



RFCI

October 2019

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 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church,
Driscoll Hall - 501 S. Dale Mabry Hwy, Tampa

∞ Upcoming Programs and Events ∞

October 12th and 13th, USF Fall Plant Sale!!! A big event for the Club. Volunteers will be needed for various chores before, during, and after the Sale. Lots more information and sign up at the September meeting. **No regular meeting.** Visit our sales area at the sale. Find a new plant for your garden or patio. Ask questions and just enjoy the event.

Friday 11th at 1PM plants will be delivered to our booth at USF, volunteers are needed to help unload the plants and set up the sales area. Volunteers are also needed during the sale days – Saturday and Sunday to help out. If you would like to help out, contact Cora at 727-403-1756 or jencofarm@aol.com



November – Annonas!!! with tropical fruit expert, speaker, and breeder, and Annona specialist, Har Mahdeem.

∞ Welcome New Members ∞

Angel & Rick Luther Lake Alfred

President: Fred Engelbrecht; Vice Presidents: Cora Coronel and Kenny Gil; Secretary: Jager Mitchell;
Treasurer: Susan McAveety; Newsletter/Membership: Denise Provencher

∞ Sapodillas ∞

With Alex Salazar



Alex Salazar of Tropical Acres Farms spoke at September's meeting about those brown sugary, sweet delights – Sapodillas. Alex has been studying and growing tropical fruits since he was a teenager, and now raises over 300 varieties of mangoes, 12 varieties of sapodilla, and 49 varieties of avocado on the Farm he founded in 2011 in West Palm Beach.

Sapodillas (*Manilkara zapota*) are considered one of the very best dessert fruits, requiring little care, and are seldom bothered by insects or disease. The taste and texture are similar to a pear soaked in brown sugar.

History:

Sapodillas originated in the Yucatan area of Mexico where hundreds of millions of trees once grew. They have been cultivated since ancient times, spreading through the tropical world with travelers.

Remember Chiclets brand candy coated gum? The latex of sapodilla trees was used to provide the gum.

Sapodillas came to Florida in the 19th century via the Bahamas. Many improved varieties have been developed here.

Trees:

Trees vary from dwarf sizes suitable for containers, to big shade trees. Sapodillas can be grown from seed or grafted. They are long lived trees, but very slow growing no matter what method you choose. Grafts can take 6 months to take.

Fruit:

The fruit can be round or oval. Some varieties have fruit that are only a few ounces in size, others can weigh several pounds. The flesh can be smooth or gritty, and vary from brownish to reddish in color. Fruiting season is winter into spring months depending on variety.



Culture:

Sapodillas can take temperatures in the mid-twenties.

Take note: do not mulch sapodilla trees to protect them from a freeze. It has been found that mulched trees are more likely to freeze than unmulched ones.

Prune when young to start shaping the trees. Trees should be kept to a 15' maximum for easy harvest.

Use a balanced fertilizer with minors when young, then a fertilizer with minors but limited nitrogen when the tree is older.

Irrigate when young.

Provide a sunny location.

A second variety close by will help with increased pollination.

***Harvest, Ripening, and Eating:***

It is difficult to tell when the fruit are ready to harvest.

Some ways to tell if the fruit is ready:

The small tip falls off.

The color of the fruit lightens to a grey/brown.

A scratch test reveals a light green, even yellowish color under the skin, rather than dark green.

There is little or no latex when picked.

If you have/purchased fruit that is not ripe, set it to ripen in an un-air conditioned room. If it still isn't ripe after as much as a week, it may never ripen properly.

Enjoy!

To eat, simply cut in half and scoop out the delicious flesh with a spoon. Remove seeds.

Some recommended cultivars for Florida are:

Alano – from Hawaii – bulletproof

Hasya- from Mexico – outstanding flavor

Tikal – from Florida – a great local selection

Thomas – round fruit of outstanding quality and large

Molix – from Mexico – a later season variety

Gigantia – if you want to impress – fruits are a huge 2 pounds

Makok – dwarf, excellent super sweet fruit, from May to October, can be containerized.

Tropical Acres Farms

1010 Camellia Rd

West Palm Beach, Fl. USA, 33405

561-358-8566 TropicalAcresFarms@gmail.com

Sapodilla Pie

Recipe from Fairchild Tropical Gardens

INGREDIENTS

1 c. sugar	1 c. milk
½ t. salt	1 c. yogurt
1 t. ground cloves	3 T. honey
3 eggs	1 t. vanilla
1½ c. mashed ripe sapodilla	1 unbaked 9" deep-dish pie shell

DIRECTIONS



Preheat oven to 425°F. Mix sugar, salt and cloves in small dish. Beat eggs in large bowl. Stir in sapodilla and sugar/clove mixture. Gradually stir in milk, yogurt, honey and vanilla. Pour into pie shell. Bake 15 minutes; turn temperature down to 350°F and bake 20 to 30 minutes more or until firm. Serve with whipped cream.

✧ What's Happening ✧

by Paul Zmoda

Persimmons are ripening – first the natives, then the Asian cultivars. I eat them when soft and gooey. Our avocados are about done for the year. One 'Choquette' is still hanging; I haven't tasted one of those for many years. I didn't get many longans thanks to lots of crows during the day, and swarms of roof rats at night.



Hog Plum

While at a plant and craft festival in Riverview, I got to taste a new fruit found growing wild along the road. Commonly called Hog Plum or Tallow wood, *Ximenia Americana*, is one inch in diameter, bright yellow and with a single seed. They are pretty tasty.

New planting: papaya, mayhaw, tomatoes, peppers, beans, and herbs.



Paul Branesky – calling tables, and raffle tickets – hope you won a plant!



A full meeting listening to talk on Sapodillas.
Photos by George Campani.



☞ September 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
Tamarind	Coronel	
Jackfruit	Gil	Strain
Madagascar olive	Gil	Kochler
Holy basil	Angel	Black
Custard apple	Premraj	
Sapodilla	Premraj	
Dragonfruit	Premraj	Gil
Samanea saman	Brown	Stein
Pineapple	Brown	Kochler
Galangal	Niklas	Penrose
Cranberry hibiscus	Black	
Jackfruit	Coronel	Brown
Starfruit	Clarke	Setera
White sapote	Kirby	Stein
Sapodilla	Stein	Kaitlyn
Papaya	Paul	Rowan
Aloe	Setera	
Cranberry hibiscus	Setera	Penrose
Betel	Te	Black
African blue basil	Deming	Strain
Mint	Branesky	Luisa



∞ September 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
Coronel	Pasta and meatballs	Koay	Broccoli salad
Johnston	Cherry cobbler	Premraj	Curry chicken and rice
Terrell	Fruit	Black	Starfruit
Sahasrabudhe	Qubuli	Strain	Stuffed eggs
Pablo	Spaghetti, bread	Quinby	Peanut cookies
Clarke	Broccoli slaw, steak&cheese taquitos	Clarke	Lemongrass tea
Male	Cookies	Kirby	Pickled starfruit
Hartz	Deviled eggs	Krotz	Grape salad
Lancaster	Cranberry juice	Premraj	Chicken curry, basmati rice
Demry	Watermelon chunks		

∞ Club Notes ∞

Send in your submissions for the newsletter, pictures, notes of interest, events, tips, recipes, questions, etc. - please send them to bdprovencher@tampabay.rr.com
Submissions for the next newsletter due by: **October 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