

MARCH 2022

*Fruit Growers  
of SWFL*





**Collier Fruit Growers' next Meeting: Monday, March 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.**

**If you have not already paid, 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.**



Center UF/IFAS in Immokalee will be the speaker on March 21 at the Collier Fruit Growers' Meeting. Dr. Qureshi's research is aimed at investigating and developing tools and tactics for implementing knowledge based Integrated Citrus Pests and the current Management programs useful for conservation of natural resources, improved environmental quality and sustainable crop production systems. Subject areas include biology, ecology, behavior and management of the insect and mite pests and their natural enemies; plant, pathogen, vector and environment interactions; and methods of pest control for both organic and conventional citrus & vegetable production systems and urban areas. In citrus, many efforts are focused on the understanding and management of the Asian citrus psyllid, *Diaphorina citri*, and its vectored huanglongbing (HLB) or citrus greening disease. Research addresses both basic and applied questions and seeks stakeholder collaboration.

**The January BSTFC Meetings will be Saturday, March 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 remember to pay your 2022 Renewal Dues: \$30 for individual/family**



The speaker at the March 12th BSTFC Meeting will be James Farwell. James grew up in Woodbury, MN before moving to Fort Myers. He started his journey into agriculture growing various vines and vegetables around 16 years old and he is now focused nearly exclusively on cultivating edible fruit trees. After a career as a mergers and acquisitions investment banker, he moved to Fort Myers where he purchased a Montessori school and then later started a fruit farm, both of which he actively leads today. James started planting fruit trees at the school for the children and soon began collecting them at home on his lanai. That collection turned into a 5-acre fruit farm where he currently lives. This hobby became a small business in 2018, hired its first of three employees in 2020, and as Farwell Fruit Farm, LLC. began

planting out the several hundred potted fruit trees that James had accumulated over the years. The Farwell Fruit Farm currently grows 400+ species and cultivars, including *Plinias* and *Myrciarias* (*Jaboticaba* and its close relatives), of subtropical fruit trees of which the seeds are sold at [www.farwellfruitfarm.com](http://www.farwellfruitfarm.com).

James will discuss his large collection of *Jaboticabas* on which he is planning to write a book.



The March 26th Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club speaker will be Berto Silva who specializes in growing rare and unusual fruit trees. He grew up in the northeast portion of Brazil where he enjoyed the diverse types of fruits available in that region. During the past twenty-five years, Berto has experimented with growing rare fruit trees from all over the world, particularly those native to the Amazon basin and the Brazilian Atlantic Forest.

Berto will discuss his experience with grafting various species of *annonas* onto pond apple (*Annona glabra*) and mountain soursop (*Annona montana*) rootstocks. Pond apple is well adapted to southern Florida and can withstand flooded conditions. Mountain soursop is a rootstock that is a bit more cold hardy.

# Mamey Sapote (*Pouteria sapota*) Recipes

## By: Noris Ledesma, Curator of Tropical Fruit

What could be more refreshing than the fruit shakes called batidos - especially when they're made with sweet pink mamey sapote (*Pouteria sapota*)? Native to the seasonally dry forests of Mexico and Central America, the mamey sapote in its natural state forms a tall, stately tree with a large spreading canopy. Fruit are borne directly on the thick twigs and branches of the canopy, have an oval or football shape and are brown with red to salmon-colored flesh. Peak harvest in Florida is during spring and summer. Maturity is best determined by nicking the thick skin with your fingernail: green flesh means it's immature, while a red or pink flesh color indicates maturity.

Eat mamey sapote by itself, or add to fruit salads, desserts, milk shakes and other fruit drinks. Because of its interesting taste and texture, mamey sapote is rapidly gaining in popularity for cooking. It's high in vitamins A and C and potassium and is an excellent source of dietary fiber. A cup of mamey sapote contains approx. 135 calories.

