

Fruit Growers of SWFL

FEBRUARY 2022





**Collier Fruit Growers' next Meeting: Monday, February 21, 2022 at 7:00 pm.
The Fire and Rescue Station
14575 Collier Blvd., Naples, FL 34119**

**Enter through the door on the east (Collier Blvd.) side of the admin. building.
The February speaker will be Steve Cucura owner of Fruitscapes on Pine Island.
Please practice social distancing. The wearing of masks is
at the participants discretion.**

**Please remember that it is time to pay your \$15.00 renewal dues for 2022 or risk
not receiving the monthly newsletters. Please mail dues to: CFG, Inc. 1944
Piccadilly Circus, Naples, FL 34112.**

**Please note that the Collier Fruit Growers now meet at the Greater Naples Fire
District Administration Building adjacent to Fire / Rescue Station No.73, just north
of Wolfe Road, west of Collier Blvd. (Route 951).**



Steve Cucura will be the guest speaker at the February Meeting of the Collier Fruit Growers. Steve is the owner of Fruitscapes, the supplier for our semi-annual Fruit Tree Sales. His nursery is a compilation of fruit trees, along with fresh fruit, organic vegetables, preserves under the chickee hut, and you-pick option. There are often baked goods and freshly cooked food items available at the chickee hut. A trip to the nursery is recommended.

In preparation for our largest tree sale of the year on Saturday, February 26th, Steve will summarize the warm fruit trees which are suited for Southwest Florida and will be available at the sale.



**The January BSTFC Meetings will be
Saturday, February 12 & Saturday the 26, 2022 at 4:30 pm.
Bonita Springs Fire Control & Rescue District Station
27701 Bonita Grande Drive, Bonita Springs, FL 34135**

**Both events will be a "potluck" dinner. Please bring a dish or dessert to share.
Please always observe the wearing of masks and social distancing.
Please remember to pay your 2022 Renewal Dues: \$30 for individual/family**

Dr. Mongi Zekri, the UF/IFAS Extension Agent in Hendry County, has agreed to come to the Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club Meeting to give us an update on the status of citrus in Florida at 5:30 pm on Saturday, February 26th.

Remember that it is time to renew your annual membership dues. Thank you to those who have already paid.

MAKEOVER BANANA NUT BREAD

104 Calories, 1.5 Protein, 19.5 Carbs, 4 Fats

PREP TIME:20 mins, COOK TIME:50 mins, TOTAL TIME:1 hr - 10 mins

YIELD: 26 SLICES (MAKES 2 LOAVES)

This super moist, banana nut bread recipe is insanely delicious and healthier than most because it uses less butter, oil and sugar than most recipes.

- **7 ripe medium bananas, 22 oz (2 2/3 cup) mashed chunky with a fork**
 - **1/2 cup 4 oz unsweetened apple sauce**
 - **2-1/2 cups 13.5 ounces unbleached all-purpose flour**
 - **1-1/2 tsp baking soda**
 - **1/2 tsp salt**
 - **4 tbsp butter, 2 oz, softened**
 - **1 cup (6 1/2 oz) light brown sugar**
 - **4 large egg whites**
 - **1 tsp vanilla extract**
 - **3 oz 3/4 cup chopped walnuts**
 - **baking spray**
- 1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease two 8 x5 inch loaf pans with baking spray.**
 - 2. In a medium bowl, combine flour, baking soda and salt with a wire whisk. Set aside.**
 - 3. In a large bowl cream butter and sugar with an electric mixer. Add egg whites, apple sauce and vanilla, and beat at medium speed until thick. Scrape down sides of the bowl.**
 - 4. Add 1/3 of the flour mixture and blend at low speed until combined, add another 1/3 of the flour and blend at low speed, add remaining 1/3 of flour mixture and the bananas and blend at low speed until combined. Do not over mix. Fold in the walnuts.**
 - 5. Pour batter into loaf pans and bake on the center rack for 50 to 52 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.**
 - 6. Let the pan cool at least 20 minutes, bread should be room temperature before slicing.**

Recipe source: www.skinnytaste.com

Small-Scale, Local Producers Get Improved Insurance Coverage Through New Micro Farm Policy

WASHINGTON – Agricultural producers with small-scale farms who sell locally can now get simplified insurance coverage through a new policy designed for their needs.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) developed the new Micro Farm policy, which simplifies recordkeeping and covers post-production costs like washing and value-added products.

