- The graft union was girdled because tape was not cut or released in time.

The main reason for failure is not trying!

Merritt Island Field Trip Report

By Verna L. Dickey

We met at the Sheriff's District II office on Falkenburg Road at 8:30 A.M. on July 25, 2009. Our bus driver, Carl, with Magical Charters, greeted us as we boarded. We had 39 people on the bus - some had to cancel at the last minute. There were 6 others who drove their cars. We met at Kiwanis Park in Merritt Island and were hosted by the Brevard County Rare Fruit Club. Also in attendance were members of the Rare Fruit Clubs from Orlando, Manatee, Sarasota, and Vero Beach.

When we arrived at the park, tables were set up with baskets of peanuts, longans and lychees for all to enjoy. There were about 300 people from the various clubs and we all enjoyed wonderful food - fish, ribs, pulled pork, chicken, turkey, roast beef and gumbo, along with all the vegetables and salads and delicious desserts. We were warmly welcomed by the Brevard County Rare Fruit Club and we enjoyed the fellowship with all the other clubs.

About 2:30 P.M., we got back on the bus and drove to Toppy Feil's place where he gave us a wonderful tour of his 18 acres of mango, lychee, longan, citrus, persimmon, banana, and other trees. Despite the heat, we had a great tour while Toppy talked about each tree.

Some of the things we learned from him include the following:

- Adding carambola to an apple pie gives it a very good flavor.
- Plant avacado trees in a mound - they do not like wet feet.
- Mangoes can be planted in any kind of soil and will still produce good fruit.
- Toppy's favorite mango is Palmer.
- Trim longan and lychee trees like an umbrella.
- Persimmons from seeds have dull leaves while grafted ones have shiny leaves.
- Persimmons will grow suckers all over. Chop around the suckers in cool weather and leave for 2 months, then dig it up and move it where you want it and graft it.
- Southern Blush - very good mango but sparse fruit.
- Springfield and Keitt Mangos have large fruit.
- Bailey's Marvel is a very good mango.
- Bombay is also a very good mango but what sparse fruit they produce is eaten by the squirrels.
- Lychees were brought to Florida from China in the early 1900s. They were killed by the frost, so they went back to China to search for a cold hardy lychee that they named Brewster.
- Longans can take cold to 24 degrees, lychees to 26, mangoes to 28 and some avocados to 32.
- Jackfruit - trim out all small branches so females will grow. Males will die.

After the tour, we were able to purchase mangoes. We boarded the bus about 5:40 P.M. and headed for home. We stopped on the way at Golden Corral in Orlando where we had more food and fellowship. I know I speak for everyone on the trip when I say that we had a great time and want to thank the Brevard Club for the wonderful food they had for us and also Toppy Feil for the tour of his place. A special thanks goes to Tampa Bay Rare Fruit Club for organizing this trip.

Fifth Fruit Photo Contest: Photos must be received by August 31. Winning photos will be determined by a vote of the general membership at the September 13 club meeting. Prizes will be given to the First and Second place winners. The same person cannot win both First and Second Place. See the June and July newsletters for the Judging guidelines and General rules for the Fifth Fruit Photo Contest. If you have questions contact Linda Novak (813) 754-1399.

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