



January 2024

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

<http://www.rarefruit.org>

[Tampa.Bay.RFCI@gmail.com](mailto: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 ∞

**January 14<sup>th</sup> Annonas! With Har Mahdeem**



Har is back, and will speak on Annonas. Har has an entire lifetime of experience with tropical fruit. He grew up in the Amazon region consuming rare jungle fruits and later worked with the famous Zill nursery on their Annona breeding program. 1-2pm Social Hour, 2-2:30 Potluck, 2:30 – 3:30 Speaker

**February 18, 2024 – Citrus Celebration!** Our Club will participate in the Citrus Celebration at the Florida State Fair again this year. The Citrus Celebration will be on **Sunday, February 18, 2024** in the “Special Events Center Building,” located in the Florida State Fair Grounds where the Citrus Celebration was held last year. This has been a fun event for many of our Club Members and fair goers alike. We are looking to sign up club members to volunteer for the Citrus Celebration.

**See page 7 of this newsletter for electronic sign-up, or sign up at the next meeting.**

∞ Welcome New Members ∞

Cathy Schoeppler	Palm Harbor
Russell Jones	Plant City
Niha Baviriseaty	Tampa
Wayne Boynes	Land o Lakes
Dana Haynes	Tampa

**2023 Holiday Social – Photos by George Campani**

The Holiday Social was a lot of fun for everyone!

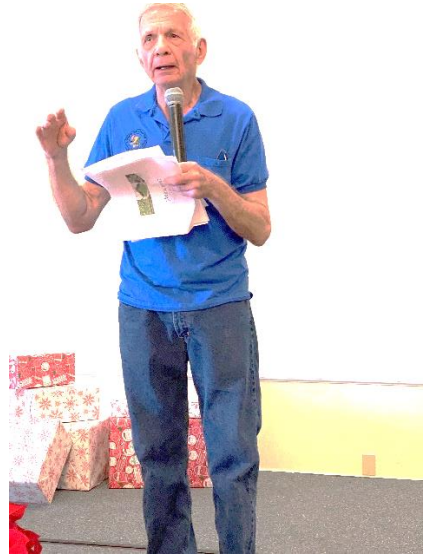
Thanks to The Regent & Perfect Plates for providing the venue & entrees.

Club icon Charles Novak spoke to the group. We wish Charles the very best as that was his last time speaking to the group about cold protection.

The winners of our contests each got a citrus tree of their choice from Hillary!

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





## ☞ What's Happening ☞

by Paul Zmoda

We received 1.9" of rain on December 16<sup>th</sup>, appreciated, but not enough to amend the drought much. Persimmon season is ending with 'Turkey Lake', an American variety, providing dozens of soft, sweet, and satisfying orbs of deliciousness. The seeds are used to grow rootstocks for grafting. I like to plant these rootstock seedlings in the fall and let them get established before grafting them later in spring when they awaken from dormancy.

I was asked to evaluate two new avocado cultivars. One is a seedling of 'Choquette', a large, shiny, green fruit frequently called the 'Florida' avocado. Since there is no avocado cultivar known as 'Florida', many 'Choquette' are mis-labeled. This seedling, tentatively named 'Barnes Butter' was pretty good – just as large and shaped like the parent, but lighter in oil, and just as tasty.

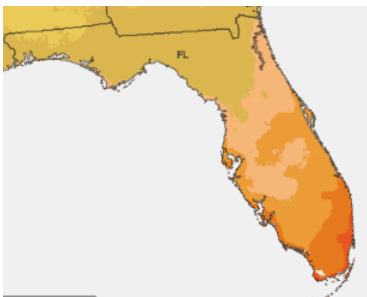
The second avocado came from a large, old tree found growing along a Tampa street – Taliaferro Avenue. This fruit was shaped like a pear (with a neck) and was dark green and weighed just over one pound. Even though the seed was large, there was still a lot of flesh to enjoy. It deserves to be propagated.



Happy New Year to all readers!

Photo: Paul Zmoda - 3 Barnes Butter, and 2 from Taliaferro Ave.

## Check these out



Home gardeners and farmers surely have noticed changes in their plants and crops due to climate change. Maybe you're planting your winter crops later, or your fruit trees are not getting enough chill hours. Check out the most recent hardiness/zone map published by the USDA, and find out how your gardening zone has changed.

<https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/>

**Kumquat Festival, downtown Dade City, January 27, 2024**

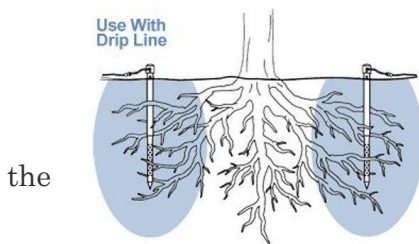
<https://kumquatfestival.org>



## Deep Root Watering Your Fruit Trees – It's a Must!

Things have been dry. Let's face it. The scant rains many of us have been experiencing the last couple seasons is an indicator of climate change that is affecting our plants. Showers less than a 1/2 an inch of rain may not penetrate the soil deeply enough to water a tree's roots. Unless you are in a low-lying, high water table area, your fruit trees may be suffering.

Deep root watering (DRW) is the recommended solution to this problem. Deep root watering is an irrigation technique that employs watering devices to deliver water directly to the root systems of plants. The plants are able to experience better absorption and less compact soil, which promotes improved growth, better oxygen flow, and protection from drought.



In areas such as California and Arizona, where both rain and available irrigation are in short supply, efficient watering is a must. DRW watering methods have been used there a long time. The benefits of applying water directly to the root system are many. Top watering only reaches surface roots, and often the water runs off and does not go into soil at all.

