

MANATEE RARE FRUIT NEWS

Manatee Rare Fruit Council

December 2007

Bleeps from the “Veep” (Abe Epstein):

Most folks have, at best, a rather hazy idea of what a virus is and how it functions - so, silly me, I thought that I would attempt to present a brief, if somewhat simplistic, explanation on the subject. There have been endless arguments on whether these things are really living entities, since viruses possess none of the usual physiological systems associated with other biological organisms such as plants, bacteria, animals, etc. Further, some argue that they are really chemical agents that somehow replicate in their living hosts. As is often the case with these kinds of arguments - both sides are a little bit right, and also a little bit wrong at the same time.

Basically, the virus particle is very small (we need an electron microscope that can deliver magnifications of 50,000 diameters or more, in order to really see it). It consists of a nucleic acid strand (most are DNA, but there are some that are RNA) enclosed in a protective protein coat. The shape varies depending on the specific virus. Most of the “Mozaic” viruses are flexuous rods, other virus particles are “icosahedrons” resembling short, geodesic rods or balls, one group, the “Gemini” viruses, occur as pairs.

As mentioned above, they have no physiological machinery, lack any of the usual life processes such as respiration, etc, and have no means of locomotion. They are completely dependant upon their vectors for transport and upon their host organisms for all of their other life processes. Upon being inserted into a compatible host, the coat protein of the virus is stripped away and the nucleic acid strand is moved to the host’s nucleus where it is inserted onto the host’s chromasome in specific locations where the viral DNA silences the host’s DNA, and the host then procedes to produce viral proteins instead of its own normal proteins. This eventually results in more copies of the infecting virus which can then be picked up by a suitable vector (aphids, leaf hoppers, white flies etc). This entire process, from removal of the viral protein coat through location of the virus in the host genome is mediated by the “Compatible” host.

Not only are there specificities of host, often there are also specificities of vector. However, Tobacco Mozaic has a wide host range, including most of the solanacious plants as well as a broad range of vectors, including even human hands. Tomato growers forbid smokers on their premises because the virus can transfer from the tobacco to the tomato via the smokers hands. Aphids are very efficient vectors of Tobacco Mozaic. The virus particles adhere to the insects feeding probe and can then be transferred to the next plant visited by that aphid. In some virus - vector associations, the virus particles must move from the insect’s mouth parts, through its body and accumulate in the insects salivary glands to be injected into the next plant. There is still much that isn’t known about many of the plant - virus interrelationships, but we keep chipping away at them.

This is probably my last “bleep” as your “Veep”. Wish the next “Veep” good luck.

Abe

The Internet Adventure:

The Clubs web site: <http://www.mrfc.org/>

Dave’s Garden Tropical Fruit Forum: <http://davesgarden.com/community/forums/f/tropicalfruit/all>

Gardenweb’s Tropical Fruit Forum: <http://forums.gardenweb.com/forums/tropicalfruits>

Sandy Engel's Pureed Red Beet Chocolate Cake (For the diabetic/healthy diet.)

Use a 9 inch square pan and if you use a larger pan make sure it is not round. If you use a 14 X 20 inch pan, you'll have to make the batter 3 times, but not together!!!!

Batter

- Non-stick cooking spray. Pam is the best.
- 1 cup firmly packed, light or dark brown Splenda sugar --- minus 2 table spoons, (I found Splenda to be too sweet, so I cut it down by 2 tablespoons
- 1/4 cup of canola, vegetable oil, or soft tub margarine

Spread

- 1 large egg
- 2 large egg whites
- 3 ounces of unsweetened chocolate melted and cooled
- 1/2 cup pureed beets
- 1/2 cup low-fat (1%) buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt or no salt (Which I used on cake at the last meeting)

