RFCI

February 2018

TAMPA BAY CHAPTER of the

RARE FRUIT COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL, INC.

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http://www.facebook.com/TampaBayChapterRareFruitCouncilIntlInc

Meetings are held the second Sunday, 2:00 P.M. at the Christ the King Church, McLoughlin Center, 821 S. Dale Mabry, Tampa

∞ Upcoming Programs and Events ∞

February 8th - 19th - **Florida State Fair and Citrus Celebration on February 11th** -

No regular meeting - All members are encouraged to enjoy the Fair and visit the Club set ups to learn about how the Club provides a learning experience about Florida fruit to the public via the Horticultural Display and Citrus Celebration.
All members who are helping with this event, please meet Bill Vega on **February 11th** at Gate #2 - 8 AM, cell phone # is 813 300 7597 - And from the Juice Man - Paul Branesky - all members helping out at the Citrus Celebration making the juice get to take some home. Please bring a quart container (or smaller) to take the juice home in at the end of the day.

March 11th, 2:00pm - Kumquats - Local grower and general manager of Kumquat Growers in Dade City, Greg Gude discusses the tasty and versatile delight that is the kumquat. The Gude family has been in the kumquat business for generations, so they have a lot of information to share.

∞ Welcome New Members ∞

Diana McCann	Largo
Diana Robinson	Tarpon Springs
Jonese Goyette	Palm Harbor
Frank Hagen	Tampa

President: Tom Schaefer; VP: Fred Engelbrecht, Program Manager: Sandra Kischuk, Secretary; Treasurer: Susan McAveety, Newsletter/Membership: Denise Provencher, Photographs:

∞ Update on Florida Citrus ∞

Speaker - Jamie Burrow

Our speaker for January was Jamie Burrow from the UF/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center in Lake Alfred. She provided an updated view of where the fight on greening stands in Florida. Although the data is sobering, certainly much is being done in the fight against this disease that has changed our landscape and affected an important industry in our State. Not many years ago, 400 million boxes of citrus were harvested annually, but that total is down to 50 million boxes per year, a huge decrease. Other diseases, weather, development, and other challenges (called shocks in the industry), have all had their affect on citrus production, but greening is the worst. No cure has been found for this devastating disease spread by the Asian Citrus Psyllid.

There are currently 6 states that grow citrus. Florida has 480,000 acres under grove, with 5 growing regions, producing one half the US production. Most production goes towards juice. Valencia has about 48% of the commercial production

The Psyllid is a prolific pest, with 9-10 generations per year, and a 15-47 day life cycle.

Many approaches to Psyllid control have been tried with interesting results. Various speakers at our Clubs' previous meetings have discussed these various approaches as they have been conducted under research. Here is an updated discussion.

C.U.P.S. - Growing (citrus under protective screening). This specialized screen adds to the cost of production, but trees grow fast, are less complicated to irrigate and fertilize, and the fruit is of premium quality. Ten acre plots of covered citrus have been attempted. However, hurricane damage to the screening exposed the trees to the insects. It is also possible that fungal disease may be more likely to occur in the greenhouse like conditions under the screening. See picture left.

Steaming, or Thermotherapy - This involves heat treating the trees to kill back the bacteria in the above ground parts of the plant. However, since the heat treatment cannot reach the roots, it cannot thoroughly kill back the bacteria. Another negative of thermotherapy is that foliage is killed, resulting in a flush of new foliage; a major attractant for the psyllids to return to the trees. see picture below.

Heavy fertilizing - Citrus benefit from regular fertilization programs, and a strong tree is better able to fight disease, but too much fertilizer is resulting in the buildup of salts in the plant and that can be detrimental. Providing adequate micro nutrients is better.

Bactericides - These are used on not only citrus, but apples, pears, and loquats, but the concern is the development of resistance.
Nanotechnology - Zinkacide - This hi-tech approach involves the development of particles small enough to get into the wood of the tree. The process uses a commercial formulation of imidacloprid that contains bark-penetrating liquids in microscopic molecules.
Interplanting with guava trees - This approach started in Vietnam, where it was discovered the guava produces an odor that repels the psyllids. However, the guava was also attracting fruit flies, and increased levels of nematodes in the soil.
Tamarixia radiata - The Asian citrus psyllid parasitoid, a hymenopteran wasp from the Eulophidae family was discovered in the 1920's in northwestern India. This wasp is showing promise as a biological control against the psyllid. (See "From the President" in this newsletter for ordering information.)

Growing citrus at home is nearly impossible. Greening has been found in all residential areas. Providing proper nutrition, especially the minor elements is important. Selecting trees from reputable sellers, that show the proper tags indicating dates of treatment /drenching, is a good first step. You can order some of the Tamarixia radiata to try on your trees at home. Growing your trees under cover may be a possibility for the homeowner if you have only a few trees. The screening is specialized (you won't get the results from your pool enclosure).