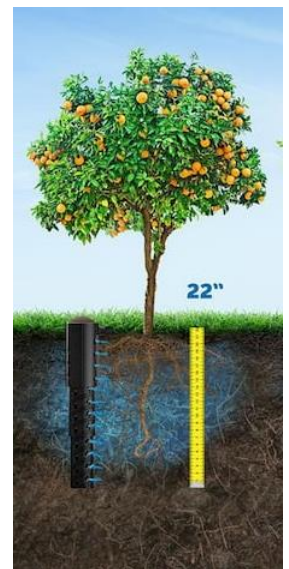
- DEEP DRIP waters, fertilizes, and aerates directly at the roots, conserving up to 50% of your outdoor water use
- Good for new, established, and struggling plants
- Deep watering promotes deeper roots and healthier plants
- Pair with automatic drip system or soak area with hose; deliver water consistently
- Increases transplantation survivability, stability in high winds, and fast & healthy growth.
- Subsurface root irrigation minimizes run-off and evaporation. The DRW System installs below ground grade and helps minimize damage to hardscapes.
- Subsurface aeration and irrigation prevent tree and shrub transplant shock
- Highest efficiency solution for tree irrigation - up to 95% emission uniformity with minimal wind, evaporation, or edge control losses

If you haven't worked with trees before or are brushing up, you may not know about deep root watering trees. This is the ultimate thirst quencher for a parched tree. To get started, you'll need to know how deep root watering works.

Here are five things to remember when deep root watering trees.

### 1. The Water Should Go Deep

Deep watering uses different systems to carry water about 8-36 inches into the ground instead of wetting the surface. Not only is deep root watering trees the best way to get your trees quenched and thriving, but using the right deep root watering system is the most efficient way to do it. It's also great for the environment because you'll be using less water. One of the biggest benefits of a deep root watering system



is that the water reaches deep into the ground, and there are different systems to make this happen. A common method is using Aeration tubes.

- **2. Water Should Also Go Slow**

In addition to the water going deep into the ground, it should also go slow. Since plants absorb water best through the soil, having a slow and steady water distribution is what will guarantee that your tree is quenched. Otherwise, you'll be risking that the water evaporates quickly, not reaching the roots thoroughly.

- **3. Water in the Morning**

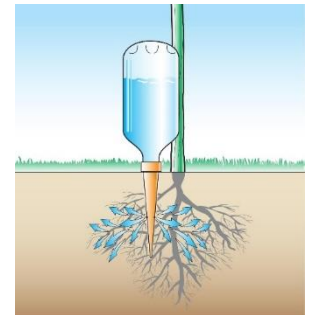
When it comes to using deep root watering for trees, there is no magical time when it should be done. Ideally, it'd be in the morning because it allows more water to remain in the soil instead of having it evaporate. Morning water gives your trees refreshment during the heat of the day.

- **4. Newly Planted Trees Need Most Water**

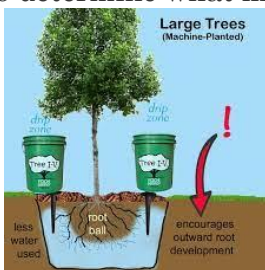
Like any other baby, newly planted trees need a lot of subsistence. Deep root tree care means giving a lot more water to your new trees than your existing older trees. This will ensure that your new trees will grow big and strong. You may need only one tube to start and add more as the tree grows.

- **5. Not All Plants Benefit From Deep Root Watering**

The best things to use root irrigation for are shrubs and trees. This is because they fight the hardest for water, and they're the ones that are hardest to reach roots, especially in the hotter months. Other plants don't need a deep root watering system because they don't need as much water.



To determine what kind of DRW system would work for you consider the following:



The types of fruit trees you want to water this way, their ultimate size and water needs.

The type of soil you have, the water table in your area, cost.

Do you want to have any irrigation system installed currently that can be tapped into?

How much do you want to spend? Do you enjoy making your own system or purchasing premade?

Picture right - Example of a readily available aeration tube, available at Home Depot online, or Amazon, for a reasonable price, perfect for drip irrigation systems or use with a hose and attached container. They are available in a range of sizes.

Of course, you can make your own to fit your special needs, just remember to drill the many holes in the PVC pipe for proper water drippage, and purchase the cap piece to keep debris out. Search online for "deep root watering", or "deep drip aeration tubes for trees". You will find plenty of ready-made products to purchase or get ideas for DIY. Be familiar with the needs of your trees to help guide your design.



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## ⌘ Club Notes ⌘

**Elections return in March!!!!** If you are considering becoming a board member or future executive for the Club, feel free to attend a board meeting and learn more. Good news!! Board meetings are now being held during the social hour between 1pm and 2pm at our monthly meetings. Stop by and meet the current board members and learn how you can contribute to the Club.



Would like to know where can I possibly get a potted good variety 2-3ft Chinese jujube plant. Thanks  
Chris Ramcharan [C\\_ramcha@yahoo.com](mailto:C_ramcha@yahoo.com) Tel: 340-277-9128

### 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](mailto:Tampa.Bay.RFCI@gmail.com)

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

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## Members: Sign up here for the Citrus Celebration

*"TB RFCI members are needed to help with the RFCI Club Display in the Florida Living Center at the Florida State Fair from Feb 8-19th. We are looking for about 5 people to help out each day to answer questions and be available to promote the Club with flyers and membership forms.*



*If you would like help in creating the Display, reach out to George Campani or send a message through here."*

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0849A9A923A7F5C07-46883234-volunteer>

Here is a QR Code, if anyone prefers to scan it :)

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## ⌘ 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

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***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.*

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Tampa Bay RFCI  
12722 Prosser Rd.  
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