



RFCI

March 2022

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 American Legion Post 111,

6918 N. Florida Ave, Tampa 33604

∞ Upcoming Programs and Events ∞

March 13th – Lychees and Longans - Steve Cucura, owner of Fruitscapes Nursery in Bokeelia, will discuss lychees and longans. Steve is a member of the Rare Fruit Council, and you may know him as being supplier of tropical fruit trees for the Club's USF plant sales. These members of the Soapberry family from Asia are long-time favorite fruits in tropical/subtropical areas. Learn how you can grow them here in the Tampa area.



∞ Welcome New Members ∞

Caleb Keeling Dade City

The 2022 Citrus Celebration at the Florida State Fair

After canceling the Citrus Celebration last year due to the Pandemic, the Tampa Bay Rare Fruit Council held the Citrus Celebration at the Florida State Fair once again this year. The challenges have increased with HLB attacking the citrus trees and many growers going out of business. Club Members have lost their citrus trees as well, making getting varieties of citrus fruit all the more challenging.

The "change" for the Citrus Celebration to be held on a Saturday instead of being held on Sunday; and the relocation from the Florida Center Building to the Entertainment Hall changed the logistics of the event as we venture forward. Invariably the Club's many volunteers rose to the challenges and on Saturday morning attacked the fruit cutting and at the same time coordinated the tasting tray layout. Changes can make challenges for any group; however, everyone came together to make this annual event run smooth.

The Fair Goers had over twenty different varieties of fruit to sample and a large seating area with round tables for the Fair Goers to enjoy their fruit. During the Citrus Celebration our Club had many varieties of citrus fruit displayed on three tables for the Fair Goers to view and ask questions. The many varieties displayed ranged from small kumquats to the large pummelos.

**President: Mike Sweet; Vice Presidents: Paul Branesky; Secretary: Jager Mitchell;
Treasurer: Susan McAveety; Newsletter/Membership: Denise Provencher**

A special thanks to Jerry Amyot and Ruth Nowland for answering the many questions the Fair Goers had on growing citrus.

A special thanks to Tom Schaefer for coordinating with Payton Barrington, Miss Florida Citrus, who participated in our "Citrus Celebration". Payton spoke with the Fair Goers and spent time with our Club Members. Thank you, Payton.

The Citrus Celebration needs its orange juice and Paul Branesky made fresh orange juice that day. It was excellent tasting orange juice. Paul, with his knowledge of making fresh orange juice, pursued the Juicy Crunch Mandarins for the taste he was looking for. It was Delicious. Great job Paul. Paul was assisted by Margie Campbell. Great job Margie.

Thanks to the many members of our club who participated, once again, in the Fair's Horticulture Display. The Horticulture Display is a 10ft-by-10ft area where we have fruit trees displayed during the entire Florida State Fair located in the Florida Center Building. This year's "Display Theme" was planting cold hardy varieties of fruit trees for the Tampa area. This can save let's say, your avocado tree during a cold spell....by planting a more cold hardy variety of avocado.

The Horticulture Display Committee Members are Paul Branesky, Tom Schaefer, Scott Petersen, Jerry Amyot, Charles Novak and George Campani.

Additional thanks to our plant suppliers: Chris Ramirez, Charles Novak, Jerry Amyot, and Jene's Tropicals.

Thanks to our citrus suppliers:

W.G. Roe and Sons in Winter Haven, Florida: was our biggest supplier, once again. They supplied the juice oranges. They also, donated citrus for tasting: Hirado Butan Pummelo, Tango Tangor, Roe Tangerine, Juicy Crunch Mandarin, Autumn Honey Tangerine, Washington Navel, Meyer Lemon and the W6-B26 Tangerine (name to follow next year?)....Maybe?

Dundee Groves in Dundee, Florida supplied: Red Grapefruit, Valencia Oranges, White Grape Fruit and Tango Tangor.

Ridge Island Groves in Haines City, Florida supplied: Red Navel Oranges, Navel Oranges, Honeybell Tangelos, Honey Tangerines, and Sugar Belle Mandarins.

Martin Groves in Plant City, donated much needed varieties which included the Lane-late-Navel Oranges and Early Gold Oranges.

Thanks to the club members who donated citrus and starfruit to their Club's Citrus Celebration.

A special thanks to U.F. Citrus Research and Education Center for their educational handouts.

Thank you to our Club President, Mike Sweet, for a great job.

A special thanks to Paul Branesky for being the Juiceman, helping with the Club's Horticultural Display and then going to gather display fruit with Charles Novak, Fred Engelbrecht, George Campani and Jerry Amyot for the information and viewing table at the Citrus Celebration. Also, thanks for being Co -Chair for the Citrus Celebration.

