



COLLIER FRUIT GROWERS NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2018

Please mark your calendar, the Christmas Holiday Party will be held Tuesday, December 18th. The entire family is invited. Access to the Life Center and set-up will commence at 5:30 pm. The actual festivities will start at 6:00 pm with a 'Meet and Greet,' followed by the Annual Meeting at 6:30, which will include the election of officers and a presentation for the 2019 Trip to Costa Rica by Charlie Strading of 'Explorations.' Food will be served at 7:00 pm. CFG will provide the ham, beverages, utensils, plates and condiments. Member are encouraged to bring a side dish or dessert to share. Prizes will be awarded near the end of the party.

The Year in Review

2018 was a year of accomplishments. CFG proceeds from the recent November Fruit Tree Sale slightly exceeded last year's sale as the best November Tree Sale ever. The February Tree Sale was also very successful. Starting with the April issue, the monthly newsletters were expanded from four to ten pages. Hopefully, with the members' participation the expanded newsletters can be maintained though 2019. There has been a greater effort to make the Cornerstone Nursery more beneficial to CFG. The propagation of CAS Guavas trees was successful. This guava relative is suitable for juicing, with a taste very similar to that of lemons. It is a good replacement for lemons without the problems associated with 'Citrus Greening.' Starting in August, Turpentine and Valencia Pride varieties of mangoes seedlings were propagated in anticipation of grafting next spring. We also propagated Pond Apple and Soursop seedlings for attempted grafting of different Annona budwoods.

Thirty native bareroot American Persimmons saplings were planted in five different areas of Collier County. Of those, approximately twenty have sprouted and grafting of other less flood resilient varieties of persimmons scions on these root stocks will be attempted next year.

Research at the nursery included the attempted 'doubling of chromosomes' during the germinating of seeds with the intent to hybridize smaller fruit 'bushes' without sacrificing yields. Further attempts will be ongoing to achieve the desired results.

**Christmas Holiday Party: TUESDAY, December 18th.
Meet And Greet at 6:00 pm.
Meeting starts at 6:30 pm
at the Tree of Life Church, Life Center,
2132 Shadowlawn Dr.**

BURDS' NEST OF INFORMATION THIS and THAT FOR DECEMBER

PRUNING Resist all pruning in December

MANGO FLOWERING

If you see flowers/panicles on your mango trees, it time to apply only 0-0-22 out around the dripline. - also, **no watering** until you see the fruit starting to set.



LYCHEES LONGANS

To encourage flowering it really important to cut off all water NOW until the flowers appear.

COLD PROTECTION

Watch THE FORECASTS, if frost is predicted, depending where you live, especially east of I-75 turn on your watering system at the WARMEST TIME OF THE DAY, 20 minutes will be enough.

Remember some fruit trees, i.e., Soursops drop their leaves and fruit at 40F or lower, so they should have a warm wrap, NOT PLASTIC !

MIRACLE FRUIT

Try applying cotton seed meal round your miracle fruit bushes, to encourage fruiting. It is sold at Feed Stores.

Use the same amount you would apply regular fertilizer, note the recommended fertilizer for miracle fruit is the same as for citrus - 10-2-10 or 6-4-6 - don't forget to check the percentage of chlorine on the citrus fertilizer bag - not more that 4% chlorine which turns to salt - that makes for very unhappy plants.

CURRENT NEWS



The Naples Botanical Garden broke ground Monday, November 19th, on a new multi-phased \$14 million Horticultural Center and Fruit Tree Orchard. The first phase consisting of a vegetation recycling center, germination and tropical greenhouses, surrounded by fruit trees is expected to be completed in two years. An administration and Research Building will be part of a future phase of the project.



