



The Fruit Growers of Southwest Florida

DECEMBER 2020

Collier Fruit Growers – The Year 2020 in Review

The year was very unusual, indeed as the Pandemic caused Collier Fruit Growers to severely alter, delay or cancel its activities. For several months, the general membership meetings were streamed live on Facebook, before resuming in-person meetings in October.

The mango grafting class originally scheduled to take place in June at the Naples Botanical Garden was first delayed until September, then again to the Spring of 2021. The registered participants have been very patient with this unforeseen delay.

The much anticipated 'Taste of the Summer' event planned for July at the Naples Botanical Garden to further enhance the public's awareness of the large variety of warm weather fruits was canceled.

Grafting of Miami soursop scions was conducted in August with two, possibly three grafts being successful. Attempted grafting of various annona varieties will continue through January 2021. Eleven extremely rare beach sugar apple (*Annona salzamannii*) seedlings were added to the CFG collection for future grafting and sale. Grafting of Asia persimmon varieties onto American persimmon rootstocks will possible be conducted between December and March 2021 as part of CFG continuing trials.

The association's nursery stock was successfully relocated in September to the north garden at the UF/IFAS Extension – Collier County facility, near the fairgrounds off Immokalee Road, in September.

Due to added County and City permit filing requirements and low nursery inventory the November Fruit Tree Sale was sadly canceled. Hopefully, an expanded tree sale can be held on Saturday, February 27, 2021, at Freedom Park on Golden Gate Parkway.

I am extremely saddened, but for safety reasons the annual CFG Holiday Christmas Party has been canceled. The CFG Board and Officers feel that is not feasible to service and share food to a potentially large gathering indoors during the current spike in rate of Covid-19 cases. I personally believe that a CFG picnic can be held outside next spring for CFG Members and their families in the garden at the UF/IFAS extension Collier County facility.

The current CFG Offices and Board members have unanimously agreed to again serve in 2021. Bonnie Hawkins, CFG vice-president, has also agreed to serve as Program Chairman in the new year. Volunteers are always welcome to participate in the organization of possible future CFG activities.



Collier Fruit Growers' NEXT Meeting: TUESDAY, January 19, 2021.

The meeting starts at 7:15 pm.

Life Center, Tree of Life Church

2132 Shadowlawn Dr., Naples, FL 34112

Please always observe the wearing a face masks and social distancing guidelines.

Please remember that it is time to pay your \$15.00 renewal dues for 2021

Please mail dues to: CFG, Inc. 1944 Piccadilly Circus, Naples, FL 34112



Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club Meeting will be DECEMBER 8, 2020.

Workshop: Tuesday, DECEMBER 24, 2020.

Revive Wellness Center, 3521 Bonita Springs Blvd., Bonita Springs, FL 34134

Please always observe the wearing of masks and social distancing.

Please remember to pay your 2021 renewal dues: \$15/ individual, \$25/ family.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH:

Grapefruit & Honey Cake

Serves between 8 & 10 persons

Best served with whipped cream or Greek yogurt.
This recipe is from the kitchen of Mario Batali.



Ingredients:

- 3 Tbsp. plus a ¼ cup of finely ground fresh breadcrumbs
- 2 medium size grapefruits
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 4 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ cup sugar
- ¼ cup honey
- 1½ cup flour
- 2 tsp baking power

Preheat the oven to 350F.

Oil a 9-inch round cake pan and dust with 3 Tbsp. of breadcrumbs.

Using a grater, zest both grapefruits. Juice one grapefruit to yield ¾ cup of juice. In a small bowl, combine the zest, juice, and extra virgin olive oil, then set aside.

In a large bowl beat eggs and salt with an electric mixer until frothy and light. Slowly beat in sugar and honey, continuing to mix for two minutes or more until the mixture is pale and thick.

In a separate bowl, sift the flour, the remaining breadcrumbs, and baking powder together. Then gradually beat the dry ingredients into the egg mixture. Fold in the citrus zest mixture just until it is incorporated.

Pour batter into the prepared pan. Bake for 50 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean.

Let the cake cool in the pan on a wire rack for ten minutes. Then remove it from the pan and let it cool to room temperature before serving.