Thanks to the many hard-working club members the day of the Citrus Celebration that made this event a big success: it could not happen without its many volunteers. Thank You: Verna Dickey, Raffina Dindial, Fred Engelbrecht, Mary Ann Branesky, Yuko Topping, Kenny Gil, Jager Mitchell, Mike Sweet, Susan McAveety, Bob Grauer, Margie Campbell, Ron Dunn, Bernie Dunn, Alice Stein, Hillary Cosenza, Debbie Campani, Robert Godwin, Christy Chraibi, Paul Branesky, Serenity Branesky, Ruth Nowland, Sumiyo Shaw, Chie Palmer, George Campani, Carole Grauer, Kathy Godwin, Jenny Thomas, Nico Tiedemann, Patty Moore, Sandy Forrington, Jerlyn Spicer, Angela Rodriguez Diaz, Scott Petersen, Tom Schaefer, Zaniya Worlds, Brenda Osmen, Rochan Premraj, Maya Premraj, Jerry Amyot, Julene Clarke, Zaida Gutierrez, Fernando Gutierrez. I apologize to those I have missed.

Thank you, to Brenda Gregory (State Fair Coordinator) for your hard work.

Written on behalf of the Citrus Celebration Committee by George Campani, Co-chair

All Photos by George Campani



Time for scrubbing!



Love those pants, Paul!



Preparing the juices, and cutting all the fruits for the Fair Goers.



George getting the display ready.



Tom and Miss Florida Citrus, Payton Barrington



Volunteers Tom and Fred ready for action.



Ruth Nowland with Jerry Amyot



The wonderful display of fruits is ready for showtime.



Making sure everything is ready to go for the throngs of citrus lovers.



The finished display for the Club, ready for opening day.

✧ What's Happening ✧

by Paul Zmoda

The big news that affected all our members is the big freeze that occurred on January 30th. Our window thermometer showed 30 degrees, but it was likely in the twenties out in the open yard. Overall, we had that heavy frost and three other light frosts, and the farm shows it.



Cherimoyas – photo by Paul Zmoda

Our jaboticaba tree tried to take our mind off all the freeze damage by giving us a nice crop of those dark, juicy berries. One of the small, native pawpaws has been flowering for a month and seems to have set some fruits. The plums are beginning to wake up and soon will be in all their flowery glory.

I grafted a couple of black sapote – the scions were whip grafted onto native American persimmons, which is possible since they are both in the Diospyros genus. In fact, I got my first ever black sapote fruit from the same graft combination I made four or five years ago.

Last month I was asked by a fruit tree nursery owner to give a grafting demonstration. It went well and the best part was that I was paid with fresh, California cherimoyas!

∞ Club Notes ∞

Contributing to the newsletter is a great way to share what you are doing in your garden with other members, learn what other members are growing, and get your questions answered.

Your submissions for the newsletter, pictures, notes of interest, events, tips, recipes, questions, etc. are especially needed - please send them to bdprovencher@tampabay.rr.com

Submissions for the next newsletter due by: **March 22nd**.

∞ Membership information ∞

NEW MEMBERS

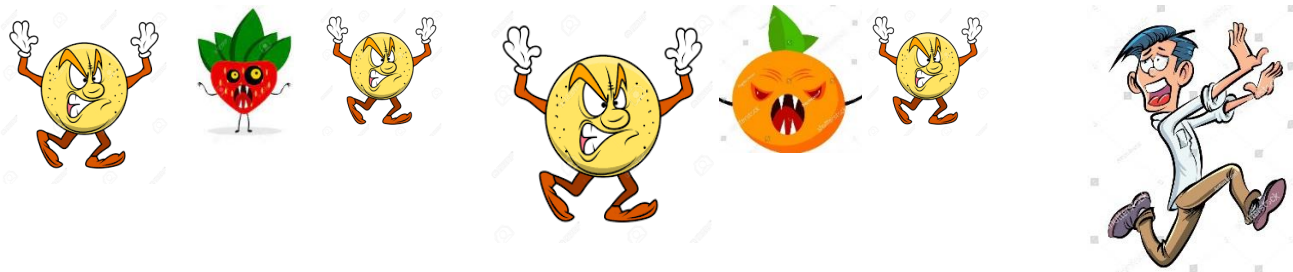
Download and fill out a membership application from: <https://rarefruit.org/membership/>, and send with check or money order for \$20 made out to Tampa Bay RFCI to:
Tampa Bay RFCI, 12722 Prosser Rd., Dade City, FL 33525

RENEWING MEMBERS

Send check or money order for \$20 made out to Tampa Bay RFCI and mail to:
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Did you know.....that Fructophobia is the fear of fruits?

From the Latin for fruit (fructus), this phobia has many interesting elements ranging from fear of the sugar in the fruit, to the fear of fruit seeds being inside the human body. Interesting.





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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