



# COLLIER FRUIT GROWERS NEWSLETTER

**MARCH 2018**



At our next meeting on March 20th, you will meet Marc Gingras.

Marc Gingras is a career horticultural professional and fifth generation Floridian. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Horticultural Science/ Citrus from Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Florida and is a Florida Nurseryman and Growers Association Certified Horticulture Professional. He has been the owner of Calusa Palms Nursery, LLC since the late 1990s, specializing in unusual and hard to find tropical plants. He has experience in wholesale nursery management, commercial landscape management, and commercial integrated pest control. Since the mid-1980s, Marc has been cultivating over thirty cultivars of edible bananas in Southwest Florida and has experience with most of the issues that affect bananas in our region.

**The tasting table starts at 7:00 pm.  
Meeting starts at 7:30 pm.  
at the Tree of Life Church, Life Center, 2132 Shadowlawn Drive.**

## **BURDS' NEST OF INFORMATION THIS and THAT FOR MARCH**

**MANGOS** are a sight for sore eyes, flowers, blooming flowers, yea yea yea!

### **LYCHEES**

If they are flowering, resume a watering schedule. Lychee varieties do not bloom at the same time, so unless you are seeing a lot of new leaf growth on your tree, there is hope. Hoc Ip and Sweet Heart tend to be the first, then Brewster followed by the Emperor. Mother Nature, however, can play games with the late varieties blooming first.

Also when the flowers are starting to open, this is the best time to fertilize, a good citrus fertilizer eg 6-4-6 or 8-2-10 or 8-2-8 lightly feathered around the tree half way out from the trunk to beyond the drip line. Next month, we will address how to achieve larger lychee fruit.

### **CITRUS**

Now is the time to fertilize 6-4-6 8-10 or 8-2-8. Feathered it around the tree, half way out from the trunk to beyond the drip-line.

**CITRUS PRUNING** Number one rule for any of your pruning shears is to cleanse them with rubbing alcohol or hydrogen peroxide. You don't want to spread any problems you might have on one tree to another. Never use bleach.

The BEST time to prune citrus is after the petals have fallen off and fruit set. Pruning before or during flowering means possible fruit has been removed. Shape the tree to resemble an open umbrella. Start when the tree is young remove branches that don't point outwards from the trunk. Know your citrus trees best time to harvest, eg if mineola tangerines are left too long on the tree they will dry out and or fall off.

**CITRUS GREENING** The psyllids are rampant right now on the new growth, so spray with the soap and minor elements solution either early or late in the day.

**DONT BE SHY TO ASK QUESTIONS** if you are new to growing your own fruit. We had to learn, sometimes the hard way.

Next month **AVOCADO PRUNING**



## **RECIPE OF THE MONTH:**

We have all enjoyed ripe papayas in fruit salads, smoothies or eaten on their own. In Asia, green papayas are prized for their use in salads. It can also be pickled. This recipe was found on [www.suwanneerose.com](http://www.suwanneerose.com). It makes a lovely side dish for fish.

recipe:

### **Green Papaya Salad with Crispy Shallots**



#### **Ingredients**

- 1 large green papaya (about 6 cups) peeled, seeded and halved
- 2 cups fresh herbs (basil +/- mint +/- cilantro)
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, sliced in half
- 1 cup green beans, thinly sliced
- 3/4 cup unsalted roasted peanuts
- 3 shallots, thinly sliced
- hot chili peppers, to taste (I used 2 Thai chilies and one cayenne)
- 1 clove garlic
- 5 tablespoons lime juice (key lime is outstanding)
- 3 tablespoons fish sauce
- 3 tablespoons coconut or brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon oil

#### **Directions**

Heat the oven to 350.

Make the dressing: whisk garlic, hot chili peppers, lime juice, fish sauce and sugar.

Place the peanuts in a plastic bag and crush them with a wine bottle or rolling pin. Place them in a single layer on a baking sheet. Bake them 3 minutes, stir them, and continue baking for another 3 minutes or until they darken to a deep golden brown. Transfer them to a plate as soon as they're done to avoid overcooking/burning.

Heat the oil in a small fry pan over medium-low. Add the shallots and cook, stirring constantly, for 6-8 minutes or until they're brown and crispy. Transfer them to a plate lined with a paper towel.

Shred the papaya using a box grater, food processor, or vegetable peeler.

Toss the shredded papaya with green beans, tomatoes, fresh herbs, 1/2 cup of the peanuts and the dressing. Sprinkle the top with remaining peanuts and crispy shallots and serve.



# Club News



**The Asian Cultural Festival** will be held at the Fruit and Spice Park at the intersection of Coconut Palm Drive (SW 248th St.) and SW 187th Ave. in Redland (Homestead), starting 10:00 am on Saturday, March 3 until 5:00 pm on Sunday, March 4. Admission to the Festival and Park is \$13.00. All members are encouraged to attend.



