



December 2017 – Macadamia



Who we are and 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 tropical and subtropical fruiting 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.

Meetings: Regular membership meetings that include an educational program are held the **second** Tuesday of each month. Meetings begin with a tasting table at 6:45 PM followed by a program at 7:15 PM, at the First United Methodist Church, 27690 Shriver Avenue, Bonita Springs. The meetings are held in the "Fellowship Hall" meeting room.

Workshops: Workshops (monthly discussions) are held on the **fourth** Tuesday of each month. This open format encourages discussion and sharing of fruits and information. Bring in your fruits, plants, seeds, leaves, insects, photos, recipes, etc. This is a great chance to get answers to specific questions, and there always seems to be a local expert on hand! The workshops begin at 7pm and are also held at the First United Methodist Church, 27690 Shriver Avenue, Bonita Springs, in the "Fellowship Hall" meeting room.

Directions:

From the intersection of Old 41 Road and Bonita Beach Road SE, proceed north to Dean Street. Turn right on Dean St. and go two blocks to Shriver, then turn left on Shriver and go two blocks to the Methodist Church. Free parking on both sides of the street. Shriver is parallel to Old 41, two blocks East.

Tree sale: An annual spring tree sale at Riverside Park in downtown Bonita Springs raises revenue for educational programs for club members and other related purposes of the club.

Trips: The club occasionally organizes trips and tours of other organizations that share our interests. The IFAS Experimental Station, the Fruit and Spice Park, and the Fairchild Nursery Farm are examples of our recent excursions.

Membership:

Dues are \$15 per individual, \$25 per household per year. Nametags, if needed, are \$6 each. Send checks to: PO Box 367791, Bonita Springs, FL 34136, or bring to any regularly scheduled meeting.

Newsletter: This newsletter is available to anyone via website and email, and to paid members via post office mail upon request.

Officers and Board of Directors:

President: Suzy Valentine

Vice President: Kathy Pflugrad

Secretary: Anna Bailey

Treasurer: Victoria Strickland

Asst. Treasurer: Melrose John

Director: Berto Silva

Director: Crafton Clift

Director: Rickford John

Email us at Info@BonitaSpringsTropicalFruitClub.com.

December Christmas Party



**Our annual Christmas party
is planned for
Tuesday evening,
December 12.**

This year we will do things a bit differently. Instead of a sit down hot meal, served buffet style with a long line, we will have a “cocktail party” set up all around the room. Foods will be grouped on various tables, by type. Hors d’oeuvres, salads, hot and cold meats, cheeses, breads, condiments, relishes, casseroles, desserts, etc. The club will provide plates, cutlery, etc., as well as hot

meatballs and cold sliced turkey and several different breads/rolls. Place your offering on an appropriate table (please provide a sign card with name and contents of the dish, as well as a serving spoon if required), and help yourself to anything that appeals! One table will be for Vegetarian and Vegan dishes. There will be chairs scattered around the room, and we plan to put some tables and chairs outside as well.

The club will also provide drinks—one or two kinds of punch, iced tea, and water.

We can only set up the room at 5:30, so please plan to arrive just before 6 o’clock. No Early Birds! (Unless you want to help set up. If so, call Suzy at 992 0113)

Calendar of Club Events

12/12 Tuesday - Christmas Party 6-8 PM - details above

12/26 Tuesday - No Workshop

1/9 Tuesday - Regular Meeting with Hospitality beginning at 6:45 PM,
Business & Election 7 PM,

followed by our Speaker, Tim Watkins, on “Freeze Protection & Recovery”

1/23 Tuesday - Workshop Meeting 7:00 PM

1/27 Saturday - Annual Tree Sale Riverside Park, 8 AM – 2 PM.

Announcements:

2018 CLUB OFFICERS We need to continue our club's growth and direction, and are looking for members to step forward and help lead for the coming year. We have received some names, and our Board of Directors (Nominating Committee) is hoping to hear from more of you. If you are willing to serve our club next year, or have any questions about the duties, please contact Suzy Valentine (239-992-0113) or email unosuzy@gmail.com.

Election will be by ballot at the January General Meeting. The offices are President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and two Directors. Our current Secretary and Treasurer are willing to continue for another year, providing continuity to our Board, and Director Berto Silva has one more year of his term.

WE ARE GRATEFUL for all who share your harvests at club meetings. Your generosity enriches the experience of each attendee. It's a special treat to taste fruits from fellow members' trees. Please continue to bring fruit samples and other treats prepared and ready to serve.

