



RFCI

December 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 ⌘



2018 Holiday Social



Please join us for the annual RFCI Holiday Social.

Sunday, December 16, 2018

1:00 P.M.

Please note the different date and start time.

Please bring a covered dish (salads, vegetables, desserts, etc.)

The Club will provide the turkeys, ham, tableware and drinks.

Please bring an item to donate to the free raffle (such as plants, small gifts - perhaps an item you received but can't use).

Volunteers are needed to help set up.

*If you are available to help, please arrive about **11:00 A.M.***

You may bring your own place setting (plate, utensils, glassware). This effort will help reduce waste, and be sturdier than paper plates so you can really load that plate up!



President: Tom Schaefer; VP and Secretary: Cora Coronel; Treasurer: Susan McAveety,
Newsletter/Membership: Denise Provencher

∞ Welcome New Members ∞

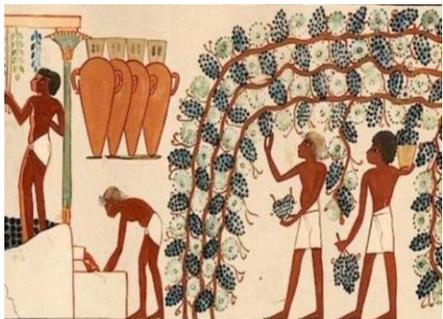
Ellie Theriac - St. Pete
Jon Molvie - Riverview

Carlton Gray - Tampa
Sarah Palm - St. Petersburg - welcome back

∞ Grapes for Florida ∞

Paul Zmoda

Our Club's very own Paul Zmoda, grape grower, and wine maker, spoke about his experiences growing grapes in Florida at November's meeting.



Grapes are one of the earliest cultivated fruits, with evidence in ancient art and literature dating back 7000 years showing that grapes provided a number of important products for various human cultures. Not only are the fruits an important source of fresh-eating goodness, but are also used to make beverages such as wine. The leaves are also edible, and the vines make wonderful baskets and other useful items.

Grapes (*Vitus sp.*) may have originated in the area of Turkey and Armenia. There are 79 species of *Vitus* worldwide, with over 10,000 cultivars. Grapes are grown on all continents except Antarctica.

In North America, wild grapes growing in St. Augustine were noted by explorers in 1564. European explorers brought better varieties from their homelands with them to America, but found it too cold here, and there were too many diseases for those varieties to survive. Breeding the strong, native varieties with the European varieties produced new, hardy varieties that would thrive here.

This breeding process takes decades to accomplish, with lots of precision to ensure proper pollination, and the selection of the most desirable grapes. Grapes do not produce true from open pollinated seed.

The University of Florida has produced a number of grape varieties for use in Florida. Paul grows a number of these plants, including some varieties that were never released.

Grapes are sugar making machines, converting sunlight into sugar within their fruits. As much as 24% of the fleshy berries are sugar, making the fruit an excellent choice for fresh eating. Grape varieties bred for use in Florida do not require fussy amendments to the soil.

If you would like to learn more about growing grapes in Florida, Paul does give tours of his gardens to members. Sign up on the tour sheet available at each meeting.

Pictures from Paul's garden of his grapes. Photos Bryon Provencher



☞ **What's Happening** ☛

by Paul Zmoda

We got a little cold snap here – 50 degrees F. Once I heard that was coming, I prepared our laundry room to receive our large, potted soursop tree for the colder temperatures ahead. Soursops are fully tropical and will defoliate at low temperatures. If this happens, they usually grow back, but are stressed. If they lose leaves twice in succession, they may die. Our tree holds two small fruits and many new flowers are coming on, so I must protect it.

I am getting quite a few Mexican limes lately from a potted tree. Persimmons are still providing us with sweet, juicy goodness.

After many years, we picked our first perfect papayas. Something had always happened to prevent that – freezes, strong winds knocking the plants over, or fruit flies. This year we are getting a nice crop of sweet, mild-tasting fruits rich in beta carotene and spicy, black edible seeds so good on hotdogs.

New plantings: peas, mustard greens, radishes, arugula, turnips, and garlic.

West African Fruit Salad

Becky Stayner

Dessert is a recent addition to the traditional West African table. Fruit, especially in a combination such as this, is often served as dessert.

This dish is also an excellent side served with smoky grilled fish or a spicy pork tenderloin.

- 4 cups cubed fresh pineapple
- 2 cups diced ripe mango (about 2)
- 1 ½ cups sliced banana (about 2)
- ¾ cup orange sections (about 2)
- 2 tablespoons dark brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 cup shredded unsweetened, toasted coconut



Combine first 6 ingredients in a medium bowl, tossing gently to combine. Cover and chill for 1 hour. Sprinkle on the coconut before serving.



