



COLLIER FRUIT GROWERS NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2017

Our next meeting is **January 9th**, the 2nd Monday of the month due to Federal Holidays. Our speaker will be **Danny Blank**, citrus farmer from Olga, who will be giving us the latest **Citrus Update**.

Danny is the former farm manager of ECHO and current has a 10 acre orchard of citrus and vegetables. His farm is called 12 Seasons Farm as he plans fruits and vegetables that can be harvested 12 months of the year. He has an advanced college degree in Sustainable Agriculture and has taught at Warner College and FGCU.



Danny will update us on the latest hopes and fears of the industry as it battles Citrus Greening. Citrus was once the brightest fruit industry star, but it is currently under devastating attack from serious disease problems.

**The meeting starts at 7:00 pm
at the Community Center,
4701 Golden Gate Parkway in Golden Gate City.**

BURDS' NEST OF INFORMATION THIS and THAT FOR JANUARY

PRUNING IT'S TIME - GRAPES, PEACHES, NECTARINES & PERSIMMONS. Each has a very particular way to be pruned. Check reliable information on how it should be done.



Persimmons, when trimmed should also be defoliated (remove the leaves either by hand or using small clippers), then fertilize with a balanced preferably organic 6-6-6 or 10-10-10 until the first leaves are pushing. If persimmons are fertilized when the leaves are pushing, it will signal the plant to either not flower or should the fruit set, it probably will abort. Figs are pruned in February or when the new growth is starting to show.

MANGOS WOW they are blooming! What a sight to look at a mango tree covered with flowers. Now is the time to fertilize with either 0-0-18 because it has a package of minors including iron which mangos need. 0-0-22 is OK but not ideal. Both are available at Helena Fertilizer Company in Immokalee. Fish out the water bottles again to hang in the mango tree. An example will be shown at the January meeting. Powdery Mildew can be a problem on the flowers especially if the mornings have a heavy dew or it actually rains. Powdery Mildew looks like white powder on each tiny flower and so if the fungus is heavy it will destroy the whole panicle. NOW - some teaching recommends to spray with copper. Liquid copper might seem the easy way to spray the flowers, from our experience LONG ago, it resulted in the fruit aborting. Powdered copper can be used; we prefer powdered Sulphur or SAFERSOAP which would be easier to find. Always follow exact instructions.

COLD PROTECTION Yes, it has been unusually warm for this time of year, BUT, be prepared! **SO** if a really cold night is coming, watering at the highest temp of the day (each zone 20 minutes is enough). Cover the trees if you can, especially those that suffer at 40F **NEVER USE PLASTIC**. re the cover, have the seam on the south east side, because cold wind will come from the N to NW. If its a really strong 'noreaster' then check afterwards for salt on the leaves, especially on Lychees and Jaboticabas and Jak Fruit. If you see the salt glisten on the leaves, hose the tree gently, no need for soap or chemicals.

ENJOY THE BLESSINGS OF YOUR FRUIT TREES, if you have an abundance, HELPS OUTREACH on J&C Blvd. would be very glad to receive your fruit, also the food bank in Bonita.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH:

We are all familiar with Caprese Salad, an Italian staple enjoyed with beautiful ripe homegrown tomatoes, buffalo mozzarella and fresh basil. This recipe goes outside the box by substituting carambolas or starfruit for the tomatoes. The recipe as written makes quite a large platter so feel free to adjust the amounts to your needs. It was created by Silvia Riedel, Atlanta Chapter of LDEI and found on the web site Tropical Fruit Growers at www.tropicalfruitgrowers.com. Enjoy!

recipe:

CARAMBOLA CAPRESE



5 carambolas

3 fresh Buffalo Mozzarella balls (8 oz. each)

Extra Virgin Olive Oil

1 bunch fresh basil

3 Tbsp. Balsamic vinegar

Salt and fresh ground black pepper

Slice carambolas into star shapes. Slice mozzarella. Season both with salt. Arrange alternately on white serving platter. Chiffonade basil leaves and sprinkle over carambolas. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Add fresh ground black pepper to taste.