The November Fruit Tree Sale held November 17th, was the best November Sale ever, even topping last year's sale after Hurricane Irma when so many fruit trees needed to be replaced. The next fruit tree sale will be held on Saturday, February 23rd. Mark your calendars. Volunteers are always needed. **Please plan on attending.**



A field trip to the Florida Citrus Arboretum in Winter Haven is planned for Thursday, January 3rd. All interested persons who plan on attending should make their wishes known by next month's Party. We will be meeting at the Cornerstone Nursery, 8200 Immokalee Road, at 7:00 AM and carpool from there. A guided tour of the arboretum's amenities and citrus collection will be arranged.



Lisa White, a longtime and valued member of CFG, has donated her Cawesh [*Annona scleroderma*] tree to CFG. This is a very unique specimen, which is rare even in its native environment of southwest Guatemala. This specific tree has been accepted by Dr. Stephen Brady of the Naples Botanical Garden for inclusion into the NBG expanding fruit tree collection. Thank you Lisa.



The submission of Technical Articles and Letters to the Editor is welcomed and highly encouraged if the expanded newsletters are to continue. All material will be considered for inclusion in future newsletters.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH:

The Holiday Season is upon us and it seems that pies are a favorite item on everyone's table. This recipe from The Food Network is easy and delicious. The avocado flavor is subtle but you can add more avocado to intensify the flavor. I've included directions for a graham cracker crust but you can use store-bought, if you prefer.

recipe:

AVOCADO PIE



Crust:

5 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
1 tablespoon granulated sugar
Pinch of salt

Filling:

2 medium Hass avocados (or other variety)
1 8-ounce package cream cheese, at room temperature
1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
2 1/2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
1 1/2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
Pinch of salt

Whipped cream or confectioners' sugar, for garnish (optional)

Make the crust: Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Brush an 8-inch springform pan with some of the melted butter. Mix the remaining butter with the graham cracker crumbs, sugar and salt in a bowl. Press the mixture into the bottom and up the sides of the prepared pan. Bake until golden brown, about 15 minutes. Cool completely on a rack.

Make the filling: Halve and pit the avocados, then scoop out the flesh and chop. Transfer to a bowl, add the cream cheese and beat with a mixer on medium speed until smooth. Add the condensed milk, lime and lemon juices, and the salt and beat until fluffy, scraping the bowl as needed. Pour the filling into the crust, press a piece of plastic wrap directly on the surface and chill at least 4 hours.

Remove the springform ring and slice the pie. Garnish with whipped cream or confectioners' sugar, if desired, and serve immediately (the top will start to brown as the pie sits).

Collier Fruit Growers is pleased to promote this custom botanical tour to Costa Rica departing July 27, 2019. The 8-day, educational tour was designed by local tour operator, Explorations, specifically for CFG, tropical fruit enthusiasts, gardeners, and nature lovers.



The tour showcases the beauty of Costa Rica's botanical diversity. With visits to 3 educational facilities, farmers markets, and a tram through the forest canopy you get a close look from bottom to top! Not only is the scenery and flora spectacular, the locations visited provide excellent birding and wildlife viewing. The tour is escorted by a naturalist guide and the use of private transportation allows stops at local village farmers markets and vendors along the roads.



A great opportunity for learning, we will have private tours and workshops at four preeminent botanical facilities in Costa Rica.

EARTH University, a private, non-profit university where we have one and a half days to explore and learn. In addition to workshops on their 990-acre campus, we will visit their plantations and Ethnobotanical Garden to learn about different plant properties and their medicinal use by locals. We will also hike in their forest reserve that encompasses 2,471 acres of primary and secondary forest for preservation of biodiversity, research, and student learning opportunities. On the 1.2-mile trail hike, one may see a diverse selection of flora and fauna, including three of the four types of monkeys found in Costa Rica, 152 species of birds, ancient almond trees, various insects, tropical flowering plants, and more.

CATIE Tropical Agriculture Center, a research center with 2,500 acres where we have all day for touring and learning. It features thousands of plant species from all over and the grounds include a botanical garden, which boasts more than 4,400 genetic samples. In addition to tropical fruit tastings, we will visit their Germplasm Banks and Forest Seed Bank.

