



<http://www.rarefruit.org>

July 2010

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

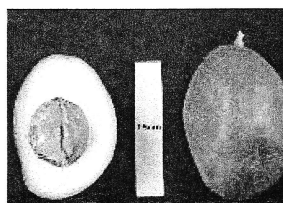
Meetings are held the second Sunday, 2:00 P.M.
at the Tampa Garden Club, 2629 Bayshore Blvd.

⌘ Upcoming Programs and Events ⌘

July 11: Dr. Bijay Tamang, PhD Postdoctoral Associate, School of Forest Resources and Conservation, University of Florida will speak on "Windbreaks for Sustainable Agriculture."

⌘ Welcome to Our Newest Members ⌘

- ⊗ Bob Gerstein of Brandon ⊗ David Sexton of Tampa
- ⊗ Karl & Christina Kincaid of Tampa



**⌘ Laurel Wilt Disease and its Effect on the
Florida Avocado Tree ⌘**

by
Dr. Jonathan Crane



Dr. Crane's message during the June meeting was that trees in the Laurel family, including avocado trees, are under siege by the Redbay Ambrosia Beetle and the resultant Laurel Wilt Pathogen.

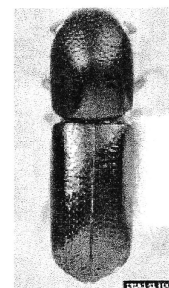
This is especially important since avocados are the #2 crop after citrus in the state of Florida, to the tune of approximately \$400 million. The problem is that the insect is so small, you don't see it. By the time you know your trees are infected, it's too late.

Redbay Ambrosia Beetle

According to the USDA Forest Service, "The redbay ambrosia beetle measures only about 1/16" (2 mm) long, it is dark brown to black in color, and cylindrical in shape. It can be separated from other similar beetles found in or on redbay trees by looking at the tip of the abdomen, which is somewhat V-shaped and pointed. It is also glabrous or shiny and without hairs."

Dr. Crane explained that the beetle infests the tree with fungus and then eats the flowers of the fungus. As the tree becomes infected with the fungus, it starts to wilt – so quickly, in fact, that the leaves don't even have time to fall off.

In an infested area, the fungus can kill 98% of the trees. *(Continued on next page)*