CLUB NOTES



Easiest Plants to Grow in Southwest Florida

Most plants selected to be grown locally are plants brought in from other climates from other sections of the country or even other countries. Tomatoes are a good example of a fruit which is relatively difficult to grow here. It has been transplanted here from South America to Europe to northern United States to our area for commercial reasons, certainly not for ease of growth. It turns out some of the best and easiest plants to grow here come from tropical or arid climates similar to ours but not commonly found in American grocery stores.

Cassava or **Yuca** (Spanish) is a tuber common in Central America, South America, Caribbean and Africa as a staple source of starch. Americans only know it as the basis for Tapioca. It does well in our sand, our wet summers and dry winters. The same goes for **Chaya**, or Tree Spinach. Both love our mixed hot climate and both grow easily by just burying a cutting and walking away. Both have a secret ingredient that assures bugs and disease never touch them. **Cyanide!**

Two staples of the tropical world that contain cyanide which even the bugs know better than to approach. Cassava tubers do not have the chemical but their leaves do. Boiling the leaves of either removes the cyanide and problem solved. The plant provided its own insecticide naturally.

Moringa doesn't have any cyanide but grows easily from seeds or cuttings locally.

Amaranth is commonly found here as pig weed but seed is available for both a grain version and one's that grow nice, large leafy versions which rival spinach (which doesn't like our climate) for taste.

Other Florida friendly greens are **Collards, Edible Hibiscus, Surinam, Okinawa, Brazilian and Longevity Spinaches**

most of which can be found right now at the nursery on Immokalee

Road. **Cranberry Hibiscus** adds color to your salad but is invasive (aka "grows like mad").



Club Tour of Dr. Steve Brady's Fruit Grove on Saturday Morning, January 14th

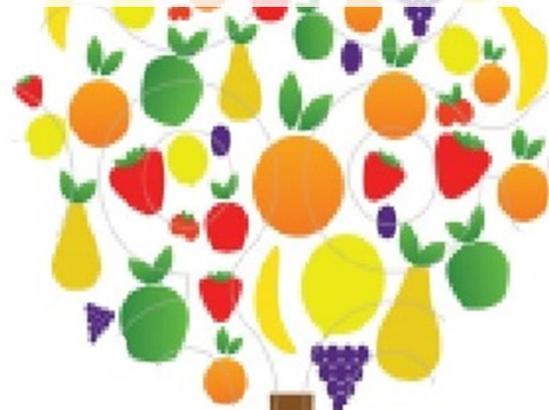
The tour scheduled for last fall that had to be cancelled has been rescheduled for January 14th. Dr. Brady is a world class fruit hunter whose local collection includes 900 plants on 2 acres in South Naples. The tour is limited to 15 with preference given first to those who were signed up for the fall tour. Space is available, so see Rodger Taylor by the end of our January 9th meeting for time and place to meet.



Next Tree Sale is February 18th at Freedom Park.

Collier Fruit Growers, Inc. FRUIT TREE SALE

Saturday, February 18, 2017



AT FREEDOM PARK
1515 GOLDEN GATE PKWY.
NAPLES, FL

9:00am - 2:00pm
MANY VARIETIES, SIZES, AND
PRICING TO MEET YOUR NEED
AND BUDGET.

COME EARLY FOR THE BEST
CHOICE BEFORE THE
INVENTORY IS SOLD.



Collier Fruit Growers, Inc. is a 501c3 corporation

Collier Fruit Growers Inc.
c/o Jan-Marie Etzel
8768 Ibis Cove Circle
Naples, FL 34119

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FRUIT NEWS

February meeting is February 13th, the 2nd Monday due to Federal Holiday.

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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www.collierfruit.org

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