



RFCI

<http://www.rarefruit.org>

March 2010

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

Meetings are held the second Sunday, 2:00 P.M.
at the Tampa Garden Club, 2629 Bayshore Blvd.

⌘ Upcoming Programs and Events ⌘

March 14: Robert Messineo, Bee Pollination and Bee Therapy

April 10-11: USF Botanical Garden Spring Plant Festival

May 9: Gene Joyner of Unbelievable Acres Botanical Garden,
West Palm Beach; featuring lychees, longans and other tropical fruits

June 13: Dr. Jonathon Crane, Tropical Fruit Specialist, UF IFAS: Avocados

⌘ Welcome to Our Newest Member ⌘

Steve Arkin – Tampa

⌘ *It's Time to Vote!* ⌘

⌘ Board of Directors Election ⌘

At the March meeting, the general membership present will elect the Board of Directors for a one-year term. The Board then elects the executive officers. Directors must be willing and able to make a significant commitment of time to the club. The Board meets monthly or at such times deemed necessary. The Board is responsible for the policies, finances and direction of the Chapter. The Board meetings are open to the entire membership, and members are encouraged to attend.

The following members have been selected for your consideration as the next Board of Directors:

Paul Branesky
Bob Heath
Fred Engelbrecht
Jimmy Lee
Sally Lee

Thom Scott
Mark Foltarz
Susan McAveety
Jerry Amyot
Bill Vega

Verna Dickey
Judy Cimafranca
Andrew Hendrickson
Charles Novak
Linda Novak

Please plan to attend and vote.

President: Paul Branesky

Editor: Gloria Sciuto; Support: Bob & Paula Heath; Production/Distribution: Charles & Linda Novak



∞ Citrus Celebration Update ∞

Our 9th Citrus Celebration at the Florida State Fair was very successful. Even though the weather was on the chilly side the turnout was great. Fair attendees enjoyed a bowl of the many varieties of citrus (cut into sample size) and cups of fresh squeezed citrus juice. A huge **“THANKS”** to everyone who helped make the Citrus Celebration a success – donating fruit, picking and washing fruit, delivering the fruit to the fairgrounds and helping with the event on Sunday.

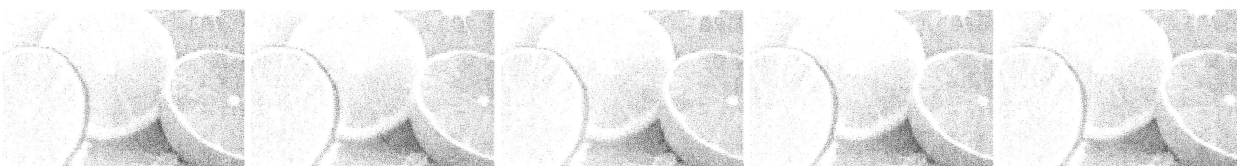
∞ Florida State Fair Exhibit ∞

Our exhibit received ‘Honorable Mention’ in the Plant Society competition. Each society receives a set-up premium of \$250 to help with exhibit expenses. Honorable Mention receives an additional \$25 and a rosette ribbon. Special **THANKS** to Roberta and Steve Harris, Thom Scott, Bill Vega, Charles and Linda Novak for setting up the exhibit and to all the members who manned the exhibit. The public is always interested in our display of fruit trees and the unusual fruit we exhibit.



∞ Calling All Members ∞

Monica Brandies, club member and author of several gardening books, is working on a book on Citrus as an Herb and would like to hear from anyone who has other uses for any part of the trees, leaves, bark, skins, beyond food and landscaping. You can reach Monica at her email address: monicabrandies@yahoo.com.



❧ Our January 11th Freeze ❧

by Bob Heath

Editor's Note: Many of you have taken a tour of Bob Heath's extensive tree garden adjacent to his home, located in Tampa. In this article, Bob takes inventory of his trees after this year's freeze.

On Monday, January 11, 2010, I recorded a temperature of 26 degrees Fahrenheit in my back yard. Damage was extensive in my gardens where I had done nothing to protect my plants.

***My philosophy is "If they are going to freeze, so be it. They'll come back."
I don't do any cutting back until I can see what is still alive.***

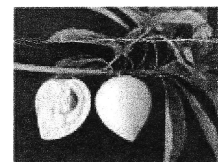
My Atemoya, Custard Apple, Sugar Apple and other Annonas all suffered extensive leaf and growing limb damage but we'll have to wait a while to see just how much.

My Avocados displayed their races. My Yound and Zimmer – Mexican varieties – suffered no damage to even the flowers, which were unharmed and will probably put on fruit. My Marcus Pumpkin and Choquette Avocados, West Indian varieties, have extensive limb damage – another case of wait and see what will come out when the weather warms.

All Banana trees were extensively damaged but they will come back from the underground corns.

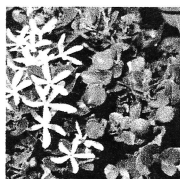
My Black Sapotes are badly damaged on leaves and limbs. It's another case of wait and see, but I anticipate no fruit next year.