### Mamey - Guava Jam

- 6 guavas
- 3 mameys
- 2 1/2 cups sugar
- 1 package Sure-Jell
- 1 cup water



Scoop out flesh from guavas, remove the seeds and make a puree of the fruit. Cut the mameys open, remove the seeds and slice flesh into pieces. Mix with the guava and heat the mixture just until it boils. In another pan, combine the sugar and Sure-Jell. Add one cup of water and one teaspoon of the fruit mixture. Bring to a boil and add it to the pan with the hot fruit puree. Stir until well mixed. Bring to a boil and immediately pour into sterile jars and seal. Yield: About six small jars.

### Mamey Sapote Mousse

- 1 cup mamey pulp
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 envelope gelatin
- 1/2 cup cold water
- 1/2 cup boiling water
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1/2 tsp salt



Rub fruit through a sieve or put through a food mill to remove any fiber. Mix sugar and salt with fruit pulp. Soak gelatin in cold water, then dissolve in the boiling water. Blend with fruit mixture. Chill until mixture thickens, then whip until light. Whip the heavy cream until stiff and fold into mamey mixture. Freeze.

### Mamey Sapote Mini-Muffins Yield: makes 15 muffins.

- 1 1/2 cup flour
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups mashed mamey sapote
- 1 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/2 cup sugar

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease mini-muffin pan, or line with paper liners. In a small bowl, mix flour, baking soda, cinnamon and salt. In a large bowl, beat butter and sugar together. Mix in eggs, mamey sapote and milk. Blend in dry ingredients. Do not overmix. Scoop into muffin tins. Bake 20 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Recipes were copied from: [www.virtualherbarium.org/tropicalfruit](http://www.virtualherbarium.org/tropicalfruit)

## Mango Calendar - Dr. Stephen Brady

**January – February** – ‘Actinovate(1); Apply every ten days after first fruit reaches pea size and thin fruit to two per panicle.

**March – May** – Cut out any branches affected by malformation. Place a pad of newspaper between touching fruits. Apply insecticidal liquid soap every two weeks.

**May – October** – Harvest your fruit when mature, but not tree ripe.

**June – September** – Spray foliage with soluble fertilizer right you pick the last fruit. 15-32-15 or similar formulation is fine. 1.5 Tbs. per gallon with ‘Spreader Sticker(2)‘; Apply on a day where it will not rain for at least 24 hours.

**September – October** – Tip prune summer grown and thin as necessary. Spray with soluble fertilizer again. As the next flush is approaching full size spray with minor element foliar spray(3).

**December** – Apply insecticidal soap; 2 oz. per gallon twice, ten days apart. Time to start again.

**Cold Weather** is one of my few triggers to give Mangos any nitrogen. Now would be a good time to lay in a supply of a [granular] general-purpose fertilizer; 6-6-6 or 8-8-8 will do.

**Precaution:** Cold weather will cause flowers and young fruit to drop, resulting in a reduced or loss harvest.

### Footnotes:

(1) Actinovate SPTm biofungicide is a high concentration of a patented beneficial bacterium on a 100% water soluble powder. This product effectively suppresses and controls a wide range of soil borne diseases including Pythium, Phytophthora, Fusarium, Rhizoctonia, Verticillium and other root decay fungi.

(2) Spreader Sticker is a product name of ‘Hi Yield’ & ‘Southern Ag’ companies, and similar products are also available from several other companies as well.

(3) KeyPlex 350 ORtm and Enviro Prime Selecttm Minors (Micro Pack) are two commercially available, concentrate organic micro-nutrient foliar sprays. A non-organic micro-nutrient spray is available from ‘Nature’s Lawn and Garden, Inc.’

### Fruits which Ripen in February

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

### Citrus Greening Seminar

March 24, 10am - 11:15am

Location: Collier County Extension, 14700 Immokalee Rd.

CEUs: 1 Private Applicator or Ag. Tree Crop.