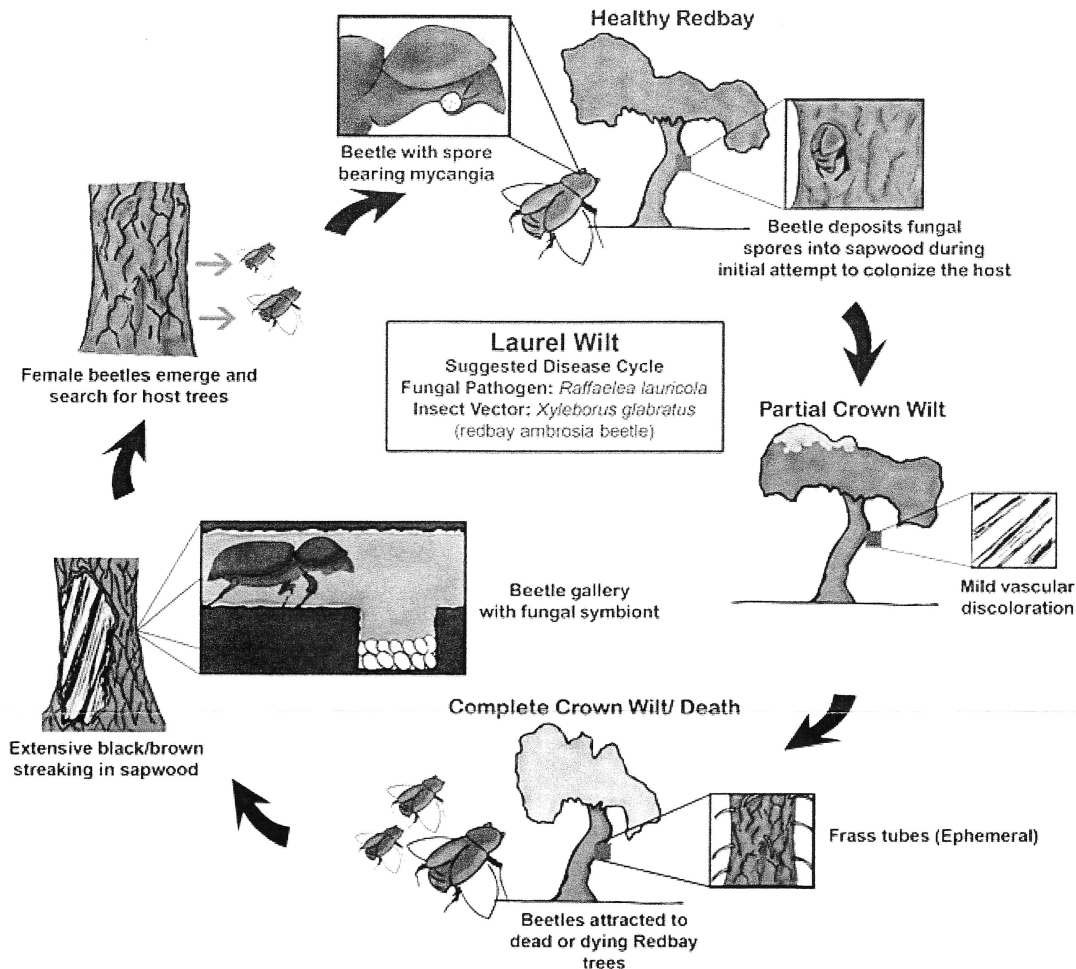
*Mike Thomas;
USDA Forest
Service*

President: Paul Branesky

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

Laurel Wilt Disease and its Effect on the Florida Avocado Tree (continued)

Graphical Depiction of the Laurel Wilt Disease Life Cycle



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Last Revised 9/21/09

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²Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry, 1911 SW 34th Street, Gainesville, FL 32608

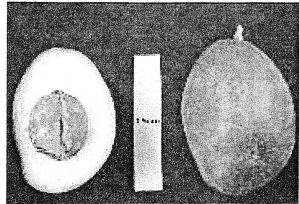
What's Being Done

There are numerous publications and videos about the beetle and the disease. One of the ways you can help is to only purchase trees from a registered nursery. See [www. http://www.fl-dpi.com/plantinsp/nursery_directory/nur_directory.html](http://www.fl-dpi.com/plantinsp/nursery_directory/nur_directory.html) for a list.

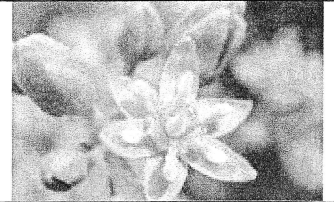
Another way to help is to limit the movement of firewood. According to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), "You can help to control these and other invasive insects and diseases by limiting the movement of firewood, especially from out-of-state. Firewood may contain insect pests and plant diseases that could easily spread to other locations. The best way to protect your forest is to use firewood from the area where you plan to burn it."

Copied from <http://www.fl-dpi.com/caps/firewood.html>

For this and other information, including videos on the disease, go to www.savetheguac.com. Don't forget to register for your "Save the Guac" bumper sticker as well!



∞ Avocado Cultivars and Culture ∞ by Dr. Jonathan Crane



In this second discussion, Dr. Crane gave us general information about avocados and avocado trees.

General Facts

Races (3)	Mexican Guatemalan West Indian
Grown Commercially:	#1: California #2: Florida #3: Hawaii
Height:	30' – 65'; 15' or shorter is less likely to get damaged by hurricanes
Type:	Deciduous (drops leaves)
Fruit:	Berry
Flower (3 groups):	Early season Mid-season Late season
Plant:	Approx. 25' – 30' apart Can plant in a container, but it will dry out and you might not get a lot of fruit
Fertilize:	Young trees: 4-8 weeks; Mature trees: 2-4 times per year
Picking/Ripening:	Fruit does not ripen on tree; wait for fruit to drop or pick and wait 3-8 days to see if it ripens properly at room temperature

Flowering/Fruiting

Dr. Crane explained that avocado trees are either A or B type. The A type is female in the morning and male every second afternoon. The B type is male in the morning and female in the afternoon. Ideally, you need at least two trees, one A type and one B type. Cultivars also flower in the early, mid- or late part of the season. If there are no other trees nearby, it's important to have at least 2 trees, an A and a B that both flower during the same part of the season; for example, an A early- and a B early-flowering tree.

