

# RFCI

June 2017

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>

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Meetings are held the second Sunday, 2:00 P.M.  
at the Christ the King Church, McLoughlin Center,  
821 S. Dale Mabry, Tampa

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## ∞ Upcoming Programs and Events ∞

**June 11th - Organic growing practices**. Bring your questions about organic growing methods and practices. Learn about what organic growing is and take home some ideas to incorporate into your own garden.

**July 9th - The Club's great fruit tasting event!!!** Don't miss out on tasting a plethora of flavorful, delightful, in season fruits from Florida.

**August 13th - Bananas** - Listen to a regional expert talk about one of the world's most grown and most popular fruits. Get informed about this wonderful and easy to grow fruit, and learn about the many varieties.

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## ∞ In Memory ∞

Ashok Dhond - member since 2005

Gus Weekley - member since 1990

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## ∞ Welcome New Members ∞

Ana & Jerry Bowman Plant City

Sunitha Pillai Tampa

Ray Marsholl Largo

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President: Tom Schaefer; Fred Engelbrecht: VP, Program Manager; Sandra Kischuk: Secretary; Treasurer: Susan McAveety; Newsletter/Membership: Denise Provencher; Photographs: Steve Lohn

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The May meeting celebrated Mother's Day with a beautiful cake, and numerous gifts that were raffled off to some lucky Moms. Elizabeth Vargas handed out the tickets for the Mom's Day raffle. And of course, there were a few special kisses too! Photos by Steve Lohn



## ✧ Growing Olives in Florida ✧

### Michael O'Hara Garcia



Michael O'Hara Garcia, president of the Florida Olive Council spoke about the wonderful olive at May's meeting. Olives are an amazing fruit, and are one of the oldest cultivated crops. As early as 3000 years BC, olives have been grown for oil and fruit, and were traded by the Phoenicians. They are thought to have originated in Mesopotamia.

The US consumption of olive oil is a very big business, with 80 million gallons per year. The United States produces about 400,000 gallons, mostly in California.

While growing in Florida on a large scale is still experimental, plantations of olives were growing here as early as 1750 in Ormond Beach, 1865 in Fernandina, and even in Tampa in 1935. In 2016 there were 42 olive groves growing in many

areas of the state.

Olive trees are very long lived. The thick, gnarly trees in old Mediterranean groves are reported to be over 2,000 years old. Olive trees are quite hardy, and will tolerate the normal range of temperatures experienced in the Tampa Bay area. Damage can occur in the low 20's, and more severe damage in the teens. (See chill hour map below) Olive trees like well-drained soil, and full sun. The soil should be a PH between 6.5 and 7.5. Irrigate but do not overwater, as too much wet can kill the trees. If you are planting in an area where water can stand, use mounding up methods to keep the roots drier. Fertilize twice per year, once in spring, and again in summer. There are few pests that bother olives. Scale, leafhoppers, and deer can be a problem.



Low chill varieties will need to be selected for growing in Florida. There are 37 varieties identified by the FOC as possible choices (see list below).

One year old plants are strong enough to plant out in the field, and this should be done in the early spring. In only three years the trees should be blooming and are mature enough to fruit. Keep them pruned to allow the canopy to be open enough to allow plenty of light to reach the branches. This is best done by pruning out inside growth.

How to reach Michael:

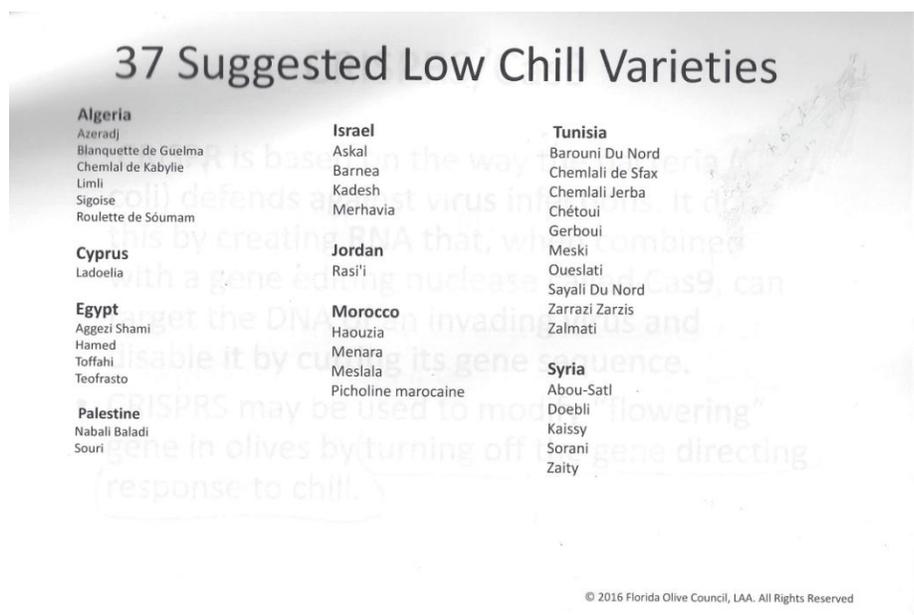
Michael O'Hara Garcia - President  
 The Florida Olive Council  
 3324 W. University Ave. #160  
 Gainesville, Fl 32607  
 202-246-2001  
[michael@floridaolivecouncil.org](mailto:michael@floridaolivecouncil.org)

