RFCI

October 2026

TAMPA BAY CHAPTER of the

RARE FRUIT COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL, INC.

Meetings unless otherwise noted are held at 1:00pm:
The Oaks at St. Mark's Event Venue.
13312 Cain Road Tampa, FL 33625

http://www.rarefruit.org
Tampa.Bay.RFCI@gmail.com
http://www.facebook.com/TampaBayChapterRareFruitCouncilIntlInc

## ∞ Upcoming Programs and Events ∞




**October 10 – 11 - USF Fall Plant Festival: No regular meeting.**
Plant Sale Time: 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., Get ready for our fund-raising event at the USF Plant Festival!!! Location: USF Botanical Gardens, 12210 USF Pine Drive, Tampa, FL 33612

**See pages 76-78 for more details**

Use the link below to sign up for volunteering at this fun event:
Signup link https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0B4FA4AE23ABFD0-65938319-2026

Please bring your own table(s) and chairs, as USF does not provide them, as well as your own food and beverages.

## Welcome New Members!

Kitty Wallace
John Petrofsky
Lars Doebler

**President: Chris Ramirez; Vice President: Paul Branesky, Secretary: Hillary Cosenza; Treasurer: Susan McAveety; Newsletter/Membership: Denise Provencher**

## Mangoes in Tampa Bay

With speaker

## Michael Gonzalez



Local nursery owner Michael Gonzalez held an interactive discussion with Club members on the cultivation and propagation of mango trees in our local Tampa Bay area. Michael is the owner of Food Forest Tampa, in Odessa.

He discussed the origins of mangoes, varieties that are great for Florida, pruning, and cold protection. He also talked about the different compounds that give the fruit its many complex flavor profiles.

Many questions from members were answered, but if you have more questions, feel free to contact Michael at 813-482-8476. Email: foodforesttampa@gmail.com

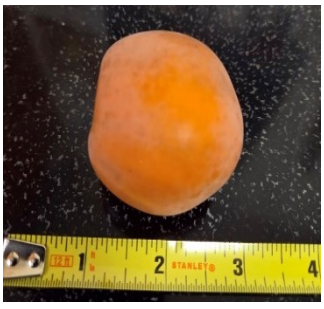
On the Facebook page there is lots of information, current inventory list of available mango varieties, videos, and much more: https://www.facebook.com/people/Food-Forest-Tampa/100063573309068/

## ∞ What's Happening ∞

by Paul Zmoda

It's been noticeably "cooler" in the mornings now, but still hell by midday. Most things are growing well, and fall vegetable gardening time has arrived. The first round of tomatoes are getting tall, while new seedlings are just getting their true leaves. I'm trying kale again this year, and got some seeds of a sorghum that pops like miniature popcorn, so that should be fun.

The last of the mango pruning has been done well before cold weather gets here, so that the new growth hardens off. I made more airlayers on the Guthrie plums as the first batch was potted up and one went into the orchard.



Persimmons are ripening quickly. The astringent ones have to be soft to eat, but the non-astringents are edible as soon as they show color. I'm adding native American Persimmon selections to the farm. So far, Prok has provided some fruit again this year. They are really large and of excellent quality. I plan to be grafting this one next year.