Lychee Fruit Cracking and Lychee Production in China By Crafton Clift

Litchi chinensis is, of course, native to South China and 70% of the forest trees in the native area are lychees*. The Philippines and Java have several subspecies of lychee, and in 1999, Poonsak Vatacharikorn found wild lychee in Thailand where fruit ripened in October. This Thai lychee grows robustly in South Florida, then may suddenly die like high altitude species often do in our hot, humid summers.

On the 12th of March 2004, at the John D. Campbell Agriculture Center in Homestead, Florida, Dr. Xuming Huang, who is now [as of 2005] at the Pennsylvania State University, spoke to the Lychee Growers Association of South Florida.

During the program, Dr. Huang had casually mentioned that on the 20th day after fruit set, the Chinese cover the fruit panicles with a cohesive fabric bag which prevents pest damage. It also enhances early ripening and coloration, avoids chemical addition, and assists in storage and marketing.

Asians are known for their intensive, hands-on horticulture. The month by month girdling, root pruning, new grown removal if flowers don't emerge, pollen collecting, and hand pollination show the lychee is treated with great reverence in China.

I was impressed to learn that there are a few hundred cultivars of lychee in China and that the season opens in March on the frost-free island of Hainan. Then there is an isolated pocket of lychee production on the Chinese east coast which is on the parallel of Washington D.C.

Outstanding cultivars include:

Sami Hong – ripe in March

Sanyuchang – ripe in May

Nanmupe- ripe in August

Skixia -70 gms per fruit, some are seedless

Wuheli- large seedless

Herichuan – large seedless

Feizixao – very large fruit, dwarf trees (1.5m)

Hehua – very large

Maguili – very late

Haulzhi – resistant to fruit cracking

Nuamici – susceptible to fruit cracking

Grafted lychees are more common than airlayers in China. As we learned after Hurricane Andrew in Florida, grafted plants have a strong root system.

To promote flowering, it is important to monitor the maturation of the autumn flush. Winter growth can be prevented by, girdling, root pruning, withholding water or applying growth inhibitors like paclobutrazole, ethylene, boron, or some mixture. If all fails and leafy growth emerges without flowers, this growth is removed or killed. Winter fertilization may be practiced along with root pruning to induce flowering. Preharvest fertilization is also practiced.

After flowering, tree ae girdled to prevent the carbohydrates from draining to the roots! Girdling may be closed or spiral or cinctured and branches the size of airlayers (finger size) are used. Trees are close-planted and kept small so this girdling can be done without a ladder.

Lychee fruit cracking was address by Dr. Huang who said researchers had investigated the role of high temperatures, humidity, and rainfall, especially the role rain plays following an extended drought. Chemical analysis of cracked fruit versus healthy fruit shows lower calcium levels were present in many cracked fruits. The question that comes to mind is, "Why would the cracking occur on the calcium carbonate soils in South Florida?"

Florida research with citrus grown on Calcareous soils shows there can be calcium deficiency in foliage of limes grown on such soils. Calcium, like iron, may not be in a form available for absorption by plant roots.

After the program, many growers crowded around Dr. Huang, with the same question, "How and where can we get that cohesive fabric bag." [See the internet link below:

<https://www.amazon.com/Protection-Outdoor-Blankets-Covers-Rosebush/dp/B07XQGYKYH>]

* D.J. Mabberley, 'The Plant Book' (First Edition)

NOTES:

1. This article first appeared in the January-February 2005 issue of 'Tropical Fruit News,' RFCI – Miami.
2. If lychee buds are 1-3mm and temperatures drop below 50°F the buds will become flowers and not leaves.
3. Lychee insects A,B,C,D,E collected at Four Fillies Farm by TREC entomologist Dr. Jorgé Peña

Pawpaws at William Hamilton's Bush Hill Mansion Woodlands Cemetery, Philadelphia

A Bit of the History of William Hamilton was provided in the January 2019 issue of the Collier Fruit Growers Newsletter. The Bush Hill Mansion preserved in the surrounding Woodlands Cemetery. A recent article in The New York Times (NYT) highlighted the establishment of a pawpaw *Asimina triloba* patch at the Woodlands.

The Promise of Pawpaw By Rachel Wharton



Devon Mihesuah, a professor of native history and culture at the University of Kansas, holding the ancient, native North American fruit tree still found across most of the eastern half of the United States. Credit... Barrett Emke for The New York Times (NYT). PHILADELPHIA — The new pawpaw patch at [the Woodlands](#), a sprawling historic property along the Schuylkill, still isn't much to look at. But just give those trees time, said Alkebu-Lan Marcus, the farmer who tends to them. He knows his pawpaws will soon be excellent providers.

