



COLLIER FRUIT GROWERS NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2014

THIS MONTH—FEBRUARY 10th MEETING



February 10th Meeting Speaker

Alison and Mario Ramirez of TreeHouse Nursery on Pine Island will prepare us all for the February Tree Sale by giving an overview of the trees and shrubs they will be bringing to the sale. It's always a good review of all the plants which grow here in Southwest Florida. Alison is the 3rd generation to manage TreeHouse Nursery. Bob and Vivian Murray came from Miami in the 1970's giving up a good job with the FAA to form a family business on Pine Island. Daughter Lianne Murray grew up in the business then became a nurse only to return with her family to continue the tradition and way of life. Now Grand-daughter Alison, also a trained nurse, has brought her family back to Pine Island and TreeHouse. Alison's Grandfather, Bob Murray, was a founding member of Collier Fruit Growers. We hope to continue our annual picnic and nursery tour of TreeHouse this May.

SPECIAL NOTE: PLEASE GO TO <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCQOeHcFDSY> to see Jan's version of the community garden near our house and Cornerstone Church

ECHO Global Farm Day March 22

Spend the day at their 50-acre Global Farm and tour a tropical rainforest demonstration, the 300+ variety seed bank, take an educational tour of the fruit tree arboretum, or learn about alternative energies as they are demonstrated in the appropriate technology area! Kids can taste, touch, and experience their way around the world as they learn about world hunger and ways they can make an impact! ECHO would like to introduce you to our 23rd annual Farm Day event on March 22, 2014 on ECHO's Global Farm at 17391 Durrance Road in North Fort Myers, about 1 mile east of exit 143 off I-75. Each year Farm Day has had over 2000 people on ECHO's Global Farm. This day will be filled with tours, demonstrations of farming techniques used around the world, applications of appropriate technologies, children's activities, creative workshops, and samples of some of the amazing varieties of tropical fruit on ECHO's farm. Admission is \$7.00 for adults. Advanced tickets are \$5.00 for adults. There is no charge for children under 10.

ECHO is an international non-profit organization located in North Fort Myers, Florida, established to equip people with agricultural resources and skills to reduce hunger and improve the lives of the poor. ECHO serves a network of 3000 individuals and organizations in 180 countries. Read more at

www.echonet.org.

Directors Honored and New Directors Elected

On December 16, 2013 we held our annual holiday party and honored two of our long service members -- John Norman and Mary Fehr. Both have been members for over 20 years and have served many years as directors and officers in the club. Both received plaques in appreciation of their dedication and service.

New directors elected were Kimberly Cavalier, Lisa White, Melissa Parsons and Kumari Pamankada. Kimberly is a raw food enthusiast and social networking specialist involved in gathering and informing food growers and consumers in Southwest Florida. Lisa White, originally from Cuba, has a tree farm in East Naples and has run the tasting table for the past few years. Melissa Parsons has taken over as treasurer since Mary Fehr "retired". Kumari is originally from Sri Lanka and has a food forest of tropicals surrounding her East Naples home.



VISIT US AT:
www.collierfruit.org

When searching for ways to use fruits, you generally find recipes for desserts or baked goods. However, I am always looking for ways to expand fruit usage in main courses. The following is a recipe that I found on www.food.com. It uses papayas, pineapples, bananas and limes in a delicious vegetarian curry. You can adjust the spice to suit your taste.



recipe:

PAPAYA CURRY

Submitted by Roberta Taylor

- 1 papaya, peeled, seeded and diced
- 2 cups fresh pineapple chunks
- 2 slightly green bananas, halved lengthwise, diced into ½" pieces
- 1 large green apple, peeled cored and diced into ½" pieces
- Juice of 1 lime
- 2 Tbsp. canola oil
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 1 small sweet potato, peeled and cubed
- 2 jalapeno peppers, seeded and minced
- 1 Tbsp. curry powder
- ½ tsp. ground ginger
- ½ tsp. each cayenne pepper and salt
- 1 14 oz. can light coconut milk
- ¼ cup raisins
- ¼ cup cashews, finely chopped

Combine fruits in a bowl and sprinkle with lime juice. Heat oil in a saucepan over medium heat and sauté onion, stirring often until they start to turn golden brown. Add sweet potato, jalapenos, curry powder, ginger, cayenne and salt and stir fry for 2 minutes. Add coconut milk and cook, stirring occasionally for 5 minutes. Add fruit and raisins, turn heat to low and simmer for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve over steamed rice and sprinkle with cashews.

Makes 4 servings.



CLUB NOTES



Subtropics

Florida is "subtropical" but those cold days of January make me wonder what that term means to a fruit grower. "Subtropical" are geographical and climate zones that include most deserts, parts of the Andes, Mexican highlands, the Mediterranean and southern California as well as Florida. **Geographically**, the subtropics are from the Tropic of Cancer poleward to the 35th parallel (Virginia). As a **climate**, it has been defined as a region having 8 months of a mean temperature of 50 degrees F or above. Others place the definition of the climate zone having an average temperature of the coldest month of between 36F to 55F degrees. There are other scales. It seems "subtropical" is a relative term for an area located between the tropical and temperate climates. Collier County is tropical in the summer and temperate in the winter. This is a savanna climate which has a wet, humid summer and a dry winter. But savannas can be in semi-arid or semi-humid regions. In the Mediterranean climate the wet season is in the winter and humidity is much lower.

Subtropical is, then, a general term with broad, variable definitions. To be helpful in identifying what plants will do well in our climate, more specific information is required. Humidity here is much different than say Southern California's subtropical Mediterranean climate. Plant selection would be different. The microclimate effect of minimum temperature tolerated varies from plant to plant and locally the variation of temperatures between Naples Beach and Golden Gate Estates can be critical. With the onset of global warming, or global "weirding", as I call it, more extreme swings in weather patterns can be anticipated. Knowing the weather preferences of individual plants and varieties will increasingly be crucial to planting success.

February 22: Tree Sale Day

Saturday, February 22 is the day of the largest fruit tree sale of the year and all hands need to be on deck to promote the sale, label trees and assist customers.

Plan to be at Freedom Park on Golden Gate Parkway for setup beginning at 7:00 am with the sale open 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. An informal lunch will be provided and trees available at discount to members who assist.



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FRUIT NEWS

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.

2014 CFG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DIRECTORS:

President-David Etzel—353-7611
Rodger Taylor, Vice President
Melissa Parsons, Treasurer
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Thamarra Pamankada, Director
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Lisa White, Director



REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!