Chores Outdoors: December Edition By David & Jenny Burd

PRUNING: Resist all pruning in December.

MANGO FLOWERING: If you see flowers/panicles on your mango trees, it's time to apply only 0-0-22 out around the dripline.

LYCHEES & LONGANS: To encourage flowering it is really important to cut off all water *now* until the flowers show.

COLD PROTECTION: *Watch the forecasts.* If frost is predicted, depending where you live--especially east of I-75--turn on your watering system at the warmest time of the day; 20 minutes will be enough. Remember some fruit trees (i.e. soursops) drop their leaves and fruit at 40 F or lower, so they should have a warm wrap, *not* plastic!

MIRACLE FRUIT: Try applying cotton seed meal around your miracle fruit bushes to encourage fruiting. It is sold at feed stores. Use the same amount as you would apply for regular fertilizer. Note the recommended fertilizer for miracle fruit is the same as for citrus (10-2-10 or 6-4-6). Remember to check the chlorine percentage on the citrus fertilizer bag; it should have no more than 4% chlorine. This turns to salt and makes for very unhappy plants.

Everyone make sure to give a big thanks to David and Jenny Burd for providing us our *Chores Outdoors This Month* tips for each month. Thanks guys.

Fruit of the Month — Macadamia

Scientific Name: *Macadamia spp.*

Family: Proteaceae

Macadamia nuts are viewed by many as a luxury food item, but until about 1850 they were a wild edible food known only to the aboriginal people of eastern Australian rainforests. Few other food crops have been domesticated so recently. Today, the macadamia is the only native Australian plant grown for commercial food production.

Two species produce edible nuts. *M. integrifolia* is the smooth-shell type preferred by Hawaiian growers for its high oil content; *M. tetraphylla*, the rough-shell type, produces a nut with a high carbohydrate content. The two species hybridize if grown in close proximity.

Both species are true subtropicals, and will grow to about 35 feet tall in Florida. They are attractive, relatively symmetrical, and densely foliated with leathery evergreen leaves, making them an attractive landscape specimen. Attractive blossoms emerge in the spring, generally white for the smooth-shell cultivars, and pink for trees that produce the pebbly-surfaced “rough-shell” nuts. Though macadamias are considered low maintenance, they benefit from irrigation during dry season and from proper fertilization. Mature trees will tolerate brief frosts in the mid to upper 20's, and do best in full sun. Young trees need protection from frosts and damaging winds. In Florida, the trees are generally free of pests and disease.

The most popular macadamia cultivars are ‘Dana White’ known for its productivity; ‘Beaumont,’ with a long harvest season; and ‘Arkin Papershell’ producing easy-to-crack nuts. ‘Aussie Bush’ is more recently introduced, but shows promise for excellent productivity and is distinguished for its bushy growth habit.

One reason macadamias have a luxury price tag is the length of time between planting and production. It may take five years to harvest a small crop; it takes twelve to fifteen years to reach full production. In Florida, full production averages about 25 pounds of in-shell nuts per tree per year—less than a fourth of typical production in Hawaii, unfortunately. Planting two or more cultivars together is said to increase production. Fortunately, the trees are long-lived and may yield crops for sixty or more years.

If you have the luxury of time, and dream of harvesting a luxury food from your own backyard, consider planting a macadamia tree.

Using Macadamia

The spherical nuts are about an inch in diameter, with a rich flavorful kernel enclosed in a remarkably hard shell. After harvest, let the nuts dry out in the shade for a couple of weeks. Then they can be opened with a PVC cutter or roasted in the shell. Roasting can be done on a tray at 170 degrees for several hours or 300 degrees for 15 minutes. Afterward, turn the oven off and allow nuts to cool before removing them from the oven. This process makes them easier to crack.

Macadamia nuts can be eaten out of hand either raw or roasted. Substitute them for other nuts in your favorite recipes. They are also excellent when chopped and added to cookies, breads, cakes, fruit dishes, salads, stir fries, or your morning oatmeal. An excellent “macadamia butter” can be made by grinding the nuts in a food processor; use this as a spread on toast or crackers.

Remember that nature has put these rich nuts in a hard shell for a reason. They are high fat and high calorie, so enjoy them sparingly.



Macadamia Blossoms



Macadamia Nuts – Green

Photos courtesy of Wikipedia

Cover Photo courtesy of SeedGuides.info