



RFCI

January 2018

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 Christ the King Church, McLoughlin Center,
821 S. Dale Mabry, Tampa

⌘ Upcoming Programs and Events ⌘

January 14th - 2pm - Citrus!!!! Jamie Burrow from the UF/IFAS Citrus Research and Education Center in Lake Alfred, will be speaking about one of our favorite fruits: citrus. Jamie is the coordinator, and Extension Program Manager involved with Canker and Greening Extension Education. Learn the latest information on growing citrus.



February 8th - 19th - Florida State Fair and Citrus Celebration on February 11th - No regular meeting - More information on volunteering at the Citrus Celebration will be at the January meeting. Come learn about how the Club provides a learning experience about Florida fruit to the public via the Horticultural Display and Citrus Celebration.

⌘ Welcome New Members ⌘

Allen Smiley

Temple Terrace

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

❧ Cold Preparation and Survival ❧

Charles Novak

Plant expert, and very long time Club member, Charles Novak, spoke about getting through the cold spells that Florida is known for. Charles was born in Plant City and has learned much about the local climate. Although Florida winters are a whole lot easier to get through than what our Northern neighbors contend with, we still have cold snaps that can harm or kill the subtropical and tropical plants and trees we enjoy growing. Virtually nowhere in Florida is truly immune from cold weather. Plant City has seen temperatures as low as 17 degrees. The worst freeze Charles recalls experienced 11 nightly freezes. This extended event damaged plants that normally could survive the usually brief freezes experienced in this area of Florida.



Charles has 20' tall mangoes in his oasis, but efforts must be made to protect them, for even one freezing night could damage or kill marginally hardy trees. He begins preparation by Thanksgiving. It may be too late to wait any later than that. Plus, it is not fun to be trying to cover plants when it's 17 degrees! There are too many plants now to protect, and some have just gotten to be too large.

Record hot years have been occurring more frequently in recent decades. 2014 was the hottest year on record since 1880, but that record was quickly broken in 2015 and again in 2016.

Freeze definitions:
Light freeze 29 - 32
Moderate 25 - 28
Severe 24 and below



Here are some methods you may try for protecting your plants and trees.

Containers: Plants in containers can be moved into a protected area, such as a garage, carport, porch, greenhouse, etc. Plants in a container will remain smaller than those grown in the open ground.

Location: Locating tender plants under trees may offer up to 10 degrees of protection by preventing the heat loss and keeping warmth at lower levels, near plants. Charles has starfruit growing under the protection of oaks. There is less fruit, but this way, less fruit is wasted as less is produced. South walls of buildings add warmth by radiating heat during the night.

Use mulch to protect roots, and especially the graft area of the trunk. The banking up of mulch and loose leaves, held against the trunk with chicken wire can help protect the trunk area.

Charles had a mango where the grafted area was planted below the ground level. When a freeze destroyed the above ground portion of the plant, the grafted plant was able to re-grow true to the variety that was grafted onto the original rootstock.



Wrap trees in Christmas lights. The old style work best as they generate more heat. Floodlight bulbs also generate a good amount of heat.

Heaters: Small space heaters, especially used in conjunction with other methods, or even patio heaters may help. Propane heaters will require very frequent monitoring.

Covers: Blankets can be used, although these can be heavy and transfer freezing water to the leaves. They'll need to be removed quicker. Frost cloth is best. It's lightweight, and lets water and air through. It can safely stay on the plant for many days. This can offer up to 10 degrees of protection.

Don't use plastic directly on plants. If it touches the plant, it can transfer the cold and cause more damage. Boxes can blow away in the wind unless weighted down.

Chemicals: FreezePruf can be sprayed on the plant ahead of time, and lasts for weeks. When tried on an Elephant ear, no damage to the leaf occurred from the cold.

Water: Misting systems do work great, if you have well water. Keep it on until the temperature warms up above freezing.

Be prepared to pick fruit harvests if a freeze is predicted.

For weather outlooks for the coming season, and all other things weather related, check the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration at: <http://www.noaa.gov/>

Freezpruf and frost cloth products are available in local box stores, and in larger quantities online.

Cold Tolerance of selected tropical fruit trees.

Hardy <24°F	24°F Min	26°F Min	29°F Min	Not at all Hardy	
Apple	Anise	Akee	Ambarella	Otaheite Gooseberry	Coffee
Blackberry	Bay Leaf	Allspice	Annato	Papaya	Spanish Lime
Blueberry	Cattley Guava	Atemoya	Banana	Peach Palm	Malay Apple
Cherry of the R. Grande	Indian Jujube	Bay Rum	Barbados Cherry	Pitomba	Miracle Fruit
Fig	Jaboticaba	Carissa	Black Sapote	Purple Passion Fruit	Spanish Lime
Jelly Palm	Kei Apple	Cherimoya	Caimito	Sapodilla	Cashew
Kumquat	Macadamia Nut	Curry Leaf Tree	Carambola	Soursop	
Loquat	Surinam Cherry	Grumichama	Cinnamon	Wax Jambu	
Mulberry	White Sapote	Imbe	Coconut	Pineapple	
Muscadine Grape		Lychee	Custard Apple	Malabar Chestnut	
Nectarine		Mysore	Guava	Sugar Apple	
Peach		Raspberry	(Tropical)	Rose Apple	
Pear		Wampi	Jackfruit	Canistel	
Persimmon		Longan	Kwai Muk	Ice Cream Bean	
Pineapple Guava			Mamey Sapote	Tamarind	
Pomegranate			Mango		
Prickly Pear			Mayan Breadnut		
			Monstera		