Cream Cheese Frosting

- 1 - 8 ounce package reduced-fat cream cheese
 - 3/4 cup confectioners sugar
 - 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
 - 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Coat a 9 inch or the 14 x 20 inch baking pan with cooking spray.
 2. Puree the beets, if using fresh beets, and steam until tender. Then put in blender and puree until completely pureed.
 3. In a large mixing bowl or the bowl of an electric mixer (I use the super large bowl as the cocoa really flies everywhere, but I am messy) beat the brown sugar with the oil or margarine until creamy. Then add the whole egg and the egg white one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in the melted chocolate, beet puree, buttermilk and vanilla.
 4. Add the flour, baking soda, and salt and beat until smooth. Then pour the batter into the pan and (If you are doubling or tripling make the batter again and pour each time in pan). Bake until toothpick comes out clean when inserted into the center usually 35 - 40 minutes. If using the 14 x 20 pan bake for 50 minutes and turn pan half way through the cooking.
 5. Let cake cool for 5 minutes in the pan before turning out onto a rack to allow to completely cool.
 6. Meanwhile make the frosting. Beat the cream cheese with the confectioner's sugar, cocoa powder, and vanilla until smooth. Slice the cake in half horizontally then spread the frosting over the bottom layer and then put the top half on that. Then spread the frosting over the whole cake.
 7. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

November Tasting Table

Donor

Food Item Donated

Donor

Food Item Donated

Sandy Miller
Don Pon
Bud & Mary Connett
Suzi Hughes
Norma Troy
Scott Peterson
Sandy Engel
Sally Lee

Apple Pie
Navel OJ
Donut Holes
Oatmeal Cherry Cookies
Fried Bananas
Cactus Pear
Pureed Beet/Chocolate Cake
Strawberry Velvet Cake

Ken Miller
Dorothy Pon
Mary Lohn
Roberta Harris
Betty Kearns
Chelly Kramer
Sally Lee

Mango Nectar
Cake
Pineapple Cake
Chocolate Chip Cookies
Pumpkin Bars
Rolls
Jack Fruit

MRFC November 12th 2007 Meeting

Those Present: 61 plus 5 guests.
Called to Order: 7:08 PM
Secretary Report: Minutes from last meeting were accepted as printed
Treasurer report: The statement balance was \$10,568.

OLD BUSINESS:

A new membership list was distributed and members were requested to not distribute the list outside our club. It included 98 families and additional copies may be secured from the internet, by request.

The Manatee County Tropical Park was discussed and members are invited to make suggestions or donate any appropriate trees and plants. Items that are planted will have the plant name and donor on a small sign by the item. A meeting at the Park will be held November 20th at 6:00 PM to plan the design and planting and members interested in assisting the committee should contact Michael Jester.

The Scholarship Program was discussed and it will be publicized by the appropriate community organizations after the first of the year.

The slate submitted by the Nominating Committee for 2008 Council officers, as published in the October Newsletter, were accepted and closed since no additional nominations were made from the floor. The election will be held at our December meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Scott Peterson suggested several possible bus trips for next year, including trips to Fairchild Tropical Gardens, the Fruit and Spice Park, Williams Farm at Homestead and ECCO in Ft. Myers. Details of a February trip will be discussed at our next meeting.

The Holiday Dinner will be held at our next meeting which will start at 7:00 PM and the club will pay for the turkeys and ham that several members will bring. Others should bring a covered dish and a personal dinner setting if desired. A gift exchange will be held for those who are interested with a suggested value of \$15.

A Life Membership was proposed for Farrell Baker and the suggestion was tabled for discussion at the January Meeting.

Spencer Salsler conducted the Plant Raffle.

SPEAKERS:

Ray Jones spoke on the Fruits of Brazil.

ADJOURNMENT:

To the Tasting Table at 8:15 PM.

This and That

Hello all Manatee Rare Fruit Club Members:

It's hard to believe the holiday season is upon us already. In the newsletter I have listed a few Christmas/Holiday celebrations at some gardens. Diane and I went to Cypress Gardens last weekend and had a wonderful time at their "Old-Fashioned Christmas". The gardens were all decorated and most of the shows were geared towards a Christmas theme. So check it out.

The Nominated Officers are.....

For President is Pete Kearns, Vice President is Scott Peterson, Secretary is Larry Rued and Treasurer is Pete Robertson. Please greet our new officers and be sure to thank them for serving. Also don't forget to thank last years officers for there hard work over the year (many who server multiple terms). See you at the party!

As always your input is still requested... This newsletter, just like the club, is at its best when all the members get involved. If you have suggestions or have found a gardening product, web site, etc., that you think will be of interest to other Club Members, or know of an appropriate community event, please feel free to contact me for its inclusion in the newsletter. Please have all information to me no later than the 20th of the preceding month. The best way to reach me is through my email at dwallace@ewol.com, but I can also be reached at 756-2276.