The pawpaw is an ancient, native North American fruit tree whose thin, droopy branches and leaves like teardrops are found in forests across most of the eastern half of the United States.

For years fans have been drawn to the fragile, fragrant fruit, still sold mostly at farmers' markets or on [Facebook pages](#). But as issues like climate change, economic inequity and access to food become increasingly critical — spurred on by the coronavirus pandemic — it is the tree itself that is drawing more attention.

It naturally repels pests, disease, and whitetail deer, thrives in shade and produces large, nutritious fruit that are creamy when ripe and taste like a blend of banana, pineapple and mango.

Mr. Marcus, 27, was drawn to farming after being arrested in 2015 at a Black Lives Matter protest in Baltimore. He considers growing pawpaws — which once fed his enslaved ancestors — as part of a movement, which promotes self-sufficiency.

"The pawpaw is native here," said Mr. Marcus, who works on behalf of the [Philadelphia Orchard Project](#), which started a one-acre educational farm on the property this spring. "It makes you feel more secure about our ability to feed ourselves."



Alkebu-Lan Marcus growing pawpaws — which once fed his enslaved ancestors — as part of the Black Lives Matter movement. Credit... John Taggart for NYT.

Pawpaws are the northernmost member of the mostly tropical custard apple family, kin to soursops, cherimoyas, sugar apples and ylang-ylangs. Nutritionally these sweet, rich fruits are a lot like bananas — high in vitamins, minerals, and energy-supplying calories. (They are not related to the papaya, even though papaya is sometimes called pawpaw.)

“Everybody in the botanical world, everybody in the environmental world — they’re all familiar with the pawpaw,” said Matthew Dain, 28, of the New York Restoration Project, which helps manage green spaces and gardens in New York City.

The group has recently increased its focus on pawpaws, distributing trees and spring seed-starting kits. Pawpaw trees stay small enough to fit a couple into small city plots — at least two varieties are needed for cross-pollination — and can withstand the already prevalent effects of climate change, like warmer temperatures or more pests and diseases.

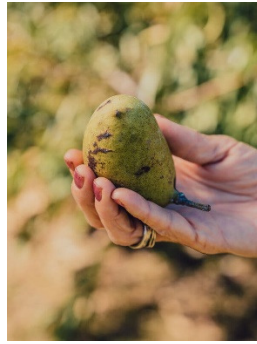
The pawpaw is also pollinated by flies and other insects rather than by honeybees, said Mr. Dain, and it flowers over several weeks instead of all at once, which ensures that fruit is not lost to the Northeast’s spring frosts.

Devon Mihesuah, 63, an author and a professor of native history and culture at the University of Kansas, who also created the school’s American Indian Health and Diet Project, grew up picking pawpaws with her grandmother.

A citizen of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Dr. Mihesuah now forages for them near her home in Baldwin City, Kan. (Sometimes she makes ice cream, the next best way to eat a pawpaw after cutting it open and putting its custardy flesh directly into your mouth, she said.)



Dr. Mihesuah recently started her own pawpaw trees from seed. Credit...Barrett Emke for NYT.



Pawpaws are the northernmost member of the custard apple family, kin to soursops, cherimoyas, sugar apples and ylang-ylangs. Credit...Barrett Emke for NYT.

Dr. Mihesuah focuses on Indigenous food sovereignty for Native peoples of the United States. It is a concept that emphasizes not just access to food and embracing traditions, but also more control over the entire food system, from what is grown to who sells it.

Though there are trademarked plants from Kentucky State University's pawpaw program and well-known growers like Neal Peterson, pawpaws have yet to become a commodity, Dr. Mihesuah said. They are still found in the wild in hundreds of varieties, and you can grow numerous good-tasting pawpaws from their giant black seeds, which are nearly the size of quarters.

Last spring, Dr. Mihesuah started her own plants, following the standard advice to keep seeds cold and moist for a few months before they are sown. She now has 17 pawpaw trees, which still need around five more years to produce fruit.

"If I ever move," Dr. Mihesuah said, "they're coming with me."