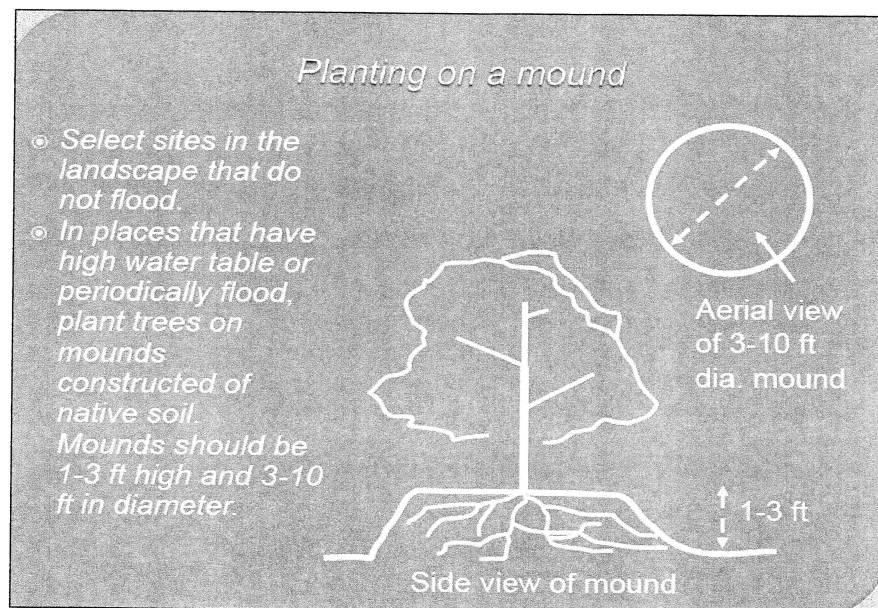
The following table can help you choose compatible trees. The asterisk (*) means the tree is hardy.

Table of Avocado Types with Blooming Periods (taken from Dr. Crane's presentation)

Early Blooming Period	Mid Blooming Period	Late Blooming Period
Cultivar/Flower Type	Cultivar/Flower Type	Cultivar/Flower Type
* Brogdon - B	Beta – B	Black Prince – A (mid to late)
Donnie - A	Black Prince – A (mid to late)	Booth 7 – B
Dupuis - A	Booth 8 – B (mid to late)	* Lula – A (early to late)
* Lula – A (early to late)	* Brookslate – A	* Marcus – B
Nadir - A	* Choquette – A	Monroe – B
Simmonds – A (early to mid)	Hall – B	Waldin - A
*Tonnage – B (early to mid)	* Marcus – B (mid to late)	
	Nesbitt - A	
	Simmonds – A (early to mid)	
	* Tonnage – B (early to mid)	
	Tower 2 - B	

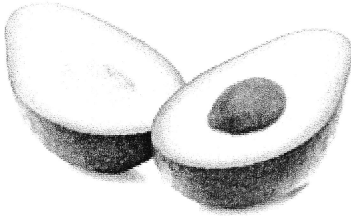
Planting

Trees are highly susceptible to root rot. For that reason, Dr. Crane recommended that you plant trees on a mound, as follows, approximately 25' to 30' away from other trees and structures. Be sure to thin out weak branches and keep the height 15' to 30' high.



∞ 15 Facts About Avocados ∞

1. Avocados are a fruit, not a vegetable.
2. There are more than 500 avocado varieties.
3. Avocados are native to Central and South America, where they have been cultivated for over 10,000 years.
4. Another name for the avocado is the "alligator pear," so-called because of its alligator skin texture and pear shape.
5. The Aztec word for avocado was *ahuacatl*, which means "testicle tree".



