



September 2017 – Mamey Sapote



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.

Guest Speaker for September:

Our speaker on September 12th, 2017 will be
Dr. Steve Brady

Topic: Avocados

Steve is a retired internist who planted his first fruit seeds at age six. He's been growing and collecting tropical fruits ever since and amassed a wealth of knowledge which he gladly shares. He lives on two acres in Naples among 600 fruiting trees and plants. He specializes in truly rare fruits collected from around the world and has been a great asset on the Collections Committee of Naples Botanical Garden.



Dr. Brady will share his new presentation on “Avocados” with us. His information is sure to be timely and practical. Facing the new threat from laurel wilt, we can all use additional education on growing this popular fruit. Come expand your knowledge.

Photo compliments of Smithsonian

Calendar of Club Events

9/12 Tue. –Regular Meeting, 6:45 PM;

Speaker: Dr. Steve Brady Topic: Avocados

9/26 Tue. –Workshop Meeting, 7:00 PM

10/10 Tue. –Regular Meeting, 6:45 PM

10/24 Tue. –Workshop Meeting, 7:00 PM

Chores Outdoors: September Edition

MANGOS: If you haven't already fertilized your mango trees, NOW is the time, with 0-0-22. Why no nitrogen? Nitrogen would signal them to grow. After the fruit has been harvested, mango trees take a rest (go dormant for a while) before the cycle starts again to flower and fruit for next year. The trees will pick up enough nitrogen from weeds, etc. to encourage growth. Do selective pruning to maintain the recommended height of not more than ten feet. If the tree is 'hat-racked' it will struggle to have fruit next year.

LYCHEES & LONGANS: Your last nitrogen fertilizing of the year should be before the end of September using 6-4-6, 8-2-8, or 10-2-10.

CITRUS: BioWash and micronutrients applied on the citrus trees will help to fight psyllids and citrus greening. Fertilize citrus with the same formula used on lychees. Fertilizer will deteriorate once the bag has been opened. To overcome this put the opened fertilizer bag in a black garbage bag and tie it tightly.

PERSIMMONS: Some varieties are starting to get ripe already. Yay, 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.

Announcements:

THANK YOU Mary Allen, for overseeing the kitchen at our monthly meetings! Your kindness and faithfulness are much appreciated.

WE ARE GRATEFUL for all who share your harvests at club meetings. Your generosity enriches the experience of each attendee. None of us have room to grow everything we'd like, so it's a special treat to taste fruits from other members' trees. Please continue to bring fruit samples and other treats prepared and ready to serve.

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Bus Trip to Clewiston - Tour of the Sugar & Citrus Industries
Friday, October 27, 2017 8 am – 6 pm
Leaving from Home Depot in Bonita Springs
Lunch in Clewiston, snacks on bus, and all tours included
\$15/person or \$25/couple
Mail your check ASAP, made out to BSTFC, to PO Box 367791,
Bonita Springs, FL 34136
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Fruit of the Month — Mamey Sapote

Scientific Name: *Pouteria sapota*

Family: Sapotaceae



Mamey Sapote originated in Central America but has gained popularity in the West Indies, especially Cuba. Though it was introduced in south Florida in the 1880's, its popularity there surged a century later in the wake of mass Cuban immigration. In fact, the crop became so profitable that thieves targeted Mamey groves; an agricultural crimes unit was formed to deal with the problem.

Mamey Sapote trees are attractive and low maintenance, relatively pest free, and productive. They prefer full sun and good drainage. A warm location is essential--they are damaged by temperatures below 32°; temperatures of 27° can kill them. The trees typically reach a height of about 40 feet in Florida, but can be pruned to maintain a more manageable size.

The Mamey Sapote fruit is football shaped, four to ten inches long, with scurfy brown skin concealing a brilliant interior. The largest fruits may weigh close to five pounds. The flesh ranges from pink to salmon or red, and holds one or more large seeds. The texture has been described as smooth and creamy, somewhat like an avocado, though less fatty. The flavor is commonly compared to pumpkin and/or sweet potato, with an added undertone variously likened to almond, cherry, vanilla or even chocolate.

Unlike most fruits, Mamey Sapotes take 12 to 24 months to mature after blooming. This means trees have blossoms, immature fruit, and ripe fruit simultaneously. Harvest time varies widely between various cultivars; it ranges from April to December, peaking from mid-summer to early fall.

Mamey Sapotes grown from seed are of unpredictable, and often inferior, quality. It's best to plant a grafted tree. The most popular cultivar in Florida is the very productive 'Pantin,' which originated as a seedling in Key West. 'Magana' is a large-fruited early cultivar that is also grown commercially; its fruits mature "only" a year after the bloom. Viejo is a small-fruited December bearing cultivar. Other recommended Mamey Sapotes include 'Lorito,' 'Lara,' 'Pace,' and 'Abuela.'

Using Mamey Sapote

Proper harvesting is essential—scratch the skin with a fingernail, and leave the fruit on the tree if it appears green. Once picked, a ripe Mamey will soften at room temperature and be ready to eat within a week. The fruit is often eaten raw. Another common use is in milkshakes, smoothies, or ice cream. Jam, sauce, and fruit bars can be made. The flesh freezes well when scooped from the skin.



Mamey Sapote Tree



Mamey Sapote Flower