My Canistel (egg fruit) trees show extensive leaf and limb damage to ½" branches or longer. I'll have to wait and see.



Canistel Tree

Carambolas (star fruit) had large crop of ripe fruit – all of which froze and dropped – covering the ground. The trees only show leaf and limb damage at this time. I'll have to wait and see.



Carissa

My Cattley Guava seems to be undamaged. I expect fruit this summer.

All my Carissa bushes show extensive leaf and small limb damage but only on the more exposed parts. The leaves underneath and close to the ground are still green.

My Cherry of the Rio Grande seems to be undamaged. The leaves and growing tips are still green and growing.

Citrus leaves and fruit seem to have come through without damage.

The Downy Myrtle bushes have leaf and growing tip damage, but only on the top growth. The lower limbs, which are more protected, are fine.

My Gac fruit is frozen to the ground, and my Grumichana tree has limb and leaf damage. Another wait and see.

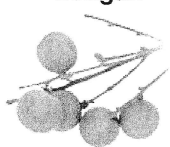
My Guajilote has extensive leaf and limb damage – no fruit this year.

My Imbes have leaf and much limb damage. The fruit is not too good, and I may take them out to make room for something better.

My Black Jaboticaba is showing only minor leaf damage. The Yellow Jaboticaba, which is located in a shaded location, has extensive damage.

My Jack Fruit has extensive limb damage. It's a wait and see before cutting dead limbs.

Longan



My Kei Apple trees have no damage. They are normally safe down to 22 degrees Fahrenheit. We'll have fruit this fall.

My Longan tree, which had two or three thousand fruit this past season, has extensive leaf and small limb damage – no fruit this year.

My Lychees have extensive limb damage; another wait and see.

The Macadamia tree shows no damage.

My Mamey Sapote, a small tree, appears to be killed to the ground.

My old Mango tree has extensive limb damage, but the main trunks seem to be OK. I'll have to wait and see.

The Miracle Fruit seems to be undamaged.

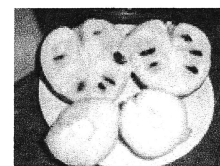
My Passion Fruit vines are killed to the ground, but will come back from the root.

My Rose Apple has extensive limb damage; maybe all the way to the ground.

My Sapodillas have leaf and small limb damage – all fruit are dead.

My Star Apple and Velvet Apple are killed to the ground – another wait and see. Surinam Cherries have leaf and small twig damage at the tops.

My White Sapotes lost their flower buds but are otherwise undamaged.



White Sapote

Another tragic winter!

⌘ What's Happening ⌘

by Paul Zmoda

The start of the 2010 growing season has certainly been a shocker. The record low temperatures simply devastated so many of our prized specimen trees. I cannot tell you how badly I've been set back yet. We must wait for the warmth of spring to show us where dead plant tissues end and the living begins.

Watch for new sprouts of life. Only then should you start pruning those lifeless branches. Many of our trees will come back given some time. Should grafted trees be killed to below the graft union, then you might consider replanting or re-grafting the rootstock sprouts with the scions of your choice. Be patient in the cleanup process. I know how badly you want to see green instead of brown. I'll report later on what damage I can assess.

Meanwhile, our brave Ceylon Red Peach has been blooming and making tiny fruit as if nothing happened. English peas, onions, lettuce and fennel are performing normally through it all. But the broccoli – **broccoli** – froze back! Now that was some frigid weather!

My Ceylon Peach seedlings started to leaf out so I knew it was time to graft them. They make excellent dwarfing rootstocks for plums. I used whip and some cleft grafts to attach two different native plum hybrids.

Most of our Citrus fruit had been frozen: they are dry, tasteless and useless now. Many have fallen. Some Pommelos, with their thick, insulating rinds are okay, except that their stems froze, so they, too, have fallen.

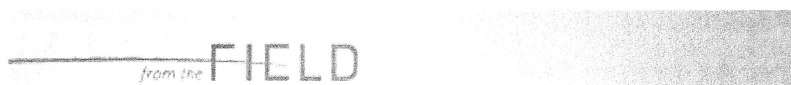
New plantings: arugula, lettuce, pak choi and pai tsai.

⌘ For Sale ⌘

Tampa Bay Rare Fruit Council Cookbook and More

Our new cookbook will be available for purchase at the March meeting (\$7.00 for members). The club also has RFCI polo shirts, Parafilm, grafting tape and grafting kits available for purchase.

⌘ Free Newsletter ⌘



Fresh from the Field provides the latest news, views and agriculture information delivered from the field to your e-mail inbox. Look for this e-newsletter from *The Grower and Citrus & Vegetable Magazine* at the end of every month. Go to the following URL to subscribe:
<http://www.growermagazine.com/SubscribeToNewsletter/tabid/59/Default.aspx>

Be Patient:
Don't Get Overaggressive in Caring for Freeze-Damaged Trees*
by Mongi Zekri

Severe freezes can damage leaves, twigs and even kill entire citrus trees. Freeze damage to citrus occurs when water inside the fruit, leaves and twigs becomes ice and ruptures the cell membranes. During the fall and winter, extended periods of cool weather prior to a freeze can allow citrus trees to harden and acclimate, and therefore withstand more cold weather than non-acclimated trees.

