



RFCI

April 2024

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 ∞

April 13 and 14 – USF Plant Sale –

No regular meeting this month. Come see us at USF!!!!!!

The University of South Florida Botanical Gardens, 12210 USF Pine Drive, Tampa, FL 33612, hosts their annual Spring Plant Festival, and it's a big and fun fundraising event for the Club.

Plenty of plants! Find that perfect new addition to your garden.

Use the plant manifest sheet on page 31, if you wish to sell fruit plants at the sale. **Only active paid members may sell plants, and you must attend the sale. No Citrus!**

Volunteers for the plant sale can sign up on the link below or the QR code:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0849A9A923A7F5C07-48485312-usfplant>



∞ Welcome New Members ∞

James Harbaugh Tampa

Pujan Shah Tampa

Ko Chang Groveland

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

The Club's Horticultural Display at the Florida State Fair

Written by: George Campani, Horticultural Display Committee Chair
Photos supplied by George Campani

This year's Display Theme was "Fruit Trees Grown by Backyard Growers in the Tampa Area."



When speaking of the Club's contribution to the Florida State Fair, we should not overlook that our Club's Horticultural Display Committee was busy once again this year in the Florida Center Building.

This is where the Horticulture Display Committee puts together a live fruit tree display to be viewed by the public during the entire Fair. This year the display area was a bit smaller. It changed to an 8ft wide by 10ft deep area. The back wall changed from a solid wall to a latticed wall (8ft by 8ft); with two latticed side walls (4ft wide by 8ft high).

This creative display is a great place for the public to view fruit trees that many have not seen before. Our display in addition to the potted passion fruit plant and dragon fruit plant; had 3 potted blueberry plants, a potted sapodilla tree, a potted avocado tree, a potted banana plant, a potted Macadamia Nut Tree, a potted All Spice Tree, a potted blackberry bush, a potted Calamondin Citrus plant, and a potted Rangpur Lime Tree that was loaded with ripe fruit making a yellow/orange colorful display.



Also featured in Our Display Area was the Tree Defender: The Tree Defender covers small citrus trees with white screening that helps to protect the tree from the psyllid that spreads the Citrus Greening-- a bacterial disease. The Tree Defender always makes for a great presentation; for highlighting our biggest problem when growing citrus in Florida--Citrus Greening.

Included in the Display were our new literature display racks, where we had handouts for the public featuring the "Florida Citrus Activity Book" (lesson and coloring) and for the homeowners there was the "Home Citrus Educational Series." Both handouts were donated by the UF/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center in Lake Alfred.

Club volunteers periodically man the display and interact with the fairgoers by answering their many questions (when they can) or they just have a conversation on their experiences on growing fruit trees in our area. We also pick up new members by handing out our membership applications to those that were interested.



A special thanks to the Club's Horticultural Display Committee for their hard work: Paul Branesky, Tom Schaefer, Charles Novak, Jerry Amyot, Scott Petersen, Chris Ramirez, George Campani. A special thanks to those Club Members that supplied the trees for our display: Fred Engelbrecht, Rochan Premraj, Jene Van Butzel.





☞ What's Happening ☞

by Paul Zmoda

What a pleasant winter we've had; only three nights barely into the thirties, and no frost on the ground. We safely passed our no-frost date of March 15th, and with April first being our last witnessed freeze, I think it's safe to say we are in the clear.

Before the last meeting, I went to visit fellow member Ugur Soylu. Even though his house sits on a small city lot, it is surrounded by hundreds of edible trees and plants – many flowering or holding fruit. Ugur is good at grafting; one avocado in particular has been topworked with nine different cultivars. One sight that took my breath away was an olive tree, easily over twenty feet tall, absolutely covered in bloom. There were so many flowers, it appeared white!

I got more grafting done: fifteen persimmons – potted and some already planted. I put some of the medlar scions on our Hood pear's water shoots to see if the two are compatible. Meanwhile, one of the first medlars I had grafted to a loquat made two flowers already.

Even though our Citrus Celebration was a washout on Sunday, I got to taste an experimental grapefruit just called '914' for now. The color was beautiful, it was seedless, juicy, and a nice size. With the flavor being excellent, it is a winner.

Thank you to our editor, Denise Provencher for handling my articles for the newsletter. This is my 32nd year anniversary article!



The '914' grapefruit – photo Paul Zmoda



Welcome to the new Board of Directors!



At the March meeting, the new Board was established. Meet your new Board members.

President – Dylan Chadwell

Vice President – Hillary Cosenza

Secretary – KC Gonzalez,

Treasurer – Susan McAveety

General Board members – Michelle James, Paul Branesky, Chris Ramirez, Kiki De La Cruz, and Bindi Shukla.

∞ Club Notes ∞

We value your feedback! Feel free to submit your thoughts and ideas on how the Club is doing, how it can be improved, what things you would like to see happen, and of course let us know where the Club is doing well. Use the QR code, or Follow the link: <https://forms.gle/mm8AhGsDaBCTfehG7>



New venue for our meetings!!!! Beginning with the May 19th meeting, (please note the change in weekend due to Mother's Day being on the 12th). There will be a new venue for our meetings, the Hillsborough Community College in Brandon. More information will be in next month's newsletter.

Always appreciated:

Member contributions to the newsletter! What 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: **April 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

Both new and renewing members can also make a secure payment using Square. See the October posting link on our Facebook page, or the link on our Website.



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
12722 Prosser Rd.
Dade City, FL 33525