“USDA is focused on supporting local and regional food systems, and Micro Farm is one more example of how we’re helping agricultural producers with farms of all shapes and sizes to manage their unique operations and risk,” said Marcia Bunker, Administrator for USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA). “The Risk Management Agency values collaboration and feedback from our customers, and Micro Farm is one way we’re responding to producers’ needs.”

Micro Farm is offered through Whole-Farm Revenue Protection (WFRP) and is geared to local producers. Details include:

- **Eligibility:** Micro Farm is available to producers who have a farm operation that earns an average allowable revenue of \$100,000 or less, or for carryover insureds, an average allowable revenue of \$125,000 or less. The increase in allowable revenue for a carry-over insured will allow for some farm growth in subsequent years before they become ineligible for the program. RMA’s research showed that 85% of producers who sell locally reported they made less than \$75,000 in gross sales.

- **Coverage Levels:** All coverage levels will be available to producers using Micro Farm. This will enable producers to purchase the 80% and 85% coverage levels without providing additional paperwork.

- **Underwriting and Recordkeeping Requirements:** Micro Farm minimizes underwriting and recordkeeping requirements, and producers will not have to report expenses and individual commodities.

- **Post-production Revenue:** Producers can include post-production activities as revenue, such as washing and packaging commodities or value-added products like jam.

Micro Farm is available for the 2022 crop year. Sales closing dates are Jan. 31, 2022, Feb. 28, 2022, or March 15, 2022, depending on the producer’s county.

Producers with crops insured under another crop insurance policy or a vertically integrated operation will not be eligible.

This new policy derived from research directed by the 2018 Farm Bill, and it includes feedback from producers who grow for their local communities. See the full report.

Specialty and Organic Crops

The Micro Farm policy builds on other RMA efforts to better serve specialty and organic crop growers. This includes WFRP, which provides coverage for producers with larger operations that may not be eligible for Micro Farm. RMA recently made improvements to WFRP as part of a broader set of new policies and expanded policies to assist specialty crop and organic producers.

More Information

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the RMA Agent Locator. If you have difficulty finding an agent, contact your RMA Regional Office. Learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at rma.usda.gov.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America’s food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy, and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov

Jessica Mendes Ryals

Agriculture / Sustainable Food Systems Agent, UF/IFAS Extension, Collier County
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Piper sarmentosum as a Ground Cover



Piper sarmentosum is an herb native to the tropical areas of Southeast Asia, Northeast India, South China, and as far as the Andaman Islands. The leaves are often confused with Piper betle(sic), but they lack the intense taste of the betel leaf and are significantly smaller. Piper lolot (lalot) is now known to be the same species. Under this name it is cultivated for its leaves which are used in Lao and Vietnamese cuisine as a flavoring wrap for grilling meats. There is no “official” English name for it, but it is sometimes called Wild Pepper or Wild Betel(sic). This plant is a fast-growing perennial spreading vine with creeping rhizomes, and a striped stem that grows to about one foot tall. Its leaves are thin, heart-shaped, 3-4 inches long, with 5 main veins from the base of the blade, oil glands on the upper surface, and finely pubescent veins on its underneath side.

Erect white spikes of about one inch long emerge at the axils. The practice of wrapping meat in vine leaves originated in the Middle East, which was taken to India by the Persians. It was subsequently introduced by the Indians to Southeast Asia. However, grape vines do not grow well in tropical climates, so the Vietnamese started to use leaves of lolot instead. It has been recently introduced into the United States by Lao and Vietnamese immigrants.

Piper sarmentosum leaves are used in traditional Asian medicines. It is used for medicinal purposes, to relieve a wide range of symptoms from inflammation to snake bites. Chemical analysis has shown the leaves contain the antioxidant naringenin. Amides from Piper sarmentosum fruit have been shown to have anti-tuberculosis and anti-plasmodial activities.

Piper samentosum contains the compound Serpentine, 1-(1-pyrrolidinyl)-(2E,4E)-2,4-decadien-1-one, a natural amide, which has been isolated from the fruit.(1) The compound has a number of interesting biological properties, including its broad-spectrum activity on weeds as an herbicide. When used as a ground cover around fruit trees, Piper somentosum eliminates most of the surrounding weeds, while also being considered drought resistant.