A NEW Collier Fruit Growers Facebook Page has been established: [https://www.facebook.com/CollierFruitGrowers/?ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/CollierFruitGrowers/?ref=br_rs)  
CFG Members are encouraged to submit fruit related articles for posting on the Page. Viewers comments are also encouraged. Please LIKE and share our page with your friends. Remember to pick the correct page!



Members are requested to donate their potted mango seedlings. Please bring seedlings to the Cornerstone Nursery at 8200 Immokalee Road between 9:00 am and Noon any Thursday. They will be utilized for practice in grafting classes starting in May. We will still be in the 'dry' season and nighttime temperatures remain consistently above 75 F.



The opportunity remains for members to obtain free hardwood mulch at the Nursery. Between 10:00 am and 12:00 Noon on Thursdays. There may be assistance to help load the mulch into the bed of a pick-up truck or small open top trailer.



The February Fruit Tree Sale was a great success. Thanks to all the volunteers that helped throughout the day. John Norman (past CFG President, Board Member, tree sale publicist & citrus tree salesman) has surely been missed at the last two tree sales. John is convalescing after a fall last year and is expected to be back selling trees at the November Sale.



David Etzel must be commended as he continues the daily oversight and maintenance of the fruit tree grove at the Cornerstone Nursery on Immokalee Road. Thank you, Dave.



Pineapple fruiting results are in with some very unscientific observations. Small pieces of banana or apple peel vs. calcium carbide crystals were dropped into the center of an equal number of plants, after the first cold snap in January. The peels were twice as effective as the crystals in getting the plants to fruit. Wetting the crystals, and not relying on the overnight dew, will increase their effectiveness.



**A related item:** Hops (*Humulus lupulus*) are increasingly in demand as the micro-breweries and home brewers become more popular. Many varieties of hops are suitable for growing in Southwest Florida, including Cascades, Chinook, Centennial, and Nugget. Persons with small available plots should consider growing and harvesting hops as a possible 'cash crop.'

## March Calendar of Events

- Reoccurring every Thursday Cornerstone Nursery and Grove – Volunteer and Grafting Workshop, 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM: 8200 Immokalee Road.
- Saturday & Sunday, March 3-4 Asian Culture Festival at the Fruit and Spice Park, Homestead, 10:00 am Saturday until 5:00 pm Sunday.
- Saturday 3 Naples Botanical Garden Lecture, 10-11 am: 'Hurricane Recovery for the Homeowner,' given by Dr. Andrew Koeser, Univ. of FL: CFG members \$5, NBG members \$15.
- Tuesday 6 Monthly Meeting: Caloosa Rare Fruit Exchange, 7:00 pm, Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council Bldg., 2166 Virginia Ave., Fort Myers.
- Tuesday 13 Monthly Meeting: Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club, 6:45 PM Tasting Table, 7:15 PM Program: First United Methodist Church, Fellowship Hall, 27690 Shriver Ave., Bonita Springs.
- Saturday 17 Echo's Global Food and Farm Festival, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm. East of Interstate 75 in North Fort Myers. Advance tickets \$5.00, \$7.00 day of the event, children 8 and under free.
- Tuesday 20 Monthly Meeting: Collier Fruit Growers, 7:00 PM Social, 7:30 PM Program: Tree of Life Church, Life Center, 2132 Shadowlawn Drive.
- Wednesday 21 Annual Agricultural Farm Tour, 8 am-4 pm: Contact Jessica Ryals at [jessicaryals@ufl.edu](mailto:jessicaryals@ufl.edu) [only a limited number of tickets are available].
- Tuesday 27 Naples Botanical Garden Lecture, 10 am-noon: 'Preserving the Harvest,' given by Deana Bess: No cost to CFG members, NBG members \$15, non-members \$20.
- Tuesday 27 Monthly Workshop: Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club, 6:45 PM: First United Methodist Church, Fellowship Hall, 27690 Shriver Ave., Bonita Springs.
- Wednesday 28 Naples Botanical Garden Lecture and Workshop, 10 am-noon: 'Tropical Fruit 101: Minor Fruits,' given by Dr. Steve Brady: No cost to CFG members, NBG members \$15, non-members \$20.
- Friday 30 Naples Botanical Garden Lecture, 10 am-noon: 'Plant Propagation,' given by Brian Galligan and Chad Washburn: No cost to CFG members, NBG members \$15, non-members \$20.

**Upcoming Meeting Dates: TUESDAYS,  
April 17<sup>th</sup>, May 15<sup>th</sup>, and June 19<sup>th</sup>.**

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!**

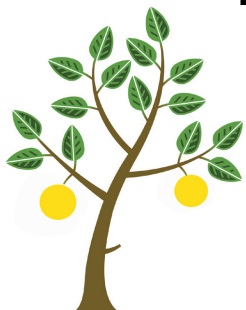
### 2017 CFG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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VISIT US AT:  
[www.collierfruit.org](http://www.collierfruit.org)

