



RFCI

August 2023

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 Unity North Tampa Church,

19520 Holly Lane, Lutz, FL 33558

⌘ Upcoming Programs and Events ⌘



August 13th: Finger Limes with Dr. Manjul Dutt, assistant Professor, Horticultural Sciences at the UF/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center. Often called the caviar of the citrus world for its flavorful vesicles that pop in your mouth, this unique Australian fruit, often used in gourmet cuisines, can be grown here in Florida. Learn about growing finger limes in your yard or patio, and about the newest hybrids.

1:00 – 2:00pm Social Hour

2:00 – 2:30pm Potluck – feel free to bring a covered dish

2:30 – 3:30pm Speaker

3:30 – 4:00pm Raffle – feel free to bring a plant

⌘ Welcome New Members ⌘

Garrett Swindal Bartow

George Greve Clearwater

Eric Redmon Plant City

Irene Lauria New Port Richey

Masood Tavalla Mango

Duane Piercey Seffner

Camille Eckrem Largo

Robert Martinson Hudson

Adam & Shannon Sawyer New Port Richey

President: Hillary Cosenza; Vice President: Dylan Chadwell; Secretary: KC Gonzalez;
Treasurer: Susan McAveety; Newsletter/Membership: Denise Provencher

The Great Grafting Workshop with Paul Zmoda, Kenny Gil and Chris Ramirez

At July's meeting, members learned a lot watching Club expert grafters demonstrate various grafting and air-layering techniques. Many questions were asked, and lots of information shared. Grafting kits were available for purchase as well as University of Florida/IFAS grafting booklet. The grafting workshop is a Club favorite, and the perfect opportunity to see and learn grafting techniques firsthand.



Photo: George Campani



Photo: George Campani

⌘ What's Happening ⌘

by Paul Zmoda

This hot, steamy weather is good for most of my plants. Outdoor work is mostly cutting grass and training plants, but pollinating and harvesting happens too. The mangoes are done for the year as avocados begin.

Our big, potted soursop has set one fruit and new flowers continue to show up from time to time. These are watched carefully to catch pollen and hand-pollinate at the appropriate time. 'Barbie Pink' tropical guavas will suddenly swell up and get lighter in color, indicating it's time to pick, and continue ripening indoors. The newly planted, grafted grapes are growing so fast that they have reached the trellis wire. I cut the vines leader here to force the future cordons to begin growing in opposite directions. The pindo palm is dropping another twenty pound load of their delicious fruit.

Before the grapes finished, I harvested a bucket of perfectly ripe Il Primos. I hand-squeezed them and got close to a gallon of juice.

New planting: red finger lime



Il Primo grapes – Paul Zmoda

The First Year in the Life of a Mango Seedling

By George Campani

Don't know what to do with all those mango seeds left-over from The Annual Mango Tasting Event? Try Sprouting the seed! After you enjoy your Mango Fruit, try cleaning and then drying the seed with its hard covering (husk) on, for three days or so.

One method that I have tried for preparing to sprout the seed is taking off the hard covering. I start by clipping the edge of the seed's hard covering (husk) with a pair of wire dikes or scissors cutting the edge of the hard covering or husk; and then I pulled the covering apart, exposing the seed. Take the seed out of the husk and place the seed (embryo) in a small pan of water, covering about half the seed (about $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch or so of water). You need to keep the pan wet (adding water as needed).



(Left) Maha Chanok hard covered mango seed after you eat the fruit, and (Right) a Maha Chanok Mango seed with the hard covering (husk) opened showing the seed (embryo) inside to be removed. Photos: George Campani

After a week or so the seed will begin to sprout and when the leaf growth gets a little bigger it is ready to be planted in a pot with potting soil. When the seedling grows larger (about 2 ft. tall) it can be used for grafting a scion or branch onto it. As the graft takes and the seedling grows a little larger, a good option is to transplant it into the ground. After the grafted mango plant is placed in the ground it takes about 3 years or so for the tree to produce some fruit.

Note: If the same seedling is planted without being grafted, you can hope to have fruit in 10-11 years or so. Also, the ungrafted seedling may not come “true to seed” (be the same variety of mango fruit). However, it is an option if you are not good at grafting. If you want to increase your chance that an ungrafted seedling comes true to seed, you can “plan ahead” by looking-up which varieties of mangos are “seed type polyembryonic,” and try sprouting mangos seeds with that “seed type”. For example, the Nam Doc Mai Mango seeds are “seed type polyembryonic”. If the “seed type is monoembryonic,” there is a good chance the mango tree will be a hybrid. The Maha Chanok Mango is seed type monoembryonic.

See more information on polyembryonic and monoembryonic mango seeds below.

