



October 2016 – Atemoya



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.

Tree sale: 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 \$20 per person for new members, and \$15 per person for renewals. 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: Kathy Pflugrad

Vice President: Suzy Valentine

Secretary: Denise Houghtaling & Adrienne Diaz

Treasurer: Melrose John

Director: Berto Silva

Director: Crafton Clift

Director: Rickford John

Past President: Madeline Bohannon

Email us at Info@BonitaSpringsTropicalFruitClub.com.

Guest Speaker for October:



Our speaker on October 11 will be **Danny Blank** of **Twelve Seasons Farm** where he and his family raise a wide variety of fruits and vegetables.

Prior to becoming a full time grower, he spent 15 years at ECHO, primarily as farm manager. Danny has traveled the tropics extensively to assist farmers and aid personnel, participate in conferences related to smallholder farming, and to teach courses on tropical farming. In 2012 he earned his MSc in Sustainable Agriculture and Integrated Watershed Management.

Danny's topic will be "Planning & Planting for a Year Round Harvest." This is the goal upon which his own farm was established, so come and learn his secrets for monthly harvests.

Announcements:

Fulfilling Opportunities—Find fulfillment in giving back! Can you give out name tags and door prize tickets at meetings, help plan our Christmas party, serve on the finance committee to formulate a budget, collect membership dues in the treasurer's absence, help serve refreshments, mentor new members, assist with our Feb. 25 tree sale? We need your skills. Email info@BonitaSpringsTropicalFruitClub.com or contact a club officer.

Calendar of Events

- 10/11 Tue. – Regular Meeting, 6:45 PM. Speaker: Danny Blank
- 10/25 Tue. – Workshop Meeting, 7 PM
- 11/8 Tue. – Regular Meeting, 6:45 PM. Speaker: to be announced
- 11/22 Tue. – Workshop Meeting, 7 PM
- 12/13 Tue. – Christmas Party, time to be announced

Message from the President

If you have several acres in which to pursue your passion for fruit trees, count your blessings! If, like most in SWFL, you have limited space to work with—this can be a blessing in disguise. Smaller spaces force you to choose varieties and cultivars wisely. When there's room only for the healthiest, tastiest, and most productive fruits, this pays off at harvest time.

Here are some varieties to consider if your fruit growing space is limited to a small yard or to containers. (Container-friendly cultivars are in **bold**.)

Atemoya: 'Geffner' requires no hand pollination and produces delicious fruit even when severely pruned each spring.

Avocado: '**Day**' is a dwarf variety with quality fruit.

Banana: '**Truly Tiny**,' and '**Dwarf Cavendish**,' are among the best for containers. 'Nam Weh' (aka 'Namwa') is productive, disease resistant, a consistent heavy bearer and serves as a privacy planting.

Barbados Cherry: '**Florida Sweet**' is a superior tasting cultivar. All varieties can be kept in a pot or trimmed in compact form.

Canistel: Multiple cultivars are available. These do well in poor soil and are known to fruit in a 30 gallon container.

Carambola: '**Dwarf Hawaiian**' is the smallest cultivar, though 'Sri Kembangan' and 'Kary' have excellent fruit and can be kept pruned.

Citrus: '**Meyer Lemon**' and '**Key Limequat**' may be container grown in screened lanais where they are less likely to be infected with citrus greening. 'Temple Orange' is compact, tasty, and less susceptible to greening than other oranges.

Grumichama: Specified cultivars are not usually available, but both purple and yellow varieties will grow in containers and small spaces. They do fine in partial shade.

Jaboticaba: '**Sabah**,' '**Red Jaboticaba**,' '**Coronato de Restinga**,' and '**Grimal**' are good varieties.

Mango: '**Pickering**,' '**Cogshall**,' '**Carrie**' and '**Glenn**' are a few of the tastiest compact "condo" mango cultivars. There are many others.

Miracle Fruit: Specified cultivars are not available. These do best in containers with partial shade.