Footnote:

(1) Sarmentine, a natural herbicide from Piper species with multiple herbicide mechanisms of action,

www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4389368 and www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpls.2015.00222/full

Polypore Mushrooms are beneficial to Honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) Colonies. Mushrooms as Medicine with Paul Stamets at Exponential Medicines

YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/7agK0nkiZpA>

The above-mentioned video has been recommended for viewing by Daniela Cracuim, a Private Chef and CFG member, as it related to Honeybee colonies. Some persons may find the initial discussion, about Turkey Tail mushrooms enhancing *Lactobacillus* and *Bifidobacterium*, beneficial bacteria, in the GI tract which suppresses inflammation, interesting. At 18:00 minutes into the video Paul makes a “hard left,” to talk about how Deforestation is responsible for eliminating Natural Biodiversity.

At 23:40 - Honeybees are attracted to bear scratches on trees. Confirmed by Honeybees’ attraction to rotting logs and tree trucks.

At 25:22 – Fungicide contamination reduce the beneficial fungi in ‘Bee Bread’ was observed in an areawide field study of Honeybee colonies.

At 26:14 – Reported findings that “Myco Honey” nutraceutical is made from the polypore mushroom Mycelium.

At 27:16 – Further findings showed that Honeybees are able to produce the most amounts of “Myco Honey” from [Lingzhi] aka ‘Red’ Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*), Chaga (*Inonotus obliquus*), and Amadou (*Fomes fomentarius*) polypore mushrooms [fungi], which assists Honeybees to cope with the large quantity of fungicide contaminants in the pesticides and herbicides used in commercial farming and insect control spraying.

Notes:

- Lingzhi mushrooms grow primarily in birch forests and on Live Oak trees in northern Florida, reportedly from Tallahassee south to Gainesville with soil pH of 6.5 and below.
- Chaga mushrooms commonly grow in the colder climates on Northern United States and Canada.
- Amadou mushrooms have been commonly found growing in both north and south Africa, throughout Asia, Europe, and eastern North America.

Conclusion: Consider attempting to propagate Amadou and possible Lungzhi mushrooms under a thick layer of mulch or in other decaying wood to possibly bolster the survival of the local Honeybee population.



Amadou Mushrooms



Lingzhi Mushrooms

False Banana: Is Ethiopia's Enset 'Wondercrop' for Climate Change?

By Helen Briggs BBC, Science correspondent

Published: January 21,2022



Fruit of the banana (left) and enset (right). Image source, RBG, KEW

Scientists say the plant enset [*Ensete ventricosum*], an Ethiopian staple, could be a new superfood and a lifesaver in the face of 'climate change.' The banana-like crop has the potential to feed more than 100 million people in a warming world, according to a new study. The plant is almost unknown outside of Ethiopia, where it is used to make porridge and bread. Research suggests the crop can be grown over a much larger range in Africa.

"This is a crop that can play a really important role in addressing food security and sustainable development," said Dr. Wendawek Abebe of Hawassa University in Awasa, Ethiopia. Enset or "false banana" is a close relative of the banana but is consumed only in one part of Ethiopia. The banana-like fruit of the plant is inedible, but the starchy stems and roots can be fermented and used to make porridge and bread.



The plant is a close relative of the banana and looks similar to its 'cousin.' Image Source RBG, KEW

The plant is a close relative of the banana and looks similar to its 'cousin.' Image Source RBG, KEW Enset is a staple in Ethiopia, where around 20 million people rely on it for food, but elsewhere it has not been cultivated, although wild relatives - which are not considered edible - grow as far south as South Africa, suggesting the plant can tolerate a much wider range. Using agricultural surveys and modelling work, scientists predicted the potential range of enset over the next four decades. They found the crop could potentially feed more than 100 million people and boost food security in Ethiopia and other African countries, including Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda.

Study researcher Dr James Borrell, of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, said planting enset as a buffer crop for lean times could help boost food security. "It's got some really unusual traits that make it absolutely unique as a crop," he said. "You plant it at any time, you harvest it at any time and it's perennial. That's why they call it the tree against hunger." Ethiopia is a major centre of crop domestication in Africa, home to coffee and many other crops.



Enset reaches 10 metres (39 feet) tall. Image Source RBG, KEW

"Climate change' is predicted to seriously affect yields and distribution of staple food crops across Africa and beyond.

There is growing interest in seeking new plants to feed the world, given our reliance on a few staple crops. Nearly half of all the calories we eat come from three species - rice, wheat and maize.

"We need to diversify the plants we use globally as a species because all our eggs are in a very small basket at the moment," said Dr Borrell.

Fruit Love Letters Podcast – Mango trees are beginning to bloom. Everyone should listen to the Podcast:

“The Fruit the World Can’t Help But Love,” with Dr. Noris Ledesman.

