



RFCI

January 2019

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 ∞

January 13th, 2pm. Citrus Tree Nutrition with Dr. Mongi Zekri.

Originally from Tunisia, Dr. Zekri has worked extensively with citrus and other tropical fruits at the Florida Tropical Research and Education Centers in both Lake Alfred and Homestead, studying and developing fertilization and irrigation schedules for fruit crops. He currently works out of the Hendry County Extension Office in Labelle providing educational opportunities and programs for master gardeners, homeowners, urban groups, and students.



February – Florida State Fair, Citrus Celebration, and Horticulture

Display. There will be no regular meeting in February. Member volunteers are needed to help with all the events. Sign up will be at January's meeting, and there will be lots more information on how you can help out for this fun and important activity for the Club.



President: Tom Schaefer; VP and Secretary: Cora Coronel; Treasurer: Susan McAveety,
Newsletter/Membership: Denise Provencher

Pictures from the Holiday Social

Photos by George Campani



The food was spread on the table with care,
Knowing that members soon would be there,



The mood was so festive,
The outfits so bright,



No one would leave hungry, try as they might.



Santa and his reindeer might like the cold,
But Charles showed us how
to keep plants warm in ways to behold.



Paul held up those tickets,
And called out a number.
Many went home with plant or a gift,
To give next year's garden an exciting new lift.





Friends chatted about all they learned this past year,
And talked about what else they'd like to learn and hear.
Then everyone went home to their beds,
While visions of rare fruits danced in their heads.

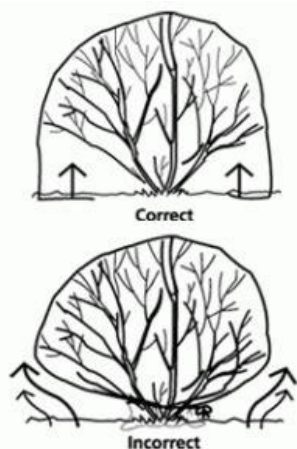
Happy New Year!!!!

Here are some methods you may try for protecting your plants and trees from Charles Novak's cold preparation talk.

Containers: Plants in containers can be moved into a protected area, such as a garage, carport, porch, greenhouse, etc. Plants in a container will remain smaller than those grown in the open ground.

Location: Locating tender plants under trees may offer up to 10 degrees of protection by preventing the heat loss and keeping warmth at lower levels, near plants. Charles has starfruit growing under the protection of oaks. There is less fruit, but this way, less fruit is wasted as less is produced.

South walls of buildings add warmth by radiating heat during the night.



Use mulch to protect roots, and especially the graft area of the trunk. The banking up of mulch and loose leaves, held against the trunk with chicken wire can help protect the trunk area.

Charles had a mango where the grafted area was planted below the ground level. When a freeze destroyed the above ground portion of the plant, the grafted plant was able to re-grow true to the variety that was grafted onto the original rootstock.

Wrap trees in Christmas lights. The old style work best as they generate more heat. Floodlight bulbs also generate a good amount of heat.

Heaters: Small space heaters, especially used in conjunction with other methods, or even patio heaters may help. Propane heaters will require very frequent monitoring.



Covers: Blankets can be used, although these can be heavy and transfer freezing water to the leaves. They'll need to be removed quicker. Frost cloth is best. It's lightweight, and lets water and air through. It can safely stay on the plant for many days. This can offer up to 10 degrees of protection.

Don't use plastic directly on plants. If it touches the plant, it can transfer the cold and cause more damage. Boxes can blow away in the wind unless weighted down.

Chemicals: FreezePruf can be sprayed on the plant ahead of time, and lasts for weeks. When tried on an Elephant ear, no damage to the leaf occurred from the cold.

Water: Misting systems do work great, if you have well water. Keep it on until the temperature warms up above freezing.

Be prepared to pick fruit harvests if a freeze is predicted.

For weather outlooks for the coming season, and all other things weather related, check the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration at: <http://www.noaa.gov/>

Freezpruf and frost cloth products are available in local box stores, and in larger quantities online.

⌘ What's Happening ⌘

by Paul Zmoda

Happy New Year! Winter is here and as of this writing we saw only two light frosts. Before they occurred, I enclosed my mango house (see picture) with fresh plastic and moved tender, potted plants inside.

I have begun pruning our deciduous trees once they have dropped all, or most all, of their leaves. First up are persimmons; I save some of the best pieces in the refrigerator for grafting later.

Recently, I heard loud screeching in the backyard. Parrots!! Two dozen parrots were checking out the fruitscape. Oh no! Crows are bad enough, but parrots? They can be very destructive to fruit crops so I'll have to stay vigilant.

New plantings: Peas and lots more winter greens.

Paul's Mango House



⌘ Club Notes ⌘

Send in 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: **January 22nd.**

If you are missing a badge, please stop at the desk by the door when you arrive at the meeting, there is a sheet there to sign to replace a missing badge, or report that you do not have one.

⌘ Membership information ⌘

NEW MEMBERS

Download and fill out a membership application from: <https://rarefruit.org/membership/>, and send with check or 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
39320 North Ave.
Zephyrhills, FL 33542