Another way to sprout a mango seed is by planting the de-husked seed in a pot with potting soil and water frequently. Yet another way to sprout mango seeds is to place the seed (husk and all) under some compost in the compost pile. I have been told (by someone who has done this) in about a month or more some seeds will sprout.

Whether we want another tree or not, seed sprouting can be a fun adventure! Try it!



(Left) the sprouted Maha Chanok Mango seed (Middle) Planting the sprouted Maha Chanok Mango Seed in a pot. (Right) 11 months later the seedling Photos: George Campani

Below is the list of Mango varieties that were available this year for tasting and whether they are Polyembryonic **P** - or Monoembryonic **M**:

Polyembryonic mango seeds have multiple embryos in the seed, all are clones of the parent except for one. This one fertilized seedling is usually the first to germinate and sprout. It will look different than the other seedlings so you can tell it is the one that is not the clone of the parent.

Monoembryonic mango seeds produce only one plant that is unique genetically, and be a new cultivar. It is not a clone of the parent.

Angie M	Buttercream M	Coconut Cream P	Carioca M
Carrie M	Cambodiana P	Cecilove M	Choc Anon P
Cogshall M	Cyrus	Diamond M	Edward M
Early Gold M	Emerald M	Fairchild M	Falan P
Glenn M	Haden M	Joellen P	Keow Savoy P
King Lion	Lemon Meringue P	Lemon Zest P	Lucille
Maha Chanok M	Nam Doc Mai #34 P	Nova	Orion M
Pickering M	Pim Sen Mun P	Saci	Sophie Frey M
Sunburst	Sunny	Tong Dam P	Vallenato P
Wango 2			



The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has a program for homeowners to apply to receive parasitic wasps as a biological control for citrus psyllids.

For *Tamarixia radiata* parasitic wasp application for home gardeners, apply to:

<https://www.fdacs.gov/TRA>, or 1-800-HELP-FLA

See the following article on page 62 for more information that member Tom Schaefer provided for members to read concerning citrus greening, the relationship between psyllids and ants and how to treat the problem of ants.

Saving Citrus trees – Ants, Wasps and Boric Acid

Information from “Want to save your citrus trees? Start a full-fledged insect war” by Jeanette Marantos, *LA Times*



Asian citrus psyllid nymphs, the sap-sucking pests responsible for spreading HLB disease, excrete tiny curly cords of “honeydew” coveted by ants as they dine on the tender new “flush” growth of a citrus tree.
(Mike Lewis / UC Riverside Center for Invasive Species Research)

In California, strides have been made against the Asian citrus psyllid that spreads HLB (Citrus Greening). This has been accomplished by brutal warfare on ants. Ants love the “honeydew” secreted by the sap-sucking psyllids, and they will do everything they can to support the well-being of the psyllids, despite how hard you are trying to eradicate them.

It has been found that using refillable liquid ant bait dispensers will provide the poison that is brought back to the nest where it will kill the ants. This bait is relatively safe to humans and animals, unless you were drink 50 gallons of it, but it does provide phenomenal ant control. Here is the recipe for the ant bait:

Mix 1 cup of sugar, 3 cups of water and 1 teaspoon of high-purity (99%) water-soluble boric acid. This balance of ingredients is just right, allowing the workers to bring the mixture back to the nest to be consumed by the rest of the ants including the queen. If it were too strong, it could kill the workers before they were able to get home to deliver it.

Another help in the battle against psyllids, is the tiny parasitoid wasp *Tamarixia radiata*. These little wasps lay their eggs on the backs of psyllid nymphs, and when the wasps hatch, they burrow inside the nymph, eating them from the inside out. In California, since introduction of the wasps, psyllid populations have decreased up to 80%.



A female *Tamarixia radiata* parasitoid wasp is the natural enemy of the Asian citrus psyllid. The wasp is the size of a sesame seed.

(Mike Lewis / UC Riverside Center of Invasive Species Research)

∞ Club Notes ∞



If you had trouble last month viewing the newsletter, those who know about such things point out it is possible that this can occur when trying to view a large document on a phone. Your device may not know what to do with a large file and convert it to a .dat file. We always send out the newsletter as a PDF. If this error occurs on your phone, try to view it on your PC instead.

Technology is here! You can renew your membership safely and securely through Square on the Club's webpage, as well as on the Facebook page.



Now available in Spanish: Florida Vegetable Growing Guide
 GUÍA PARA CULTIVAR VEGETALES EN LA FLORIDA
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/hs1383>

ALWAYS WANTED:

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 Tampa.Bay.RFCI@gmail.com

Submissions for the next newsletter due by: **August 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:
 Tampa Bay RFCI, 12722 Prosser Rd., Dade City, FL 33525



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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