Fruit Love Letters (castos.com) Episode: 1/11/2022

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/fruit-love-letters/id1602743541> Jan 11, 2022

Plantago is a nature remedy to the allergy people may have to the latex present in the stems & skin of mangos.

Memorial Service for Jose Maisog – February 4

A Celebration of Life will be held on Friday, February 4 starting 10:30 am at the St. John XXIII Catholic Church, 13060 Palomino Lane, Fort Myers 33912. All are invited to attend the service.

Bus Trip to Homestead - February 19

Bus trip to Homestead - \$60.00 per person. Ticket includes: Bus trip to Homestead Farmers' Market, Fruit & Spice Park - admission and tour, and "Robert Is Here", bus driver's tip, plus food and beverages supplied on the bus.

There is room in the bus storage hold for any large purchases you may make.

Wearing a mask is mandatory during any entry or exit of the bus. Wearing a mask DURING your ride is not required. Proof of vaccination is not required. And, if you have been vaccinated, then YOU are protected. You are not allowed to require anyone else to be vaccinated - or to wear a mask in your presence. Anyone NOT agreeing to this should not consider going on this trip.

Bus tickets must be paid for in advance, and can be cancelled with a complete refund if cancelled on or before 12 noon of Friday, Feb. 4th. Any cancellation after that date and time will be subject to resale of seats due to deposit requirements. Payments may be made in cash or by check.

Bus will leave at 7:30 AM from the Walmart parking lot (at Colonial and Six-Mile-Cypress) in Ft. Myers, then

Bus will leave at 8 AM from the Walmart parking lot in Naples on Immocalee (just west of I-75 exit #111). Walmart address is 5420 Juliet Blvd. - Naples.

Bus will return approximately between 7 PM and 7:30 PM.

Contact: Madeline at 239-851-4448

Pineapple Day on Marco Island – February 19

The Marco Island Historical Museum is happy to be able to again host Pineapple Day as one of their annual events. The event was highly successful in 2018 and 2019 and was not held in 2020 and 2021 due to covid. We are excited about being able to present a fun, family friendly event once again.

The event date is Saturday February 19 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm and is on the museum grounds at 180 S. Heathwood Drive, Marco Island, FL 34145. The museum telephone number is 239-252-1440 and it is open 9:00 am to 4:00 pm Tuesday through Saturday.

Honeybee Seminar at the Extension Service – February 23

The Collier County Extension Service on Immokalee Road will host a seminar on Bee Keeping Wednesday, February 23, from 4:00 am to 7:00 pm. Contact for details Jessica Mendes Ryals by telephone at 239 – 252 - 4811 or by email at Jessicaryals@ufl.edu. Dinner will be provided, which will be prepared by Daniela Carciun, private chef and contributor to the FGSWF newsletters. The cost will be \$50.00 per person to attend the seminar. Seating will be limited, so please register through the Eventbrite website to reserve a place.

Fruits that Ripen in January

Avocado, banana, black sapote, canistel, carambola, citrus, coconut, guava, macadamia nut, mamey sapote, papaya, sapodilla and soursop. Annual Fruits: Eggplant, winter squash (Cushaw/Seminole pumpkin), pigeon pea, bell pepper, tomato.



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:

The General Meetings will be held on the second Saturday of each month starting at 4:30 pm. The Meetings will be pot luck dinners at the Bonita Springs Fire Control & Rescue District Station at 27701 Bonita Grande Drive, Bonita Springs, FL Please bring a dish to share.

Workshops:

Workshops will be held on the fourth Saturday of each month starting at 4:30 pm. at the Bonita Springs Fire Control & Rescue District Station at 27701 Bonita Grande Drive, Bonita Springs, FL and will be pot luck dinners.. Please bring a dish to share. This open format encourages discussion and sharing of fruits, plants, seeds, leaves, insects, photos, recipes, etc. This is a great change to receive answers to specific questions.

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:

The annual dues are \$30.00 for both individuals and families. 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
Mario Lozano, Vice President
Tom Kommatas, Secretary
Janice Miller, Treasurer
Crafton Clift, Director
Eric Fowler, Director
Luis Garrido, Director



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

2022 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!

CFG Officers

President, Crafton Clift
Vice President, Bonnie Hawkins
Secretary, Lisa Hare
Treasurer, Rodger Taylor

CFG Board Members

Jorge Sanchez
Micah Bishop
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VISIT US AT:
www.collierfruit.org



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