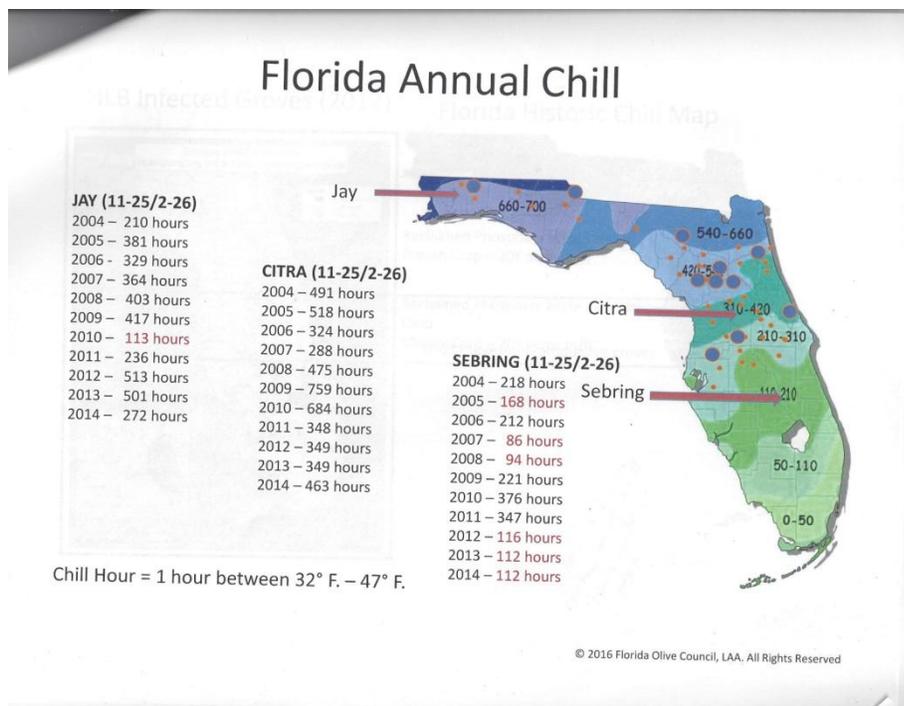
Florida Olive Council website:  
<http://www.floridaolivecouncil.org>

University of Florida article on growing olives:  
<http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/edibles/fruits/olives.html>

Sources:

Olive Tree Growers  
 Website has varieties for sale, cultivation info., recipes  
<http://olivetreegrowers.com/varieties.php>





Fresh fruit for sale at the meeting, and the plant raffle table!  
Photos by Steve Lohn

## ☞ What's Happening ☞

by Paul Zmoda

This drought is horrid - just keeping prized specimens alive is job number one lately. I run the well for a few hours each day, being careful not to waste any water. If the hose will reach, it trickles on the trees for a few minutes. If not, then I haul five gallon carboys and buckets to the farther zones.

We've been eating perfect 'Glenn' mangoes, Brazos blackberries and jaboticabas for a while. Some grapes are already ripening.

I top-grafted a couple of coffee cake persimmons scions to my cocktail tree, bringing the total to seven cultivars on the tree. I set some fig cuttings to root.

Each morning finds me pollinating Annona flowers and collecting the pollen for the following day.

New plantings: grafted Texas black persimmon, ornamental bananas, and a white llama.



## ☞ May Tasting Table ☞



*This is a sampling of the wonderful offerings at the buffet table. Thank you to the following folks for their tasty offerings and to all those who did not sign the sheet. Members who donate food receive a ticket for the plant raffle.*



Name	Item	Name	Item
Male	Pie	Englebrecht	Spanish rice and yucca
Coronel	Fried rice, pancit, banana bread	Vega	Pasta
Latimer	Brownies	Payne	Shrimp pasta salad
Dickey	Guava Oatmeal bars, jello w/fruit	Clarke	Peppercorn beef, cornbread
Clarke	Chicken enchilada	Tyler	Kale salad
Long	Salsa and chips	Morgan	Fruit
Zmoda	Passionfruit	Frances	Mother's day cookies
Lavallette	Chili beans	Aguire	Ravioli
Davies	Pasta salad	Saceda-bigelow	Bami-e
Hartzler	Endive with orange, walnuts	Krotz	Radish tea sandwiches



## ☞ May Plant Raffle ☞



Here is sampling from the plant raffle table. Thank you to everyone who brought in plants to share at the raffle.

Plant	Donor	Winner
Pomegranate	Coronel	Pino
Papaya	Vega	Black
Papaya	Vega	Davies
Papaya	Vega	Provencher
Spinach	Vega	Pino
Pineapple	Clarke	
Kiwi male and female	Latimer	
Gloriosa lily	Engelbrecht	Davis
Mosquito plant	Latimer	
Dragon fruit	Black	Pruitt
Longan	Lohn	
Red lime	Payne	Lohn
Kopsia	Provencher	Lohn
Kopsia	Provencher	King

## ☞ Club Notes ☞

We welcome your submissions for the newsletter, pictures, notes of interest, events in your area, tips you've tried or learned that you would like to share with others, recipes, or questions about growing fruits - please send them to [bdprovencher@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:bdprovencher@tampabay.rr.com) Submissions for the next newsletter due by: **June 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, 39320 North Ave., Zephyrhills, FL 33542.

### RENEWING MEMBERS

Send check or money order for \$20 made out to Tampa Bay RFCI and mail to:  
Tampa Bay RFCI, 39320 North Ave., Zephyrhills, FL 33542.



***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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