Lankester Gardens, where we have a half day to tour this world-famous garden. The 27 acres of grounds contain trails and impressive display of more than 3,000 unique plant varieties in the gardens, including rare orchid species that most people will never see in their lifetime. A research center for the University of Costa Rica, the gardens feature bromeliads, palms and cacti growing amid secondary pre-montane forest, and many visitors come to Lankester to view the more than 1000 orchid species.

Atlantic Rainforest Aerial Tram founded by Dr. Donald Perry on the Eastern flank of Braulio Carrillo National Park is a private reserve. An open gondola goes up to 170 feet off the ground with up to four passengers and a naturalist guide. An immersive nature experience over the forest canopy, it is the longest and only guided tram in the country. The tour also includes a guided trail walk, and visits to the Butterfly Garden, the Orchid Garden, and Terrarium housing amphibian and reptile species.



The accommodations were specifically chosen for their quality, lush landscaping, and surrounding nature and are destinations themselves.

Hotel Buena Vista is a beautiful Spanish-colonial style resort and the only hotel in the area atop a mountain with a 360° panoramic view of 3 volcanoes: Poas, Barva and Irazú. The hotel grounds have extensive tropical gardens including many fruit trees. It even has its own nature walk/coffee trail.

Casa Turire a small, upscale hotel is built in the style of an hacienda. Located in the heart of the verdant Turrialba agricultural region with lush grounds, this beautiful place is bordered by La Angostura Lake.

Rio Perlas Resort and Spa is located on 270 acres of forest in the beautiful and verdant Orosí Valley. Built with colonial-style architecture, the rooms are spread out, offering nature and tranquility. At the intersection of Rio Perlas and Rio Navarro rivers, the resort is known as one of the most beautiful rainforest and mountain hotels in Costa Rica and is surrounded by an abundance of forest views. Numerous hiking trails with waterfalls are within the hotel grounds.

The group size is limited to the first 20 people to reserve. Besides being a fun and educational experience for members and friends, the tour is also a fundraising opportunity for the nonprofit organizations as a portion of the trip price includes a donation.

Starting and ending in San Jose, Costa Rica, the trip cost is \$1,800 per person in double occupancy, tips and gratuities included. A single supplement is an additional \$450. Estimate \$400 for airfare from Fort Lauderdale. Please visit www.CollierFruit.org for more information.

Mulching of Fruit Trees

With mulching there are almost as many opinions as there are gardeners, and personal preferences vary widely. The use of cardboard, paper, black plastic or landscape fabric for weed control is a decision that generally will not raise the acidity of the soil. Mulching is an easy way to cut down on water loss by trees and soil, as well as to slowly add nutrients back into the soil. Mulches come in organic and non-organic forms. They affect soil acidity, water retention ability, and nutrient level, all things that are important to good tree health. Healthy trees are best equipped to survive the drought conditions that we have during the winter season.

Aged cow and chicken manure are considered to be the best material for mulch as seeds are rendered sterile in the animal's digestion system. Stable bedding mixed with horse manure is a cost-effective, but a distant second place choice. Straw is an easily obtainable mulch. Mulches that are acid include oak leaves, peat moss, and pine needles. Non-acidic mulches are rice hulls, corncobs, grass clippings, hardwood chips and leaves (except oak leaves). Palm fronds should never be used in mulch.

Mulch having a high carbon to nitrogen ratio (sawdust, leaves, hardwood chips) may cause nitrogen deficiency in trees. Bacteria that break these materials down use nitrogen, thus depriving trees of this vital element. The best solution is to compost these materials until they start to break down. This may require a year or two for sawdust. Alternatively, you may make supplemental applications of a water-soluble fertilizer high in nitrogen for the first couple of years.

A common method of mulching includes:

Placement of 6 to 8-inches of composted mulch, combined with cottonseed meal, in a radius of 3 or 4-feet out from the trunk of newly planted trees to maximize water retention as well as slowly adding nutrients into the soil. [Make sure to keep any organic mulch 8-12-inches away from trunk of tree to avoid disease, fungus, mildew or damage from mice or other rodents.]