Warm Thai Scallop and Mango Salad

12 ounces bay scallops, rinsed and drained (you may also substitute shrimp, shelled and deveined)

6 tablespoons Oriental chicken salad dressing, divided

5 cups Dole organic baby lettuce mix

1 cup chicory, chopped

1 mango, pitted, seeded, chopped

1 cucumber, peeled, seeded, chopped

1 yellow, green or red bell pepper, cut into strips

¼ cup cilantro leaves

Cook scallops in 1 tablespoon salad dressing for 2 – 3 minutes, or if using shrimp, cook until shrimp are pink.

Remove from heat. Toss together salad blend, chicory, mango, cucumber, pepper and cilantro leaves with 4 tablespoons salad dressing.

Spoon mixture onto serving plates, and arrange scallops or shrimp over each salad, drizzle remaining dressing.

From the President: Tom Schaefer

Thanks to Paul Zmoda for the grape information at our last meeting. We had a number of people interested in visiting Paul at his home in Riverview to learn more about growing grapes. We'll have a sign-up sheet next meeting and schedule a date and time.

Don't forget the 1:00 p.m. early time for our Holiday Social on Dec. 16th. Please bring your side dishes, salads and desserts! Helpers are needed and should arrive at 11:30. Every person who would like to receive a gift, please bring a gift. Bring a plant as a gift or something wrapped in the \$5-10 range. We look forward to another great festive occasion.

A short discussion on cold weather protection will be provided. Last year was supposed to be uneventful, but we got some frigid temps: 26° for me! I lost a few good plants. Don't take the weather for granted. Be prepared! A sudden temperature dip for several hours can damage many plants. Know what temps your plants can take. Forecasters are not always thinking and talking about your particular yard.

As the year ends, we look forward to 2019. Our January meeting will have a UF speaker, Dr. Mongi Zekri, talking about citrus tree nutrition in the greening age.

We'll have sign-ups for our horticultural display at the Florida State Fair which runs Feb. 7-18, 2019. Please help with ideas and set up! Then we have our annual Citrus Celebration event at the fair. If you haven't experienced this tasty celebration of Florida citrus, you are in for a sweet treat (and sour ones too- lemons, etc.). Talk to other members about this experience. We need many helpers to cut up our fruits, starting about 8:00 a.m. and keep the tables supplied. Years ago, our members brought all the citrus we needed. But with the citrus greening disease, we now turn to packing houses for most of the citrus we provide for fair goers. Some citrus is still provided by members who have successfully grown their trees despite greening disease.

Happy Holidays!





❧ November 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
Passionfruit	Luba	
Miracle fruit	Schaefer	McDonald
Orange berry	Schaefer	
Passion fruit	Soylu	
Persimmons and starfruits	Zmoda	Kyle
Dragonfruit	Latimer	
Tamarind	Coronel	
Ice cream banana	Coronel	Jonathan
Madagascar olive	Gil	Hunt
Surinam cherry	Sweet	Gauthier
Longevity spinach	Jacobs	
Pineapple sage	Bowman	
Longan	Vega	
Pepper	Vega	
Moringa	Pablo	Kibitlewski
Jackfruit	Pablo	Payne
Pineapple	Pablo	King
Tamarind	Pablo	
Key lime	Pablo	
Cranberry hibiscus	Pablo	Kibitlewski
Canna	Paul	
Tamarind	Gutierrez	Soto
Orange berry	Provencher	Black
Samea	Provencher	
Sugar palm	Provencher	Jager
African mangosteen	Provencher	Jager
Basil	Payne	Gomez
Key lime	Payne	Kibitlewski
Euphorbia viguieri	Jonathan	
Cryptanthus	Robinson	Payne
White sapote	Robinson	Mitchell

☞ November 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
Branesky	Longans	Soylu	Green grapes
Latimer	Pickled beet salad	Campani	Chocolate
Sakuta	Bananas	King	Bananas
Kibitlewski	Rotini lasagna	Sweet	Pulled pork and rolls
Bowman	Asparagus	Clarke	Enchiladas, stuffing
Clarke	Pumpkin blondie	Johnston	Pumpkin sour cream coffee cake
Graver	Cakes	Zacharazyk	Papaya
Hartzler	Deviled eggs	Kirby	Yucca salad
Gray	Cheesecake	Premraj	Jerk chicken
Soto	Broccoli salad		

☞ Club Notes ☜

Send in 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: **December 22nd.**

If you are missing a badge, please stop at the desk by the door when you arrive at the meeting, there is a sheet there to sign to replace a missing badge, or report that you do not have one.

☞ 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