∞ What's Happening ∞

by Paul Zmoda

We experienced the coldest weather in many years recently. 27F is as cold as we got, along with a couple of heavy frosts. I covered what I could, while the largest trees had to fend for themselves. Our thirty foot jackfruit took a beating; several bananas were stopped in their tracks while beginning to bloom.

I have been pruning grape vines and deciduous fruit trees. Any dormant pieces got stored in the refrigerator for rooting or grafting later as the weather becomes warmer. I obtained another rare grape and planted it. Grape breeding history writer, Tom DeWolf, named it 'Dunstan's Dream' in honor of its creator, Bob Dunstan, who never released it. This grape is one of only a few rare hybrids of a muscadine and a European vinifera grape. They are rare crosses because the chromosome numbers of the parent vines are different.

New Plantings - lots of cool weather vegetables and the grape.

See more information about Bob Dunstan and his grapes and other important accomplishments for Florida, see article on page 7.

From the President
Tom Schaefer

Brrr! Where did this cold weather come from? I thought we were to have a La Niña this winter. Thanks again to Charles Novak for talking to us about Cold Weather Protection. Hopefully his advice helped save some of our plants!

Our January Citrus speakers provided us with lots of information, although not all positive, for our citrus. The Florida citrus growers are determined to get through the citrus greening problem. Hopefully we can keep our current and new citrus trees as healthy as possible to provide us with good fruit. The key is good nutrition: monthly fertilization with major & minor elements, foliar sprays and control of the Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP). But management of HLB depends primarily on controlling ACP with regular pesticide applications. Natural enemies of ACP are tiny parasitic insects known as Tamarixia radiate. Homeowners can obtain and release these parasitoids on your property. They can benefit your citrus trees and those of your neighbors as the parasites reproduce and spread.

Contact the website below to order these free insects and learn more.
http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Plant-Industry/Bureaus-and-Services/Bureau-Of-Methods-Development-Biological-Control/Biological-Control/Asian-Citrus-Psyllid-Biological-Control/Biological-Control-of-Asian-Citrus-Psyllid-in-Dooryard-Citrus-and-Ornamentals/Tamarixia-Release-Application

We look forward to the 2018 Florida State Fair, Feb. 8-19th, with our display and the Citrus Celebration on Feb.11th. If you have any special citrus for our display, please advise George at 727-735-7293. Bill Vega will be sending tickets to those who volunteered to help work at our Citrus Celebration. He will be sending tickets to those up to date members who signed up to help us. Any fruit brought to the fair must be washed prior to entry.

We are also delighted to have Rachel Smith, Miss Florida Citrus, join us at the fair this year. She is a graduate of the Univ. of Florida and lives in Clearwater. Mark Govan may be performing his Sunday morning radio show on 970 AM WFLA at the fair on Feb.11th. If you cannot attend, please listen. Your friends may be interviewed on the air!

Thank you to all who consistently bring dishes for our buffet. We look forward to full cooperation in this endeavor to treat our members and guests!
Don't forget to view our website, www.rarefruit.org . Lots of information in the previous newsletters! Check the Home Page for INFORMATION SOURCES and TROPICAL FRUIT.
See you at the fair!

January Tasting Table

This is a sampling of the wonderful offerings at the buffet 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 receive a ticket for the plant raffle.

Name	Item	Name	Item
Coronel	Fruits, bibingka, meat	Campani	Strawberries
Vega	Rice	Sakuta	Fruit
Kischuk	Chocolate chip cookies	Trangos	Baked beans
Sweet	Key lime pie	Cotierrez	Bread
Payne	Deviled eggs	Black	Ethiopian cabbage
Newcombe	Carambola w/yogurt	Saceda-bigelow	Chicken bean casserole
Davies	Greek pastistio	Fotopoulos	Coffee
Soto	Yellow rice	Vargas	Cookies
Bowman	Salad	Clarke	Sweet potato casserole, rolls
Clarke	Plaintains, bread pudding	Topping	Cake and fruit
Tamura	Fruits	McHenry	Shoofly pie
Kirby	Hot wings	Dickey	Salad, pretzels

Word Find

by

UF/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center

S S G R B T L F B E G Z M T D
H U A N G L O N G B I N G A E
B C I I S R S P X J M F S N D
D D I X R E A W A I T F R G I
Z L J T G E R P S M E I U E S
P L T N R I T S E V M H X R P
H R A I R U H C G F K E K I O
L R Q R F A S G A S R H M N L
O X U R P G E M N B U U M E Y
E F U E G N I N E E R G I S W
M I N P S Y L L I D B E I T Q
T L L A M S V R V M P L Y T U
R U A X Z H T M I K E V H O D
W M W N X B G E T I G A A M A
D Q V O D G N F K W P N A R M

BACTERIA
GRAPEFRUIT
HUANGLONGBING
ORANGES
SMALL
CITRUS
GREENING
LOPSIDED
PHLOEM
TANGERINES
FRUIT
HLB
MISSHAPEN
PSYLLID

∞ January Plant Raffle ∞

Here is sampling from the plant raffle table. Thank you to everyone who brought in plants to share at the raffle.