Mulberry: '**Dwarf Everbearing**,' '**Issai**,' and 'Ishar' are shrub-like rather than large trees.

Papaya: 'Red Lady,' 'Known You,' and '**Sunrise Solo**' are tasty choices.

Pineapple: Many varieties exist; those with smooth (rather than barbed) leaf edges are best near walkways.

Sapodilla: '**Silas Wood**,' and '**Makok**,' have a reputation for being somewhat compact.

For more information on container growing see

www.tropicalfruitnursery.com/container-trees.shtml

Chores Outdoors: October Edition

By David & Jenny Burd

MANGOS: No pruning. If you haven't already fertilized, use 0-0-18 or 0-0-22 out by the dripline. Helena Chemical Co. in Immokalee has a 0-0-18 that has added minor elements.

LYCHEES & LONGANS: They need to rest, so no nitrogen; maybe a light sprinkle of 0-0-18.

PAPAYAS: Late October into early November is a good time to plant papaya seeds because the trees will still be small enough to protect should we have a cold snap.

Planting Method: Select a spot where you want them to grow—NOT by a downspout or roof overhang or in a likely soggy spot—because they will die!

Plant 6 - 8 seeds in a shallow hole; cover with light sprinkle of dirt or good mulch. When they are about 12 inches tall lightly fertilize with a balanced fertilizer (e.g. 6-6-6 or even a splash of a liquid Peters 20-20-20 following directions on the bottle.) Wait for the flowers to show. Female trees have one main flower maybe surrounded by 1 or 2 others; male trees have a long pretty plume with multiple flowers. Remove the male plants by cutting them off low to the ground; avoid pulling them up so as not to disturb the female roots.

Note: Papaya seed can be air dried and stored in the refrigerator for up to a year. Really good seeds are sold at ECHO—maybe a wee bit expensive—or use seeds from a delicious papaya you have just eaten!



Papaya blossom, female.
Photo courtesy of Fruitscapes.

MULCH: The best mulches to use are Melaleuca or Eucalyptus; they have lots of minor elements and other goodies. Cypress mulch is mostly window dressing.

P.S. *Cool air is coming!* Yay! Yay!

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 – Atemoya

Scientific Name: *Annona cherimola* X *Annona squamosa*

Family: Annonaceae

By many, the atemoya is considered the best of the annonas to grow in Florida. It is a cross between the cherimoya, a delicious fruit of the Andes Mountains, and the sugar apple of the tropics. The result was this premium fruit with the quality flesh of a cherimoya, but the heat and humidity tolerance of the sugar apple.

The delectable atemoya is easy to grow, but rarely available to purchase. The tree rarely exceeds twenty feet high, but can easily be maintained at smaller sizes with an annual pruning in early spring as it shows signs of leaf buds after its winter dormancy. Young trees grow quickly, and bear fruit within three years. While they are not overly demanding of water and tolerate a variety of soils, they do prefer full sun and a somewhat sheltered location to protect from strong winds. While most cultivars need hand pollination, the 'Gefner' does not, and is therefore recommended.

Atemoya fruits are intensely sweet and range from 6 ounces to over a pound, with a texture similar to ripe Bartlett pears. The flavor is reminiscent of pear marinated in pineapple juice. A mature 'Gefner' may produce 100 or more fruits; harvest season is drawn out from late summer through early winter.



Atemoya close up.



Atemoya stem end, splitting open.



Atemoya grouping of three.



Atemoya Foilage and Blossom



Atemoya – young fruit.



Atemoya Tree

Recipes

Atemoyas on the Half Shell *(a delicious natural dessert)*

Clip mature atemoyas from the tree when they begin to lighten and brighten in color. Hold at room temperature until they soften, often splitting a bit at the stem end. Refrigerate *briefly* (too long will create chilling injury). Cut in half, top to bottom. Discard stem and core. Spoon the sweet white flesh into your mouth and savor each bite. Discard seeds and skin.

Atemoya photos courtesy of Kathy Pflugrad.