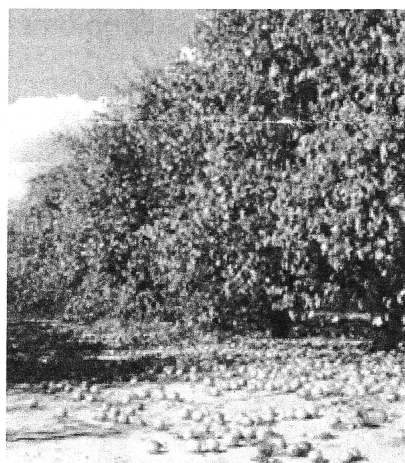
On the other hand, freeze damage is more severe when it follows a warm spell. Because new growth is more susceptible to freeze damage, do not do anything that stimulates new growth during the winter.

Symptoms of Freeze Damage

The evidence of freeze damage to citrus fruit is the presence of ice crystals in the fruit. Ice formation inside the fruit usually ruptures the juice sacs.



During a freeze, ice crystals can form inside the fruit, usually rupturing the juice sacs.



Following severe freezes, mature fruit should be harvested as soon as possible to minimize losses from excessive fruit drop. Freezes cause the leaves to dry out, curl, turn brown and fall.

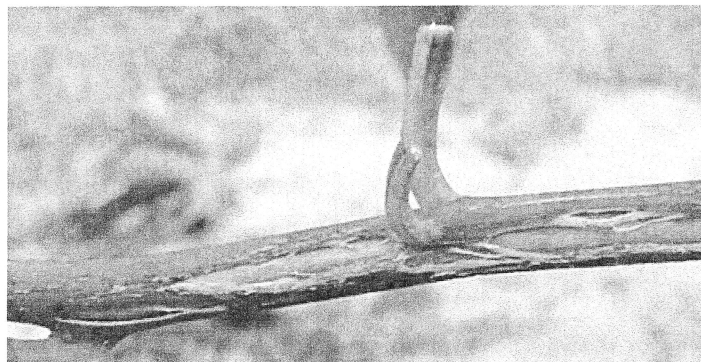
Within several days of warm weather after a freeze, water will be lost from the fruit, causing a reduction in its juice content.

Following severe freezes, mature fruit should be harvested as soon as possible to minimize losses due to excessive fruit drop and reduction in juice content.

If twigs and wood have not been damaged severely, the leaves will rapidly shed. If twigs or wood have been seriously damaged, the frozen leaves may remain attached on the tree for several weeks.



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After a severe freeze, twig dieback can continue for a couple of years. Another sign of severe freeze damage is splitting of the bark.

The true extent of freeze damage to branches may not be clear within the first three months following a freeze. No attempt should be made to prune or even assess damage from freezes until at least the new spring flushes get fully expended and mature.

Care of Freeze-Damaged Trees

Pruning freeze-damaged wood

No pruning should be done until late in the spring or the summer after a freeze.

In early spring, freeze-damaged trees often produce new growth that soon dies back. Sufficient time should be given for the dying back to cease and for the new healthy growth to take place and fully expand. Experience has shown that early pruning does not promote recovery and that delaying pruning to the proper time will save money.

Irrigation and Fertilization

When leaves are lost, evaporation from the tree canopy is greatly reduced. Therefore, the amount of water required should be reduced. Over-irrigation will not result in rapid recovery, but may cause root damage. Normal irrigation should be practiced when trees regain their normal foliage development and canopy density.

Fertilization of freeze-damaged trees should also be reduced until the trees are back to their original size and their canopies are back to their original densities.

Dr. Mongi Zekri is a multi-county citrus agent with the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences based in LaBelle. He can be reached at maz@ufl.edu or at [flicitrus.ifas.ufl.edu/Mongi's Webpage/Zekri.htm](http://flicitrus.ifas.ufl.edu/Mongi's%20Webpage/Zekri.htm).

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<http://citrusandvegetable.com/PastIssues/ArticleLanding/tabid/70/Default.aspx?tid=1&cid=837718&issueid=772>.

Trivia: What is Fruitarianism?

Fruitarianism is a nutrition system and a life style. The fruitarian diet consists of raw fruit and seeds only. Examples include: Pineapple, mango, banana, avocado, apple, melon, orange, etc., all kinds of berries, and the vegetable fruits such as tomato, cucumber, olives; and dried fruits such as nuts, hazelnuts, cashews, chestnuts, etc.. And seeds including sprouted seeds.

For more information on Fruitarianism, refer to <http://www.fruitarian.com/ao/WhatIsFruitarianism.htm>.

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