After 8 to 12 months provide an additional 4 to 6-inches of mulch with additional cottonseed meal.

Then consider planting perennial peanut plants or sprinkle with clove seed, or other nitrogen-fixing crop within the mulched area.

Periodically add more mulch and reseed as deemed necessary.

Placement of mower guards around the base of trees and micro-heads on the irrigation system is recommended.

If mildew or fungus problems arise, remove the mulch and allow the sun to shine on the soil for a couple days. This will kill the disease spores. Then mulch with fresh material.

Limited Use of Chemical Fertilizers

The use of 'Chemical Fertilizers' should be carefully monitored in South Florida. Of the three main ingredients nitrogen, phosphate, and potassium only Potassium as K_2O should be used for mature fruit trees of over one year old. Why is this one may ask. Excess Nitrogen and Phosphate in surface runoff pollute our waterways. Adequate phosphate levels exist in our sandy soils naturally, and not needed to be supplemented.

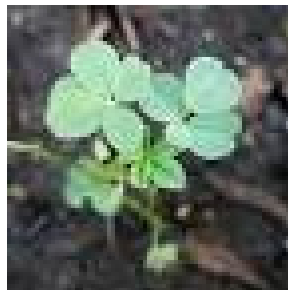
The necessary levels of nitrogen can be provided using so-called 'Nitrogen-Fixing' plants, basically those plants of the Legume family [*Fabaceae*]. These plants contain symbiotic bacteria called *Rhizobia* within the nodules in their root system, producing nitrogen compounds that help the plant to grow and compete with other plants. When the plant dies, the fixed nitrogen is released, making it available to other plants and this helps to fertilize the soil. In short, they have the capacity to draw nitrogen from the atmosphere and make it available to other plants. Perennial peanut, clover, and various varieties of beans are commonly used as ground cover in conjunction with fruit trees and plants. It is important to know that as these plants begin to flower and possibly fruit they start to absorb nitrogen, not only that which they produce, but also some of the nitrogen in the surrounding soil. It is, therefore, necessary to mow low ground coverings such as perennial peanut and clover or chop and drop taller nitrogen-fixing plant in place. For a more in-depth listing of nitrogen fixing plants go to:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Nitrogen-fixing_crops

This bring the discussion back to potassium. Approximately 85% of the potassium fertilizers on the market today is Muriate of Potash (MOP) which is derived from potassium chloride (KCl). Use only potassium oxide (K_2O) with a trace of 0.05% or less of chlorine or a derivative thereof. Chlorine negatively effects the health of the tree. Potassium granular fertilizer is readily available as 'slow release' 0-0-22 to 0-0-50 but check the label carefully to avoid the presence of excess level of chlorine. It is also very important to apply micro-nutrients three times a year, either in granular 'slow release' or foliar spray form. It should contain small amounts of magnesium, zinc, iron, boron, molybdenum, copper and sulfur. But check that the fertilizer does not contain chlorine.



Beans



Clover



Black-eye pea



Peanut

WARNING: Many 'nitrogen fixer' ground covers are NOT drought resistant, and require watering in the dry season.

SEED DURATION

Many individuals attempt to grow fruit trees from seed. Many times, it is required to obtain suitable rootstock for grafting. The table below indicates the average length of time that the seeds may be viable, and the time required for the various trees to start bearing fruit.

