



RFCI

February 2019

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

<http://www.rarefruit.org>
Tampa.Bay.RFCI@gmail.com
<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 7 -18 – Florida State Fair, Citrus Celebration, and Horticulture Display. There will be no regular meeting in February. See you at the Fair!



March 10th – Bud grafting workshop with mango expert Walter Zill! A must for anyone wanting to learn the important art of bud grafting. This is a continuation of Walter's talk on mangoes. Learn to do your own grafting of this wonderful fruit.

⌘ Welcome New Members ⌘

Ishrat Sahasrabudhe	Tampa
Jeanine Lussier	Apollo Beach
John Yann	St. Pete
Leif Penrose	Apollo Beach
Mary Ann Albert	Largo

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

☞ Citrus Care and Nutrition, and Surviving Citrus Greening ☜

Dr. Mongi Zekri



Photo by George Campani

January's speaker, Dr. Mongi Zekri, provided Club members with the latest information on caring and feeding of citrus despite greening, and how the battle against citrus greening was proceeding.

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.

Much is continuing to be learned about Citrus greening, or Huanglongbing (HLB), and how not only the industry is dealing with the disease, but how the homeowner can continue to grow and enjoy citrus fruits. No cure has been found for the disease, which is a bacteria spread by the Asian psyllid insect. Greening has affected all citrus varieties, and citrus relatives, although some fare better than others. The Mediterranean area and Australia are still free of the disease.

Greening starts in the roots of the affected tree, therefore by the time symptoms are visible it is often too late, with 70-80% of the tree affected. In branches, you may notice "yellow shoot", when one branch is showing symptoms. Initially, this may be the asymmetrical yellowing of leaves.

There are many approaches to fighting greening:

Besides bactericides and insecticides aimed at the bacteria and the insect respectively, there are other treatment showing promise.



*Handler walking with scent-detecting dog in citrus grove.
Photo: University of Florida*

Interestingly, dogs are being used to detect the scent in citrus groves at the ground level before the disease is symptomatic, and are proving to be 99% accurate, better than laboratory testing.



(CUPS) Citrus under Protective Screening.

You may have seen the groves being grown under special screening in containers while driving through citrus growing areas of the State.



**Bob Adair, Florida Research Center for Agricultural Sustainability Inc., inspects a tree planted on metalized reflective mulch. After more than four years, the mulch is still intact.
Photo by Frank Giles**

The use of reflective mulch material under the trees is also being utilized.

Thermotherapy, which involves heating the trees to 130 degrees is being used in some groves with some success.

Parasitic wasps that are a problem only for the psyllid insect, are being released in groves to attack the psyllids.



Nutrition is a critical component of greening treatment, and one that is easily managed by the homeowner. Proper nutrition at both the root level, and foliar treatments as well, are combined to keep trees strong and healthy.

Here is one example of fertilizer recommendation for citrus:

For citrus trees in the citrus greening (HLB) era, soluble fertilizer should be split into 10 applications per year with a complete balanced fertilizer (Feb, Mar, Apr, May, June, Jul, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov). Besides nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, be sure that the fertilizer has magnesium, and micronutrients such as manganese, zinc, iron, copper, and boron. The use of 6-month controlled release fertilizer is preferred. Use the recommended rate on the fertilizer label. Be sure that the fertilizer has all nutrients.

The rates on the following Table are per year per tree. The rate per application should be divided by 10.

Fertilizer guidelines for citrus trees

Tree age	Lbs. fertilizer per tree per year		Application frequency
	6-6-6	8-8-8; or 8-2-8; or 8-4-8	
1	4	3	10
2	7	6	10
3	10	8	10
4	15	11	10
5+	18	14	10

Foliar applications of micronutrients should be applied at least 3 times a year on the major spring, summer, and fall flushes when the new leaves are about fully expanded. Use the recommended listed rates on the container.

⌘ What's Happening ⌘

by Paul Zmoda

Many of you may have seen me featured in the Sunday, January 6th, issue of the Tampa Bay Times garden section. Garden Columnist Penny Carnathan wrote about my work with Florida grapes.

I've entered the wine competition at the State Fair. All that's left to do is finish bottling, labeling, and then hand-delivering my three entries.

Our Minneola tangelo tree is the least affected by the citrus greening disease and has been providing dozens of perfect fruit for the past few weeks. The fresh squeezed juice is excellent.

All of our avocados are budding out and should have open flowers before too long. The 'Fantastic' avocado tree had grown to over twenty feet, so I cut it back to fifteen to let it spread out and keep the fruit within reach.

Grape pruning is almost finished followed by some vine training and trellis repairs. January 16th was my 65th birthday – time flies by so quickly.

To view the article on Paul's grapes, go to this website, and click on the January 6th link.

<https://tampabaytimes-fl.newsmemory.com/?special=Homes>



⌘ 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
Latimer	Brownies	Campani	Brownies
Luba	Pineapple juice	Yann	Carambola
Petersen	Finger grapes	Bowman	Pineapple chunks, black olives
Ishrat S.	Quinona	Coronel	Fried rice, turkey, guacamole
Quimby	Cookies	Clark	Squash casserole, chili
Clarke	Guava bread pudding, brownies	Clark	Zucchini bread



∞ 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
Tamarind	Coronel	
Sugar apple	Luba	
Hot peppers	Zmoda	
Starfruit	Zmoda	
Green papaya	Zmoda	
Strawberry plant	Zaida	
Passionfruit	Ugur	McDonald
Sugar cane	Black	
Guava/everglade tomato 1 pot	Premraj	
Jackfruit	Vega	
Sapodilla	Vega	Black
Pepper	Vega	
Cryptanthus	Donna Z.	Payne
Jackfruit	Payne	
Okinawa spinach	Larsen	
Yesterday/today/tomorrow	Tamura	
Everglade tomato	Quimby	Black
Malabar spinach	Ramirez	McDonald
Bay leaf	Dods	Petersen
Sugar apple	Boynes	
Pineapple	Boynes	
Plumeria	Boynes	Curry
African mangosteen	Provencher	Gil
Samanea	Provencher	Petersen
Green sugar apple	Provencher	Male
Ackee	Provencher	Yann
Pineapple	Clarke	
Hundreds of seed packets	Soylu	Everyone

Sources for citrus trees:

Some of the best varieties of citrus for the home grower include Sugar Belle, which is one of the best recommendations. Also, Bingo, Tango, and Dancy are great choices.



Club member Harris Nursery in Lithia is a great place to shop for your citrus. Please call ahead and ask for the varieties you would like to purchase. RFCI members receive a discount on purchases.

<http://www.harriscitrus.com>

Harris Citrus 10721 HWY 39 South - Lithia, FL 33547 Phone 813.684.1654



Also, Justfruitsandexotics in the northern part of the state offers Sugar Belle and other varieties of citrus, and can ship 3 and 7 gallon sizes.

<https://justfruitsandexotics.com/product/sugar-belle-tangerine-tree/>

⌘ 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: **February 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
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Zephyrhills, FL 33542