

Twelve Months of Local Fruit Harvest



Tropical Fruit Society
of Sarasota

October 28, 2014



Fruiting Season Types

- Warm-weather fruited: Grow when it's warm and fruit as soon as they can. Bananas, papayas, pineapples
- Short-season fruited (includes temperate-climate fruits): blueberries, mulberries, stone fruits such as peaches and plums, lychees and longans
- Long-season fruited (perhaps using early-, mid-, and late-season varieties in combination): avocados, mangos, carambola, sapodillas, citrus

The Bad News About Citrus

- These days citrus is one of the most difficult kinds of fruit to grow these days, due to so many pests and diseases.
- In particular, “citrus greening” is an incurable bacterial disease spread by a certain kind of fruit fly. It's generally unavoidable except by constant high-toxicity spraying.
- If you have an established citrus tree, it's worth keeping it going as long as it will give good fruit. Use both ground fertilizer and foliar spray fertilizer.
- Lemons and limes seem more disease resistant and often do fairly well. They are still worth a try.
- Tangerines, tangelos, and oranges are difficult, and grapefruit is the most difficult. Consider leaving them to the professionals, and devoting your efforts to some of the many wonderful “rare” fruits that work well here.



Factors Affecting Fruiting Season

- Temperature
- Rainfall--- amount and pattern
- Variety (cultivar): Early-season, Mid-season, Late-season

Fruiting Calendars

The website:

www.growables.org



Has tables showing fruiting seasons in southwest Florida for:



























































































- avocado varieties
- mango varieties
- most fruits that grow in our area

Fruiting Calendars from www.growables.org

Typical Fruit Harvest Dates

for South and Southwest Florida

	heaviest crop
	light or second crop

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Ambarella												
Apple												
Atemoya												
Avocado												
Banana												
Barbados Cherry												
Black Sapote												
Blueberry												
Cacao												
Caimito												
Canistel												
Carambola												
Carissa												
Cherry, Barbados												
Cherry of the Rio												

Mangos



- Wonderful, productive fruit trees for west of I-75
- Beautiful evergreen tree, easy to grow
- Mix varieties to stretch fruiting season from April to October or even beyond

Mangos – Growing Tips

- Minimal irrigation, **especially** when fruit is forming in late winter.
- Minimal fertilization. Avoid high-nitrogen fertilizers--- a minor-element foliar spray fertilizer twice a year will do.
- Your *mango tree* wants to be a big tree. *You* want it to be 8 feet tall and 15 feet wide. *You* have the pruners.
- Mango trees grow in “flushes”. Prune after flush is completed by “tipping” (cutting off 3/4 inch below growing tip).
- Relatively pest and disease-free, except for anthracnose, a fungus which detracts from appearance but does not harm the fruit itself.

Mango Varieties

- Hundreds of varieties, many excellent ones
- Dwarf and semi-dwarf varieties have many advantages
- Early season: Rosigold, Manalita
- Mid-season: Nam Doc Mai, Cogshall, Fairchild, Mallika
- Late-season: Graham, Neelum, Keitt (medium-size)
- Full-size favorites: Valencia Pride, Kent, Edward

Avocados

- Another great Florida fruit that can produce during most of the year if you mix early and late varieties
- Come to the January TFSS meeting (“AvocadoFest”) to hear a real expert talk about avocados, and to taste several different winter varieties

Loquat (Japanese Plum)



- Fruits December to February, depending on variety
- Evergreen, highly ornamental, small white flower
- Cold tolerant, fairly drought tolerant, but **not** flood tolerant

Loquat - Growing Tips

- Ensure proper drainage--- on high ground or a mound
- Modest fertilizer needs
- Thin the fruit to increase fruit size
- Good varieties: Christmas, Bradenton, Big Jim

Canistel



- Fruits in winter
- Deciduous, attractive tree but not highly ornamental
- Its cold tolerance is about the same as for mangos--- damaged by hard freezes, making it iffy east of I-75

Canistel - Growing Tips

- Can be slow to establish--- doesn't do much for two or three years, then takes off
- Allow fruit to get soft on the shelf before eating
- The best varieties are *much* better than mediocre ones or seedling trees: Aurea, Fairchild #2, Trompo, Bruce

Stone Fruit (Peaches and Plums)



- Fruit in spring
- Special Florida varieties are required due to low number of chill hours here (chill hour = 1 hour at 45 degrees or below)

Stone Fruit - Growing Tips

- Good drainage required
- Thin to produce larger fruits – one every 6 inches
- Can produce very good fruit here, but it's not the easiest fruit to grow. Disease and pest-prone, also need proper pruning to flourish and be productive
- Good low-chill varieties for peaches: Tropic Beauty, several UF varieties
- Best plum variety here: Scarlet Beauty (needs fewest chill hours, and is self-fertile)

Blueberries



- Fruit in April, May
- Need ACID soil---
peat moss, pine bark
- Consider container
growing
- Low-chill varieties
required: Emerald,
Jewel, many others

Lychee



- Many people's favorite fruit
- Evergreen, attractive tree, can get large
- Short fruiting season--- June into July
- The tree is easy to grow, but it's not so easy to persuade it to produce fruit

Lychee – Growing Tips

- They like water, but fertilize very minimally.
- Prefer acid soil.
- Withhold irrigation starting in late fall to trigger dormancy, which induces fruiting.
- Once the fruit forms, give plenty of water (otherwise they will tend to drop their fruit).
- Best overall variety here is probably Hak-Ip, gives excellent fruit.
- Most reliable fruiting is Mauritius.
- Emperor is less reliable but gives large, great-tasting fruit. Slow-growing.

Longan



- Similar to lychee, but much easier to grow and fruit
- Fruits in July, August
- Evergreen, attractive tree
- Best varieties: Biew Kiew, Big Jim
- Thin fruit for larger size

Carambola (Starfruit)



- Fruits continuously second half of the year, very productive
- Evergreen, beautiful medium-sized tree, small pink flower
- More shade tolerant than most fruit trees --- in fact some afternoon shade is probably better than full sun.
- Easy to grow. Get a high-quality, sweet variety such as Kari or Sri Kembangan

Other Popular Regional Fruits

- Mulberry (easy to grow, fruits in spring)
- White sapote (late spring fruiting, pearlike fruit, distantly related to citrus, cold tolerant)
- Guava (long-season, summer, fall)
- Fig (late summer, sometimes other parts of year as well)
- Macadamia nut (fall, if the squirrels leave you any)
- Black sapote (winter fruiting, not cold tolerant, related to persimmon)
- Sapodilla (easy to grow, fruits much of the year, depending on variety)

One Possible Twelve Month Plan

- January - March: Loquat, Canistel, Avocado
- April - June: Stone Fruit, Mulberry, early-season Mango
- June - September: Lychee, Longan, mid- and late-season Mango
- October - December: Carambola, Persimmon, Avocado