Fruit	Seed Shelf Life	Duration to Fruit from Seed
Atemoya	6 months to a year	2 to 5 years
Avocado	2 to 3 weeks	8 to 20 years
Caimito	1 month	5 to 8 years
Canistel	1 month	8 to 15 years
Carambola	1 month	5 to 10 years
Cashew Apple	1 week	5 to 10 years
Custard Apple	1 year	4 to 8 years
Dragon Fruit	2 to 6 months	3 to 4 years
Grumichama	1 to 2 weeks	3 to 4 years
Guava	3 to 6 months	2 to 3 years
Jaboticaba	2 weeks	6 to 10 years
Jackfruit	1 week	2 to 8 years
Longan	2 weeks	6 to 8 years
Loquat	1 month	4 to 8 years
Lychee	2 weeks	8 to 10 years
Macadamia Nut	3 to 6 months	8 to 12 years
Malay Apple	2 to 4 weeks	6 to 10 years
Mamey	1 week	8 to 20 years
Mango	1 week	7 to 10 years
Miracle Fruit	2 to 3 weeks	3 to 4 years
Mulberry	6 months to a year	6 to 10 years
Papaya	1 year	6 to 9 months
Passion Fruit	3 to 4 months	9 months to a year
Peach/ Plum/ Nectarine	6 months to a year	3 to 4 years
Persimmon	1 to 2 years	6 to 10 years
Pomegranate	6 months to a year	2 to 5 years
Sapodilla	3 to 6 months	8 to 20 years
Soursop	1 to 3 months	3 to 6 years
Sugar Apple	6 months to a year	2 to 4 years
Tamarind	3 to 6 months	8 to 12 years
Wax Jambu	1 to 2 months	6 to 8 years
Orange/ Grapefruit	2 to 6 months	6 to 8 years
Lemon/ Lime	2 to 6 months	6 to 8 years

DECEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Tuesday 4 Monthly Meeting: **Caloosa Rare Fruit Exchange**, 7:00 pm, Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council Bldg., 2166 Virginia Ave., Fort Myers.



Weekly Workshops: Every Thursday **year around**, 9:00 AM until at least 1:00 PM, **Cornerstone Nursery**, 8200 Immokalee Road, North Naples – Learn about fruit trees, volunteer in the nursery, or just come and listen to Crafton's stories.



Tuesday 11 Christmas Party: **Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club**, bring something to share: First United Methodist Church, Fellowship Hall, 27690 Shriver Ave., Bonita Springs.



Tuesday 18 Christmas Party/Dinner: **Collier Fruit Growers [The entire family is invited]**, Setup 5:30 pm, Meet & Greet 6:00, Meeting 6:30, Dinner 7:00 pm: The ham, beverages, and condiments will be provided by CFG. Please bring something to share. Tree of Life Church, Life Center, 2132 Shadowlawn Drive, Naples. Charlie Strading of Explorations will give a short presentation on the Costa Rica Trip planned for next summer.

Fruits which Ripen in December:



Atemoya, avocado, banana, black sapote, canistel, carambola, carissa⁽¹⁾, coconut, fig, guava, jackfruit, mamey sapote, macadamia, miracle fruit, orange, Otaheite gooseberry, papaya, passionfruit, peanut butter fruit, pomegranate, soursop, strawberry tree, and sugar apple⁽²⁾.

Footnotes:

Warning: All unripened green carissa fruits are poisonous. There are three species; *Carissa spinarum* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carissa_spinarum], *Carissa bispinosa* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carissa_bispinosa], and *Carissa macrocarpa* [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carissa_macrocarpa] Sugar apple (*Annona squamosa*) fruit is also known as sweetsop.



There's a **NEW** Collier Fruit Growers Facebook page:
https://www.facebook.com/CollierFruitGrowers/?ref=br_rs
CFG Members are encouraged to submit fruit related articles on the page. Your comments are also encouraged. Please LIKE and share our page with your friends. Be sure to LIKE our new page!

**Upcoming Meeting Date: TUESDAY,
January 15th, February 19th, and March 19th**

The Collier Fruit Growers Inc. (CFG) is an active organization dedicated to inform, educate and advise its members as well as the public, as to the propagation of the many varieties of fruits that can be grown in Collier County. The CFG is also actively engaged in the distribution of the many commonly grown fruits, as well as the rare tropical and subtropical fruits grown throughout the world. CFG encourages its members to extend their cultivation by providing a basis for researching and producing new cultivars and hybrids, whenever possible. CFG functions without regard to race, color or national origin.

REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

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VISIT US AT:
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