Must register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/citrus-greening-tickets-260458025967>

### ‘Fantastic Fungi’ Movie on Netflix

This extremely pertinent 1-hr. 22-min. movie concerning the little-known benefits of mushrooms can either be viewed on Netflix or streamed for \$3.99 on YouTube

at: <https://youtu.be/C7abxMxL4so>

# King Stropharia (*Stropharia rugosoannulata*), The Garden Giant By Mushroom Mountain, May 21, 2020

## How to Grow the Wine Cap Mushroom



King stropharia, or the wine cap mushroom takes its name from the rich wine like coloring of the cap in its younger button state. As it gets larger, it can lighten in cap color becoming a golden yellowish brown with age. The gills are a pale gray when young, changing to a purplish gray, and later-on in life a purplish black. The stipe or stem is whitish when young, and yellows with age. This species is native to northeast North America, [also found in Europe and was introduced to Australia and New Zealand. The mushroom was reported in April 2018 in Colombia, in the city of Bogota.]

King stropharia has a delicious mild potato cooked in a red wine flavor, and the stem has an asparagus-like texture. Garden Giants are extremely low in sodium and calories, as well as fat and cholesterol free. They also contain iron, protein, and calcium, making them a healthy addition to your meal.

### Benefits of King Stropharia in Your Garden

- Garden giants break down hardwood chips, and other substrates. By doing this, they enrich and build a rich layer of soil to nurture plants in the garden.
- They attract earth worms. Earth worms love the smell of the sweet king stropharia mycelium. They will help aerating the soil in that area and deposit worm castings, which are great for your plants.
- The mycelium will help reduce the damage caused to the root system when the area is infested with nematodes. Mycelium will capture and destroy the nematodes.

**TIP:** Word of caution, once the earth worms learn where the mycelium is, they will come for it, so moving the bed each year to another location might be a good idea, if you are looking to eat mushrooms.



King stropharia comes in form of sawdust spawn, weighing approximately 5-lbs. and it will inoculate a cubic yard of wood chips or 1 square bale of wheat straw. They do prefer to have bright, but indirect sun to partial sun, so make sure that you're not placing the bed in bright full sun. A good place for these would be at a tree line, tucked behind a garden shed, next to a retainer wall or just about anywhere with the correct light.

### Growing the Garden Giant on Wood Chip

#### What You Will Need

- Fresh (up to two months) hardwood chips – You can either make your own, check craigslist, check with your local arborist, with your power company, or a local mill
- Spawn – [**King Stropharia (1 strain) AM4 (Aloha)**]
- Cardboard – take off all plastic tape, and or metal
- Straw or leaves
- Water

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## Method

### Step 1

Prepare an area by creating a rectangle hardwood log frame for the bed (optional), you can use logs that are inoculated with other strains such as Reishi! Try to use logs that are around 6-8" [15-20 cm] in diameter. Locate the site in a shady area or between rows of vegetable plants in the spring [fall in south Florida].

### Step 2

Cover the entire floor of the mushroom garden with cardboard from flattened boxes. Water the cardboard until it is saturated. Sprinkle spawn lightly onto the cardboard over the entire surface.

### Step 3

Add 3" of fresh hardwood chips and sprinkle more spawn on top. Pack the surface to remove any air pockets. Sprinkle lightly with enough water to moisten the chips.

### Step 4

Cover with another layer of cardboard. Tear the cardboard, so that the moisture can make it to the bottom layer. You can also use a thin layer of newspaper. Sprinkle another layer of spawn onto the cardboard, covering the entire surface.

### Step 5

Add a second 3" layer of fresh hardwood chips or lawn compost and mix it generously with sawdust spawn. Pack the surface to remove any air pockets. Sprinkle lightly with enough water to moisten the chips.

### Step 6

Cover with straw or leaves to a depth of 1-2" to help preserve moisture and to shade the chips.