*Prok persimmon: Photos: Paul Zmoda*

## Scenes from September's meeting
## Photos: George Campani



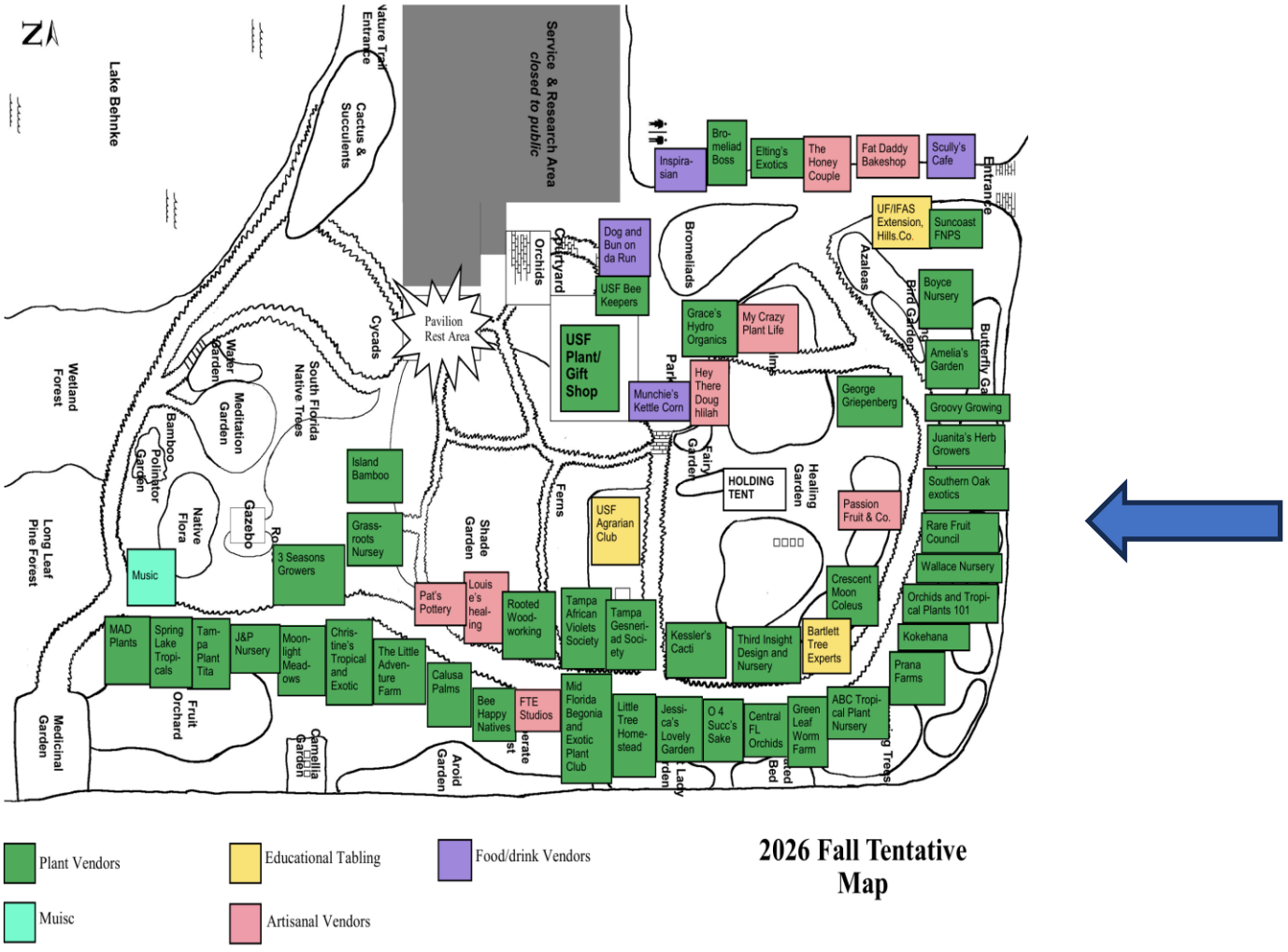








**Blue arrow shows TBRFC's location in the USF Gardens for the Plant Sale.**



## More details on the USF Plant Sale

**<u>USF Plant Festival – Saturday October 10 and Sunday October 11, 2026</u>**.
Our Club will once again participate in the USF Spring Plant Festival!!!
**Set-up is on Friday, October 9, 2026 for the Plant Sale.**




Also, the Club is looking for **volunteers** (and those selling plants) to help at the sale, and sell juices. If you have not attended a USF Plant Festival and you like plants, you should enjoy the interesting display of plants to purchase or just walk around and learn.

**<u>Address of the USF Botanical Garden: 12210 USF Pine Drive, Tampa, Fl</u>**

**Trees and plants you are selling need to be brought in on Friday before noon and must have the inventory manifest form filled out and signed off by the Club.**
**The Board voted to change the percentage to 5% ( 20% of sales goes to USF, 25% total of members sale) for the 2026 Fall Sale! This is instead of 10% (30%total). In other words, you now will keep 75% of the price of the plants you are selling.**
**All plants must be an edible plant / fruiting plant. No citrus!**

Signup link https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0B4FA4AE23ABFD0-65938319-2026

**Plant manifest is on the next page.**

# Tampa Bay Chapter RFCI Plant Sale Manifest

**Seller Name:** _____ **Date:** _____

**Page** _____ **of** _____

| Plant | Size | Number Brought | Number Returned | Number Sold | $ Price | # Sold x Price = $ Collected |
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**Pre Inventory check:** _____ **Sales Total this page:** _____

**Post Inventory check:** _____ **Total other page(s):** _____

**Paid check number:** _____ **Total Sales:** _____

**Date:** _____ **Member's Share:** _____
**(70% of total sales)**

**Received by:** _____ **on** _____

## ꕥ Club Notes ꕥ

**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: **October 22nd**.

**Reminder about raffle plants**: Please be sure to properly identify and label your raffle donations. It is important that the person receiving the plant knows its identity and what parts are edible, how to grow, etc. The emphasis is on edible plants of course, as we are a fruit club. Please, no invasive plants.

## ꕥ Membership information ꕥ

**Both new and renewing members can make quick, secure credit card payment using Square. Use this QR code**

Check your newsletter email or address label for your membership renewal date.

**Prefer using a check? Use address below.**
**NEW MEMBERS -** Download and fill out a membership application from: https://rarefruit.org/membership/, and send with check of money order for $25 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 $25 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.
Dade City, FL 33525