Dale

MRFC Calendar	
Monday, December 10, 2007 6:30 p.m.	Board meeting at the County Fairgrounds in Palmetto.
Monday December 10, 2007 7:00 p.m.	Our regular monthly meeting at the County Fairgrounds in Palmetto. There will be no speaker since this is our annual Christmas Party.
Monday, January 14, 2008 6:30 p.m.	Board meeting at the County Fairgrounds in Palmetto.
Monday, January 14, 2008 7:00 p.m.	Our regular monthly meeting at the County Fairgrounds in Palmetto.

Community Calendar	
Thursday, December 6, 2007 10:00 a.m. To 11:00 a.m.	Florida Yards & Neighborhoods: Nine Landscape Principles – Betty Volpe, Master Gardener Advisor: As our communities have grown, there has been tremendous pressure placed upon our natural resources, such as water. Learn how you can play an important role in minimizing the potential harmful effects of urbanization on our resources through adapting environmentally friendly landscape maintenance practices. (1 hour class Venice Library 300 S. Nokomis Avenue Venice, FL 34285. Call (941) 861-5000.
Wednesday, December 12, 2007 10:00 a.m. To 12:00 p.m.	Rain Barrel Workshop. A hands-on class where participants learn about water conservation, capturing rainwater, and other Florida Yards & Neighborhoods principles. This workshop includes assembly of a rain barrel from a kit that you take home and use to capture rainfall and reduce runoff. Cost for this workshop is \$40.00, make check payable to "Friends of Extension." Please register and pay at least one week in advance. Minimum workshop size is required; workshop sizes are limited. Manatee Extension Office 1303 17th Street W, Palmetto. Call Cheryl at 941-722-4524 or 941-742-5986.
Friday, December 14, 2007 2:00 p.m. To 3:00 p.m.	Florida Yards & Neighborhoods: Nine Landscape Principles. - Jo Hanson, Master Gardener Advisor. As our communities have grown, there has been tremendous pressure placed upon our natural resources, such as water. Learn how you can play an important role in minimizing the potential harmful effects of urbanization on our resources through adapting environmentally friendly landscape maintenance practices. (1 hour class). Gulf Gate Library 7112 Curtiss Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34231. Call (941) 861-5000
Monday, December 17, 2007 2:00 p.m. To 3:00 p.m.	Florida Yards & Neighborhoods: Nine Landscape Principles. – Lea Hall, Master Gardener Advisor. As our communities have grown, there has been tremendous pressure placed upon our natural resources, such as water. Learn how you can play an important role in minimizing the potential harmful effects of urbanization on our resources through adapting environmentally friendly landscape maintenance practices. (1 hour class). Fruitville Library 100 Coburn Road Sarasota, FL ,34240. Call (941) 861-5000
Saturday, January 12, 2008 10:00 a.m. To 11:30 a.m.	Pruning Basics: January is a good time in Florida to prune many of our shrubs and trees. Join Extension Agent Pam Brown to learn the fine points of pruning to enhance the look and health of your landscape. This is a free class. Pinellas County Extension 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo, Florida 33774-3602. Call 727-582-2673
Saturday, January 12, 2008 10:00 a.m. To 11:00 a.m.	Veggie Tales: Learn how to grow your own vegetables. Get you garden ready for the spring season. Plant a seed for your garden. This is a free class. Pinellas County Extension & Florida Botanical Gardens 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo, Florida 33774-3602. Call 727-582-2673

Christmas & Holiday Garden's Celebrations

Bok Towers:

1151 Tower Blvd.
Lake Wales, FL 33853
863-676-1408

Christmas at Pinewood: A Jolly, Jazzy Holiday Home Tour: November 23 – January 1, 2008

Christmas at Pinewood is a holiday celebration for the whole family. It features a traditional holiday home tour along with a benefit party, concerts, family days, Santa visits and Shop at Bok night events. Pinewood Estate's 1930s Mediterranean Revival mansion is the highlight of the annual event. The home tour will showcase stunning holiday décor that accentuates the mansion's antique furnishings and architectural elements.

Their hours are Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. & Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Visit their web site at <http://www.boksanctuary.org> for details.

Selby Gardens

811 South Palm Avenue
Sarasota, FL 34236
941-366-5731

Lights in Bloom" – A Tropical Celebration

There will be a spectacular display of colorful lights. The "Light's in Bloom" will have a wide range of entertainment such as swing dancers, ballerinas, choirs, school groups, Circus Sarasota clowns and local trios and jazz quartets.