**TIP:** Do not make your bed deeper than two feet. You don't want the mycelium to become anaerobic and die.

### Step 7

Water every day for the first week, every other day for the 2nd and 4th week. Water once a month thereafter unless it receives sufficient rain. After 4-8 months the mushroom mycelium, or filaments of the fungus will spread throughout the chips and penetrate the surrounding soil, distributing nutrients to nearby plants. Check back on your patch often. Mushrooms grow extremely fast once they start fruiting, you don't want to miss them! Your patch may fruit several times a year.

## Interplanting King Stropharia in an Existing Garden

You can also interplant the Garden Giant with your existing plants. You would mostly use the same process that you would if you were building a bed exclusively for the wine caps except you would do it around your plants. We use this method around our blue berries each year. Instead of weed eating around them, we just cover the area with cardboard, and build a mushroom bed on top of it. You are getting rid of the grass, growing mushrooms, and bringing in extra nutrition for the blueberry bushes. Win-win situation all around.

## Fruiting, Picking and Storing



Mist the mushrooms as they appear to prevent drying. It is critical that the baby mushrooms never dry out. As the mushrooms enlarge, you need to mist occasionally, but not all the time. Excessive watering can attract bacteria that rot and decay the mushrooms. Mushrooms generally double in size every day. Pick just as the mushrooms start to slow or stop doubling in size, and do not water before picking. Pick the mushrooms in a button stage. This way you will beat the maggots to them, and the stems will not be wormy. The deeper you make your bed, the bigger those buttons will be.

## What's Next

When your King stropharia bed is established, you can add a new layer of wood chips to it once a year in the fall, after it fruits, to feed the mycelium and keep the bed fruiting. You can also take some of the colonized wood chips from your established bed and use it to inoculate a new bed.

**[NOTE: A trial is needed to be conducted to determine if the cultivation of King stropharia is possible in southern Florida. The Collier Fruit Growers is seeking a volunteer to conduct this trial. The required five pounds of sawdust spawn for the trial will be provided by CFG.]**

## The Billion Agave Project and Climate Change by Carole Menser (Cville\_Gardener) December 28, 2021



There's some good news about the environment for a change. And it's all because of the agave, a plant that's so much more than tequila.

**The Billion Agave Project is an ecosystem regeneration strategy recently adopted by a group of visionary Mexican farmers in the high desert of Guanajuato.**

### The project

Mexico has launched a monumental project that could change desert landscapes and benefit economies around the world. The plan combines cultivating agave plants and nitrogen-fixing companion tree species, such as mesquite (pictured below), with rotational livestock grazing. The result is a high yield of forage and biomass even on degraded semi-arid lands.



The system produces large amounts of agave leaves and root stems that can create up to one ton of biomass over the 8–10-year life of one plant. When chopped and fermented, the plant material produces an excellent and inexpensive animal fodder costing a whopping 2 cents a pound. This agroforestry system reduces pressure on overgrazed rangelands while at the same time improving soil health and water retention, along with drawing down and storing massive amounts of atmospheric carbon dioxide.



### The goal

The goal of the Billion Agave campaign is to plant one billion agave globally in order to draw down and store one billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. The campaign is being funded by donations, along with public and private investments.

When bruised, Mexican agave (maguey) leaves produce a paste from which paper can be made. The juice is fermented into an alcoholic beverage called pulque; its leaves provide a thick thatch for roofs. Thread can be made from the coarse tufts, and strong cords from the twisted fibers. Thorns at the ends of the leaves are made into pins and needles. Cooked roots provide nourishing food.

The four major edible parts of the agave are the flowers, leaves, stalks or basal rosettes, and the aquamiel (Spanish for honey water or sap).

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### Food and fiber

Each agave plant produces several pounds of edible flowers during its final season. The stalks weigh several pounds each and are sweet when roasted. Like sugarcane, they can be chewed. When dried, stalks can be used to make didgeridoos. Leaves collected in winter and spring when the plants are full of sap are nutritious. The leaves of several species yield fiber. Among these are *Agave sisalana*, the sisal hemp, and *Agave decipiens*, false sisal hemp. *Agave americana* is the source of pita fiber used to make cords and paper in Mexico, the West Indies, and southern Europe.