6. Spanish explorers could not pronounce *ahuacatl*, so they called the avocado *aguacate*. This is the origin of the word guacamole.
7. The origin of guacamole is the Aztec avocado sauce called *ahuaca-hulli*.
8. Avocados were first introduced to the United States in 1871, when Judge R.B. Ord planted three trees in Santa Barbara, California.
9. The Hass is the most common avocado in the United States and is the only avocado grown year round.
10. Rudolph Hass, a postman, patented the Hass avocado tree in 1935. The first Hass avocado tree is still alive and producing fruit.
11. Mexico is the world's top producer of avocados, with California coming in second.
12. Aside from the United States and Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Brazil, and Colombia are the world's top producing countries.
13. One tree can produce between 150 and 500 avocados per year.
14. Avocados have the highest protein content of any fruit.
15. Avocados contain more potassium than bananas.

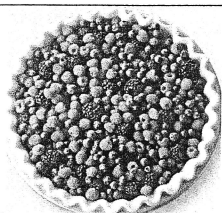
Copied from <http://www.healthdiaries.com/eatthis/20-facts-about-avocados.html>

∞ Membership Directories ∞

New membership directories will be available at the July meeting. Please notify Charles Novak at (813) 754-1399 or charles.novak@gmail.com by July 6 if you would like to make any changes to your name, mailing address, phone number or e-mail address. Please pick up your copy or contact Charles to have a copy mailed to you.

∞ Sign Up for Email ∞

As of the June meeting, "35 members now receive their monthly newsletter by email," reported Charles Novak. Help save a tree for humanity as well as time and money for our club by signing up for your electronic copy today. Members also receive selected additional articles of interest chosen by Charles Novak. Just notify Charles or Linda at (813) 754-1399 or charles.novak@gmail.com.

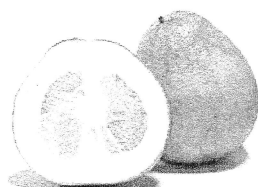


June's Tasting Table

Thank you to the following folks for their tasty offerings and to all those who did not sign the sheet. Members who donate food may receive a ticket for the raffle.



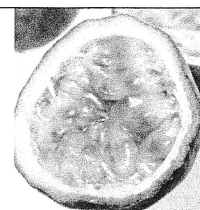
Name	Item	Name	Item
Broconne	Tomato salad	Johnston	Topical fruit cobbler
Coronel	Bibinka	Beeker	Cheesecake
Stewart	Jalapeno cornbread	Lohn	Cheesecake
Sawada	Sandwich cake, tortilla rollups	Newcombe	Fruit compote
Frankland	Fruit punch cake	Ferst	Pumpkin cake
Sweet	Pasta salad	McAveety	Marinated tomatoes
Novak	Coconut and lemon macaroon cookies, pineapple/mango salsa/chips, mango upside-down cake, juices	Shigemura	Cuke/pineapple salsa, corn/black bean salsa, meatballs



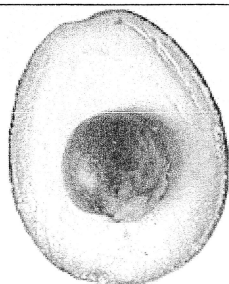
June's Plant Exchange

Just a reminder that members who donate plant(s) may receive a ticket for the raffle.

Donors and winners please sign the sheet.



Plant	Donor	Winner
2 Pineapple Abacca	Bob Heath	---
2 Carrissa	Bob Heath	---
Passion fruit vine	Bob Heath	---
Sapodilla	Bob Heath	---
Chaya spinach	Bob Heath	---
Red sugar apple	Bob Heath	F. Engelbrecht
Orange berry	Bob Heath	B. Provencher
Basil	Bob Heath	---
Guava	Charles Novak	R. Frankland
2 Cherry tomato	Charles Novak	---
Barbados cherry	Charles Novak	S. Krosiak
Aloe	Fred Engelbrecht	R. Stewart
Blue agave	Fred Engelbrecht	Bhola
4 Rose apple	Ed Musgrave	Sumner, Stewart, Frankland, Krosiak
2 Surinam cherry	Ed Musgrave	---
Stevia	Roberta Harris	---
Banana – Cavendish	Roshan Premraj	---
2 Avocado from seed	Verna Dickey	R. Stewart
Meyers Lemon	James Oliver	---
3 Jackfruit	Paul Branesky	C. Haack, M. Lohn
Praying Hand Banana	Paul Branesky	C. Haack
Gold Finger	Rose Frankland	B. Sheets
2 Bananas	Rose Frankland	R. Stewart