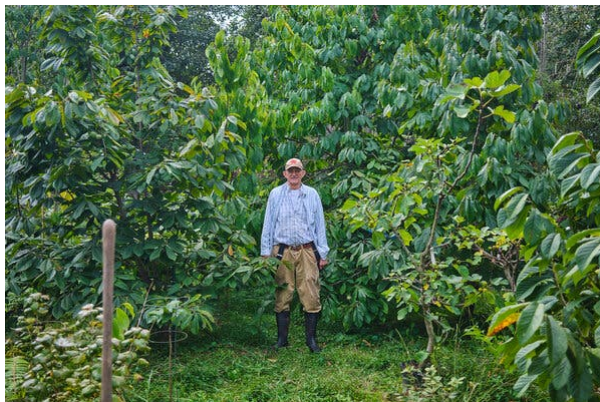
There are also young pawpaws at the Catawba Indian Nation in South Carolina, where DeLesslin George-Warren is following Dr. Mihesuah's lead.

Two years ago, Mr. George-Warren, 29, won a series of grants to start his nation's first food sovereignty program, which included planting 100 young pawpaw trees.

Like most of his fellow Catawbans, he had never seen a pawpaw before. Now it is one of his favorite plants. He hopes the nation will one day breed its own cultivars as a way to earn income. Until then, he is waiting to see what growing pawpaws will teach them.

"A big part of this is recovering the knowledge that was taken from us through colonization," Mr. George-Warren said. "We can mourn what was lost, but we still need to work on this, and the earth is our first teacher."

Taking cues from nature is also part of the plan for Ronald Jones, whose densely planted backyard was just named the best urban garden in St. Louis at the Missouri State Fair.



Charles West ate pawpaws while growing up in Ohio. Now he sells fruit and trees from his New Jersey nursery. Credit...John Taggart for NYT.

Mr. Jones, 47, won his first pawpaw in another gardening contest, and has since found them to be perfect for his gardening techniques, one of which is planting a “food forest.” His yard — he calls it Blackberry Landscaping — trades tidy rows for a mix of fruit trees and shrubs growing right next to vegetable crops, herbs and vines, all left to die back and enrich the soil.

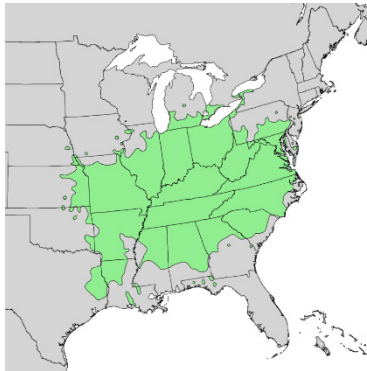
Mr. Jones, who lives in the historic Black neighborhood called Jeff-Vander-Lou, opens his yard to the public and gives fruit away via Facebook. In the future he wants to find an empty city block — there are many in his community thanks in part to 20th-century practices like redlining — and turn it into a true educational center like the one in Philadelphia.

You could argue that Charles West’s yard is also a food forest, even though he is the professional grower behind West Farm Nursery in Branchburg, N.J., just 50 miles west of Manhattan.

Mr. West, 81, a botanist who grew up eating pawpaws in Ohio, tends to more than 100 trees, the largest of which form a grove that meanders around other plants like okra, squash, berries and summer herbs.

Mr. West, who started his farm as a retirement project 15 years ago, now sells more than 40 varieties of the fruit from a refrigerator in his garage from August to October. But trees are his biggest seller: His orders jumped to 250, from 50, over the last four years.

Mr. West does tinker with other kinds of fruit trees, including a peach he regards with derision. “It has never given me a single fruit,” he said. “My conclusion is we should leave the European trees in Europe.”



Range of the North American Pawpaws

Webinars: Tropical Fruit Tuesdays

Jeff Wasielewski, the Commercial Tropical Fruit Extension Agent, UF/IFAS Extension Miami-Dade County organized the ‘Tropical Fruit Tuesdays’ series of Webinars which occurred every other Tuesday started June 16 and ending November 27. The Links to all the ‘Tropical Fruit Tuesdays’ Webinars have been uploaded to YouTube. Links to the videos are on pages 8 of this publication. Any related questions can be emailed directly to Jeff at: sflhort@ufl.edu.