Tools used to obtain agave's ixtle fibers, at the Museo de Arte Popular, Mexico City, D.F.; Thelmadatter, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons)

The agave, especially *Agave murpheyi*, was a primary food source for prehistoric indigenous people of the Southwestern United States. The Hohokam of southern Arizona cultivated large amounts.

The Navajo also found many uses for the plant. Besides a beverage, the heads can be baked or boiled, pounded into flat sheets, sun-dried, and stored for future use. They are also boiled and eaten whole or made into a paste for soups. The young, tender stalks and shoots are roasted and eaten as well. The fibers are used to make rope. Leaves are used to line baking pits, and the sharp-pointed leaf tips are used as basketry awls.

During the development of the inflorescence, sap rushes to the base of the young flower stalk. Agave syrup/agave nectar is made from this sap. It can be used as a sugar substitute for cooking and added to breakfast cereals as a binding agent. Agave sweeteners are diabetic-friendly. Agave leaf extracts are also being researched as potential food additives.

[Here's organic agave nectar that will be perfect for many of your sweetening needs.](#)

### Beverages and tequila

The sap of *A. americana* and other species is used in Mexico and Central America to produce an alcoholic beverage. The flower shoot is cut out and the sap is collected and fermented. Mezcal is then distilled. One of its best-known forms is tequila. *Agave tequilana*, or *Agave tequilana* var. *azul*, is used in its production. *Agave angustifolia* is widely used in the production of mezcal and pulque; however, at least 10 other *Agave* species are used for this purpose.

### Research

Agave is used for the commercial production of fructans, a prebiotic dietary fiber. As a result of its natural habitat in stressful environments, it is being researched for potential uses in germplasm conservation, as well as biotechnology research to better anticipate the economic effects of global climate change. It can possibly be used as a bioethanol feedstock.



The importance of the Billion Agave Project worldwide is enormous.



## Laurel Wilt of Avocado

### Threat to Florida Avocados & Native Trees in the Laurel Family

Laurel Wilt is a deadly disease of redbay (*Persea borbonia*) and other tree species in the Laurel family (Lauraceae). The disease is caused by a fungus (*Raffaelea lauricola*) that is introduced into host trees by a nonnative insect, the redbay ambrosia beetle (*Xyleborus glabratus*). Further information on this disease has been compiled by Dr. Jonathan Crane at the Univ. of Florida/ IFAS Tropical Research and Educational Center which can be accessed at the following internet link:

<https://trec.ifas.ufl.edu/faculty/dr-crane-lw-ab-website/links/>

The Planting and Care of Avocado Trees has been discussed previously in the January 2021 issue of the FGSWF Newsletter. Please note that according to Dr. Crane, mature avocado trees having trunks of between eight and ten inches in diameter are especially susceptible to Laurel Wilt. Depending upon the growth rate of the variety of avocado trees the average life expectancy is between ten and twelve years.

## Proposed Changes to Food Safety Moderation Act's Agricultural Water Rule

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has hosted an all-day Virtual Public Meeting on February 25 to discuss the proposed rule. FOG will present a summary of what was covered during the FDA session and allow time for your questions during the March 11th meeting.



**New Event Date: Friday, March 11th, 2022**

**Event Time: 2:00-3:00pm (EST)**

**Location: Held over Zoom.**

**Registration for this event is free.**

[Register](#)

## Grafting Annonas in March

March is the perfect time to graft the various annonas species as they push new foliage in March. Mario Lozano has agreed to graft soursop, sugar apple, custard apple, Ilama, atemoya and/or cherimoya scions (depending on availability) onto the forty or so pond apple rootstocks currently in the nursery at the IFAS Collier Extension Service. The selection of the scions and grafting technique is important for success.



# 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  
Lisa White



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



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# Fruit Tree Sale February 26th