Protection levels of different methods

Cold Protection Design	Protection from		Effectively saves		Method is prone to				Suited for
	Min Temp	Wind	Growth Bud	Foliage	Fungus	Physical Damage	Foliage Baking	CO2 Starvation	
Minigreenhouse	high	high	high	high	high	no	high	high	All Tender
Open Heater	high	low	high	high	no	Fire	no	no	Large Plantings
Coldframe (no heat)	+2°	high	medium	medium	high	no	high	high	Border Line
Coldframe (heat)	high	high	high	high	low	Fire	low	high	All Tender
Tripod	low	low	medium	low	low	no	low	no	Border Line
Plastic Cone	low	high	low	low	low	no	medium	no	Hardy
Wrapping	high	high	high	high	low	medium	low	low	Border Line
Cage	medium	high	medium	low	low	high	no	no	Bananas
Box	medium	high	high	high	low	low	no	no	Border Line
Blanket	+4°	high	low	medium	medium	low	high	low	Border Line
Mulching	low	no	no	no	low	no	no	no	Hardy
Chemicals	low	low	low	low	no	no	no	no	All Tender

❧ What's Happening ❧

by Paul Zmoda

Happy New Year from Flatwoods Fruit Farm! It's "winter" now, but seems like early fall. Some leaves have turned color and dropped. We're eating the last persimmons as Dwarf Brazilian bananas are just ripening.

About 20 years ago, an RFCI member gave me a few small Medjool date palms that he started from seeds. One now has a trunk well over a foot in diameter. These palms frequently send up shoots which compete with the trunk and can start to form an unruly mass of needle-armed fronds. I decided to clean it up by trimming the main trunk's older fronds and needed a chain saw to remove the thick basal shoots. Once finished, I noticed the shoots contained good-sized hearts. Instead of tossing them out, I removed the hearts to eat. Sweet and crunchy, I put some in an omelet, some in burritos, and the rest went into the garden salad that I brought to our Holiday Buffet.

I had to cut down our large mission olive tree as it had died from too much rain in the past. It was a shame to lose it. I started it as a pencil-sized cutting and it grew to a six inch diameter trunk. It had never flowered, but I air-layered several more from it years ago, and they are doing well.

New plantings: Lots of garden vegetables

Steve Lohn captured these moments at the Holiday Social



Tom Schaefer got these shots at the Holiday Social



*From the President
Tom Schaefer*



Our 2017 Holiday Social was a very special event for us. From delicious salads, flavorful side dishes, roast pig, turkey & gravy, to homemade ice cream, cookies, pies and cakes, no one left hungry! The raffle gifts were full of surprises and much appreciated. Thank you to everyone for providing for this festive occasion.

One of our past presidents, Charles Novak, provided us with some timely notes on Cold Weather Protection. With a La Niña prediction, the outlook is for warm, dry weather this winter. But you never know when a cold snap will slide through our area. Be prepared!

As we close this year, we look forward to 2018 and more enlightenment for our growing club. Many have noted how our membership is increasing. Younger people are seeing the investment in dooryard fruit trees and opting to learn how to grow them. With our July Mango Tasting and February Citrus Celebration, people are learning of cultivars they may not have been aware of previously. With the April Plant Sale at USF, our Chapter can provide many of the trees.

Our January speaker, Jaime Burrow, of UF, CREC, will discuss citrus topics. Citrus Greening has decimated Florida. Now found in Texas and California, we anxiously wait for solutions to this dreaded disease. Researchers at the Citrus Research and Education Center (CREC) in Lake Alfred, are working diligently. Sadly though, our diverse selections of citrus is now limited. George Campani searches citrus packing houses for as many varieties as possible. If you or anyone you know can donate any citrus for our event please contact George at our next meeting.

Please sign up to help with our horticultural display at the Florida State Fair from Feb. 8-19, 2018. We also need help cutting citrus for the Citrus Celebration on Feb. 11th. Look for more information at our next meeting.

☞ Club Notes ☞

The Club is looking for a new photographer. This person would be responsible for taking pictures of all events and activities, speakers at the monthly meetings, plant sales, etc. Please contact tschaefer5@tampabay.rr.com for more information if you are interested.

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

Tampa Bay RFCI
39320 North Ave.
Zephyrhills, FL 33542