Fruits Which Ripen in December

Atemoya, avocado, banana, black sapote, canistel, caimoyo (begins in January), carambola, carissa, coconut, fig, jackfruit, mamey sapote, miracle fruit, orange, Otaheite Gooseberry, papaya, passion fruit, peanut butter fruit, pomegranate, soursop, strawberry tree, sugar apple.

Annual Fruits: Eggplant, winter squash (Cushaw/Seminole pumpkin), pigeon pea, bell pepper, tomatoes.

The complete 2020 'Tropical Fruit Tuesdays' Webinar series has been uploaded to YouTube as follows:

Pruning Fruit Trees

<https://youtu.be/KGXekOJWKh8>

Planting Tips and Tricks

https://youtu.be/r_fm0oNGzOI

Fertilizer Basics

https://youtu.be/jUh4zg_9Ma4

Tropical Fruit with Attitude

<https://youtu.be/EE7s8kDM60>

Propagation by Grafting

https://youtu.be/uAi_SZ8ZwFQ

Propagation by Air-layering

<https://youtu.be/0NOqpRnO6NQ>

Propagation by Seed

<https://youtu.be/zMcTiZ8xImI>

Propagation by Cuttings and Division

<https://youtu.be/wWC5H2la4t4>

Successfully Growing Mangos in South Florida

<https://youtu.be/q9sMchH6na4>

Successfully Growing Avocados in South Florida (and Laurel Wilt)

<https://youtu.be/-61WrTy1FU>

Successfully Growing the Jackfruit in South Florida

<https://youtu.be/RMkOKAi1qcs>

Successfully Growing the Carambola in South Florida

<https://youtu.be/WSQODpur6f4>



Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club



Who We Are & What We Do

The Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club, Inc., is an educational not-for-profit organization whose purpose is to inform, educate and advise members and the public in the selection of plants and trees, to encourage their cultivation, and to provide a social forum where members can freely exchange plant material and information. The club cooperates with many organizations, and provides a basis for producing new cultivars. We function in any legal manner to further the above stated aims.

General Meeting:

General meeting, that include an educational program, are held the *second Tuesday* of each month. General meetings begin at **6:15 pm for social time**, and the **speakers begin promptly at 7 pm.**, at the Revive Wellness Center, **3521 Bonita Bay Blvd.**, Bonita Springs.

Workshops:

Workshops (monthly discussions) are held on the *fourth Tuesday* of each month at **7 PM** at the Revive Magazine, when practical. This open format encourages discussion and sharing of fruits and information. Bring in your fruits, plants, seeds, leaves, insects, photos, recipes, ect.. This is a great chance to get answers to specific questions, and there always seems to be a local expert on hand!

Tree Sales:

Semi-annual tree sales in DECEMBER and December, in the Bonita Springs area, raise revenue for educational programs for club members and other related purposes of the club.

Trips:

The club occasionally organizes trips and tours of other organizations that share our interests. The IFAS Experimental Station and the Fairchild Nursery Farm are examples of our recent excursions.

Membership:

Dues are \$15 per person for new members, and \$25 per household. Name tags are \$6 each. Send checks to: PO Box 367791, Bonita Springs, FL 34136, or bring to any regularly scheduled meeting.



Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club



Feel free to join BSTFC on **our Facebook group**, where you can post pictures of your plants, ask advice, and find out about upcoming events!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BSTFC/>

Link to the **next meeting**: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BSTFC/events/>
Meetup Link (events/meetings sync with the calendar on your phone!):

<https://www.meetup.com/Bonita-Springs-Tropical-Fruit-Club/>

Our **Website** (and newsletters with tons of info):
<https://www.BonitaSpringsTropicalFruitClub.com/>

Officers and Board of Directors:

Jorge Sanchez, President
Luis Garrido, Vice President
Dwain Kiddo, Treasurer
Talitha DeLuco, Secretary
Crafton Clift, Director
Lisa Mesmer, Director
George Kaladiny, Director



Like Us on Facebook! <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BSTFC/>

2020 CFG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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.

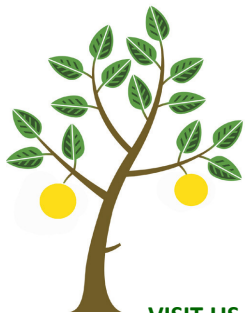
REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

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Melissa Parsons, Treasurer
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