Inside the mansion there will be displays of holiday trees from the culture of Japan, Sweden, France, and the Latino community. There will as be trees decorated by the Founders Club, the Selby Gardens Nature Printers, and the Ikebana Society. The Café and Garden Shops will open nightly, and children and families will enjoy activities such as cookie decorating, face painting, storytelling, a secret garden, an interactive giant picture book, and a train display by Sarasota Model Railroad Club.

Selby Lights in Bloom will be open from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., December 12-16, 19-23, and the 26-30. Visit their web site at <http://www.selby.org/> for details.

Florida Botanical Gardens

12520 Ulmerton Road
Largo, FL 33774
727-582-2100

The Illuminated Gardens

November 22, 2007 – January 3, 2008

Free - Stroll through the Florida Botanical Gardens free brilliant display of more than 425,000 holiday lights each night through New Year's Day. Start a family tradition of welcoming in the holiday season in style! Visit their web site at <http://www.flbg.org> for details.

Cypress Gardens Adventure Park

6000 Cypress Gardens Blvd.
Winter Haven, FL 33884
863-324-2111

"An Old-Fashioned Christmas"

There is an 80 foot Christmas tree and millions of twinkling lights and many of the park's original Christmas displays provide a brilliant backdrop for the event. There will be strolling carolers and musicians, as well as seasonal shows. Be sure to see "An Old-Fashioned Christmas on Ice," a skating spectacular. The 25 minute-production promises to be a delightful display of power and grace, full of leaps and spins, set to a traditional holiday soundtrack.

The day are November 16, 17, 23, 24, 30, December 1-30 and closed Christmas Day. Visit their web site at <http://www.cypressgardens.com> for details.

The Tamarind

By Gene Joyner, Extension Agent - Palm Beach County Cooperative Extension Service

The tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*) is an evergreen slow growing tree that eventually can reach heights of over 50 feet. Thought to be a native of tropical Africa it is found throughout most tropical regions of the world and also subtropical areas as well. Trees do well on a wide variety of soils, but seem to do best on semi-arid regions. The trees are able to tolerate high rainfall areas only if the soil is well drained.

The growth habit of the tree is usually very open with large spreading limbs with a weeping habit of growth. Each compound leaf has 10 to 20 half inch long leaflets and these are carried the year round. Yellow and red colored flowers about one inch in diameter are borne usually in the spring and the fruit ripens in Florida during the early summer months.

The fruit is a straight or curved brown pod about 3 to 8 inches in length and about one inch in width. The pulp inside is a rich golden brown or cinnamon brown with large seeds. At maturity the thick dark colored pulp shrinks from the shell which then becomes very brittle and within a short time fruits will drop to the ground.

Fruit is normally consumed fresh, but there are many other uses for the fruit as well and it can be used in chutneys or curries and is used in many commercial products as well. The pulp makes an excellent drink or sauces for use in cooking with various meats. The acid pulp is sweet enough to be eaten fresh and there are sweet varieties as well.

Trees are easily propagated by seed and a few varieties are grafted. Trees have few pest problems and seem to do well anywhere they are planted. Trees are reported to be very wind tolerant, too, so they don't tend to uproot as easily in hurricanes or high winds as other tropical fruits. Growth rates on tamarinds generally are about 3 to 4 feet a year.

November's Garden Calendar

By Gene Joyner, Extension Agent - Palm Beach County Cooperative Extension Service

At the end of this month look out for possibility of cold weather damage since we've had severe freezes in past years as early as mid December.

Don't do anything to plantings to encourage a lot of tender growth coming out since this would be more adversely impacted by low temperatures. Trees should be best left dormant so don't do any heavy fertilizing or applying large amounts of water.

Weeds can still be a problem this time of year and there are many cool season weeds that are making their appearance at this time. Use mulches wherever practical around trees several feet in diameter to keep weeds from offering a lot of competition. This is especially important for small trees.

If you want to do propagation this time of year, grafting and budding can still be done with certain varieties, but many people prefer to wait until late February when we start our spring growing cycle for most active propagation.

If you have questions about winter activities in your landscape, check with fellow members at monthly meetings or contact your local county Extension office for free advice.

