



COLLIER FRUIT GROWERS NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2015



For our March meeting, we are privileged to have Larry Schokman, Director *Emeritus* of The Kampong, the historic home and National Botanical Garden of David Fairchild, the founder of America's Tropical Fruit research and exploration.

Larry Schokman led the garden for more than three decades as he nurtured and expanded the collection and site of The Kampong. His illustrated talk will be "The Kampong -- The History and Horticulture". He is a sought after speaker and a legend in South Florida that we are privileged to have visit us.

Mr. Schokman is compiler and author of "Plants of the Kampong".

Next Meeting is March 16 At the Golden Gate Community Center,
4701 Golden Gate Parkway
7:00 pm for the tasting table and 7:30 pm for the meeting/program.

BURDS NEST OF INFORMATION

THIS and THAT FOR MARCH

PLANTING:

Now that the threat of frost is over, this is an excellent time to plant your new fruit trees, so that you'll have the most growth before next winter. Remember, no fertilizer in the hole when planting. Wait 1 month before you start fertilizing, lightly, out by and beyond the drip line, and never close to the trunk. Its OK to fertilize young trees a little each month until September.

Keep up the spray program on citrus to keep the psyllids away.

There is still time to prune you PEACHES & GRAPES, too.

The best time to prune FIGS is before & when you see the first sign of new shoots. If you are too late, let go until next year.

Count your blessings - share your harvest.





RECIPE OF THE MONTH

While searching the internet for recipes, I came upon this healthy recipe from www.simplyquinoa.com. The original recipe called for mangos, but I found that it is equally as delicious with papayas. For a vegetarian version, simply omit the chicken. Enjoy!

recipe: **Tropical Grilled Chicken Quinoa Lettuce Wraps**

Submitted by Roberta Taylor

- 1/2 cup quinoa
- 1 cup water
- 2 small mangos or papayas, seeded, peeled and diced
- 1 avocados, pitted and diced
- 1/4 cup cilantro, finely chopped
- Juice of 2 limes
- 2 tablespoons avocado oil (or olive oil)
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 8 - 10 leaves of butter lettuce
- 2 boneless skinless chicken breasts, grilled
- Hot sauce to taste

Bring the quinoa and water to boil in a small sauce pot. Cover and reduce to simmer for 10 - 15 minutes, until the water has been absorbed. Remove from the heat, and keep covered for another 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork and transfer to a mixing bowl. Let cool for 10 - 15 minutes.

While the quinoa is cooking, prepare the dressing. Whisk the lime juice, oil, vinegar, honey, and spices together in a small bowl. Set aside.

Once the quinoa has cooled, add the mangoes or papayas, avocado and herbs. Toss together until combined. Pour dressing over the salad and mix until coated. Scoop the quinoa salad into the lettuce leaves, top with grilled chicken and hot sauce.

Serves 4.



CLUB NOTES



AVOCADO – A FRUIT FOR ALL SEASONS

Avocados are becoming the fruit of choice for Southwest Florida. Greening disease has made the classic favorite Citrus often disappointing and difficult for the homeowner to grow. With no cure in sight for citrus many are beginning to turn to the avocado. New varieties for Southwest Florida are making avocados healthy, trendy and available fresh in any season with that buttery, nutritious fruit we all love.

A native of Central America, the avocado is well adapted to our area. Although Mexican avocados tend to be small, dark with rough skin, the new hybrids for Florida tend to be large, green with smooth skin. Some Florida commercial growers promote their avocados as "SlimCados" having up to half the fat and a third the calories of the leading California avocado. It all depends on how long the fruit remains on the tree. Mexican/Californian avocados grown in their western dry climate are smaller and have a higher fat content. Florida avocados grown in the wet summer months grow huge with less fat content. But new avocados developed for our area can mature later in the dryer winter season developing the higher fat content of western varieties. Today, Southwest Floridians can choose from dozens of varieties that mature in any month year round with that great creamy taste for which the avocado is famous. Steve Cucura of Fruitscapes recommends Wurtz, Nishikawa and Munroe for winter avocados in our area.



Fruit Bite -- Star Apple or Caimito

Our annual tree sale had Caimitos for sale and most didn't recognize it. Caimito is the Spanish common name for star apple which has a round green fruit which usually turns purple at maturity. It is common and favored in the Caribbean and Latin America. It is frost sensitive and can grow quite large. It is in the Sapotaceae family, a relative of the canistel, the abiu, mamey sapote and sapodilla.



Fruit Bite -- Jujube

The Jujube may be the most underrated trees for Southwest Florida. It is tough, drought and cold tolerant, pest resistant and tolerates poor soil. Many northerners like the tart apple-like crunch of the immature fruit which is pear shaped but smaller than most apples. Left to mature the fruit darkens and may wrinkle tasting more date-like. It grows rapidly in spurts but suckers should be removed. It is not the most handsome tree but it is well adapted to Southwest Florida. The Chinese jujube has the best taste but the Thai variety at Fruitscapes is well adapted to south Florida. Even if neglected it does well in our area. It fruits in the winter.

Collier Fruit Growers Inc.
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FRUIT NEWS

**FUTURE MEETINGS:
April 20th, May 18th, and June 15th**

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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