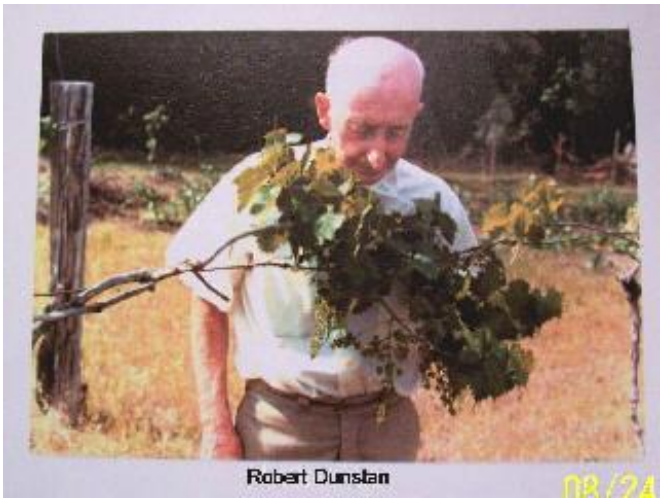
Plant	Donor	Winner
Dragonfruit	Soylu	
Banana	Soylu	Black
Papaya	Soylu	
Ice cream banana	Coronel	Bowman
Cilantro	Vega	Clarke
Aloe	Vega	
Tumeric	Branesky	Vargas
Galang ginger	Branesky	Sakuta
Tangerines, hamlins	Branesky	
Guava	Zaida	Acosta
Cuban oregano	Black	
Starfruit	Clarke	
Sweet potato	Clarke	
Black sapote	Westerfield	
Fig	Mahoney	Fotopoulos
Citrus fruits	Coronel	

∞ Club Notes ∞

The Club is looking for a new photographer. This person would be responsible for taking pictures of all events and activities, speakers at the monthly meetings, plant sales, etc. Please contact tschaefer5@tampabay.rr.com for more information if you are interested.

We welcome your submissions for the newsletter, pictures, notes of interest, events in your area, tips you've tried or learned that you would like to share with others, recipes, or questions about growing fruits - please send them to bdprovencher@tampabay.rr.com Submissions for the next newsletter due by: **February 22nd**.

About Bob Dunstan



Paul Zmoda's mention of Bob Dunstan prompted a little research into the history of a very interesting and important horticulturalist in Florida.

Bob Dunstan did what other plant breeders said could not be done. He hybridized two different grape species. He successfully crossed the sturdy native American Muscadine (Muscadinia rotundifolia) with the fancy elite European table "bunch" grape (Vitis vinifere) to create a new grape agribusiness in Florida. This accomplishment earned him the title of "Southern Luther Burbank", after his role model, the most notable California horticulturist. Remarkably, he was an amateur life-long gardener, just playing with plants for the love of it. It was said he didn't work the earth, he adorned it, and although he had no formal education in horticulture, it didn't prevent him from doing remarkable things.

Although he later adopted Florida as home, Bob was born in North Carolina in 1901, and gardened there during the Depression, where he grew tomatoes the size of cantaloupes, exotic colored raspberries, white dewberries, and other rare fruits. He became involved with grapes when a friend brought him 30 rare French hybrid grape varieties from abroad. Breeders had been unsuccessful for over 100 years in crossing the euvitis and rotundifolias. Thus began decades of enthusiastic work resulting in the "it couldn't be done" cross.

While the grape research was going on, Bob was also crossing pecans and hickory trees, producing the "he-can". He also brought the chestnut back from the brink of destruction from the blight, and introduced varieties of persimmons not previously grown in Florida. He also propagated many other "first" fruits for Florida, such as the Anna apple from Israel, cold hardy citrus, figs, jujubes, peaches, and papayas.

Bob Dunstan died of cancer in 1987, but his work surely lives on at the family farm.

The Chestnut Hill Nursery in Alachua is the multi-generational farm of the Dunstan/Wallace families, and the largest grower of chestnuts and persimmons in the US. Check the website for the catalog of many available fruits: http://www.chestnuthilltreefarm.com/

ꕥ Membership information ꕥ

NEW MEMBERS

Download and fill out a membership application from: https://rarefruit.org/membership/,
and send with check of money order for $20 made out to Tampa Bay RFCI to:
Tampa Bay RFCI**,** 39320 North Ave., Zephyrhills, FL 33542.

RENEWING MEMBERS

Send check or money order for $20 made out to Tampa Bay RFCI and mail to:
Tampa Bay RFCI**,** 39320 North Ave., Zephyrhills, FL 33542.

The objectives of The Tampa Bay Rare Fruit Council International:

To inform the public about the merits and uses of fruits common to this region and encourages the cultivation, collection, propagation and growth of fruits that are exotic or unusual to west central Florida. The club also encourages the development of new fruit varieties, cooperating with local and foreign agricultural agencies.

Tampa Bay RFCI
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