Board & Committee Chair 2007

President	Jon Goings (941-723-9795) email: j.jonbirgittegoings@verizon.net
Vice President	Abe Epstein (941-798-8806) email: ahepstein10@aol.com
Secretary	Bud Connett (941-798-8935) email: buddymar@juno.com
Treasurer	Mary Gayle Martin (941-350-8599) email: mgtt@netzero.net
Speaker Chairman	Ray Jones (941-729-5985) email: raycat2@verizon.net
Tree Sale Chairman	Betty Kearns (941-723-9879) BKearns644@aol.com & Pete Ray (941-776-0222) pray0222@verizon.net
Plant Raffle	Spencer Salsler (813-634-8253) email: palm.man@verizon.net
Membership	Larry Rued (941-722-9550) email: presby1368z@yahoo.com
Tasting Table	Mike McCallister email: mikey2810_2000@yahoo.com (941-720-2288) and Farrell Baker
T-Shirt Sales	Sandy Engel (914-776-2195) email: KENGEL4@tampabay.rr.com
Newsletter	Dale Wallace (941-756-2276) email: dwallace@ewol.com

November Plant Raffle

Donor

Mary Gayle Martin
 Mary Gayle Martin
 Steve Lohn
 Walt Yoblonski
 Walt Yoblonski
 Pete Kearns
 Karen Carpenter
 Karen Carpenter
 Pete Ray
 R.E. Whigham
 Birgette Runge-Goings
 Norma Troy
 Norma Troy
 Sally Lee
 Pete Robinson
 Kim Begin
 Dale Wallace
 Dale Wallace

Plant

Neem Tree
 Neem Tree
 Ponderosa Lemon Fruit
 Pink Guava
 Pink Guava
 GPS
 Papaya
 Loquat
 Black Sapote
 Red Banana
 Pineapple
 Hawaiian Papaya
 Hawaiian Papaya
 Avocado Fruit
 Papaya
 Plumaria
 Pink Guava
 Pink Guava

Winner

Cass Robertson
 Scott Peterson
 Sam Ho
 Scott McKennin
 Dorothy Pon
 Dale Wallace
 Robert Hughes
 Dan LaValley
 Pete Robertson
 Don Pon
 Ruth Vent
 Dorothy Pon
 Scott Peterson
 Mary Gayle Martin
 ?
 Sam Ho
 Dorothy Pon
 ?

MANATEE COUNTY CHAPTER OF RFCI STATED OBJECT OF ORGANIZATION:

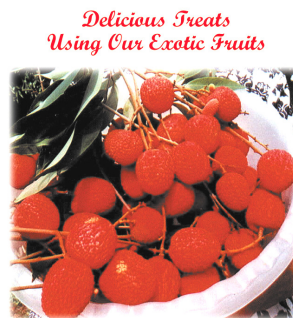
To be an active, non-profit organization dedicated to the following objectives:

To introduce, propagate, and distribute the many rare tropical and sub-tropical fruits grown throughout the world; to educate its members and the public as to the merits of these plants; to encourage and extend their cultivation.

The Manatee Rare Fruit Council meets the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m., usually at the Harlee Auditorium in the Manatee County Fairgrounds next to the Agricultural Extension Office on 17th Street, Palmetto. Most months feature a knowledgeable speaker. Visitors and guests are welcome and encouraged. Membership is \$15 annually per family.

We still have plenty of Club Recipe books available. They make terrific Christmas gifts.

They are only \$15.00, so plan to pick up a copy at the monthly meeting.



*Manatee Rare
Fruit Council*

E.C.C.O.

Commercial All Purpose

Colloidal Cleaner

Safe for you... safe for your plants

\$15/Quart

941-966-4377

Debra Sims

\$35/Gallon

crux@comcast.net

Nokomis

Donna & Dennis Gretton

D & D Growers

*Herbs, Butterfly Plants,
Perennials, Ornamentals, Grasses*

P.O. Box 951

Lithia, FL 33547

813-716-5038

E-Mail danddg@att.net

Jon Goings has the Fruitlizer in!!! Please call Jon at 723-9795 to arrange pick up ASAP....

Reminder from Mary Gayle Martin:

It has been a pleasure serving our club for the last year as treasurer and my best wishes for your new incoming treasurer Pete Robertson.

Dues are now due for the upcoming 2008. Please remember to bring a check for your renewal for \$15 made out to MRFC at our next meeting – our Christmas Dinner. If you would like to be on our e-mail list, please include it on your check.

Thank you

First Class Mail



Manatee County Chapter
P.O. Box 1656
Bradenton, FL 34206-1656