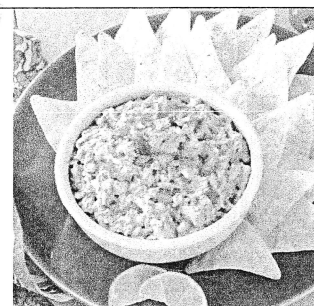
∞ Did You Know? ∞

According to the University of Florida Extension of Food and Agricultural Sciences (EDIS):

"Florida avocados are lower in calories and fat than other varieties and are rich in vitamin A and potassium. However, avocados are one of the highest sources of fat in the fruit and vegetable group.

1/4 cup of a Florida avocado (approx. 1/4 lb, pureed) contains:

- 69 calories
- 6 grams fat
- 1.3 grams protein
- 5 grams carbohydrate
- 200 milligrams potassium
- 3 grams fiber"



Source: USDA NDB Number: 09039; Copied from <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/he606>

Photos: <http://michaelsondesign.files.wordpress.com/2009/07/guacamole.jpg> and <http://www.willsavocados.com/index.php/avocado-varieties>



∞ What's Happening ∞

by Paul Zmoda



All of our chestnut and chestnut hybrids are in full bloom. What you notice, first, are rows and rows of tiny male flowers held on long white chenille-like catkins. The female flowers, which will produce the nuts, are not so noticeable at first glance. Although larger than the males, the female flowers are green and lie closer to the branchlet from which the catkins originate. There are only a few female flowers compared to dozens and dozens of pistillate males on each structure. The female flowers are easily recognized, however, as they appear like miniature pineapples. The lower portion is globular and scaly while the pollen receptive stigmas stick up and outwards much like the leaves of pineapples. Pollination should not be a problem as the flowers are a magnet for insects, especially lovebugs (*Plecia nearctica*) that eagerly work the blooms for nectar. If you wanted to make a lovebug trap, you couldn't fail with chestnut blossoms as bait!

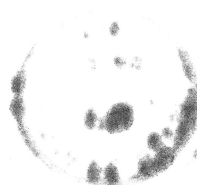
Other insect pollinators present are several small scarab beetles, flies and soldier beetles - many of which are seen mating on the nectar source.

Armenian cucumbers are doing well as long as the vines are heavily mulched and adequately irrigated. We get a pair of fruit every 3 days. They are refreshing eaten raw. We also have garlic dill pickles in the works.

Along the winemaking front, I received word that my hard work was rewarded with a silver medal for my rose' wine made with my hybrid grape "Il Primo" in what is claimed to be the world's largest amateur wine competition sponsored by Wine Maker Magazine. See all the winners at <http://www.winemakermag.com/images/stories/2010%20wine%20competition%20results.pdf>.

New plantings include rollinia, mint, gac, yard-long beans and white sapote.

Editor's Note: Congratulations, Paul, on your silver medal and thanks for supporting our club every month with an interesting and relevant article.



How to Store Avocados After You Bring Them Home:

Never refrigerate unripened (hard) avocados because they will not ripen in cold temperatures.

Unripened (hard) avocados are best stored in a cool dark place until they have ripened.

To Ripen Avocados:

Place unripe avocados in a brown paper bag to ripen. This traps the ethylene gas they produce and helps them to ripen. A firm avocado placed in a paper bag will ripen at room temperature in about three to six days. As the fruit ripens, the skin color will darken.

How to Speed Up the Ripening of Your Avocados:

Add a tomato, apple or banana to a paper bag in which you have placed an avocado. This will produce more ethylene gas and reduce the ripening process to one to three days.

When to Refrigerate Avocados:

Only refrigerate ripe avocados. Avocados will keep for up to 5 days when refrigerated but leaving them too long in the refrigerator will cause them to lose their flavor and begin to turn dark in color. Avoid slicing avocados before refrigerating as they will turn brown after they are cut.

Copied from <http://www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?tname=foodtip&dbid=16>



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