

**FRIENDSHIP FARMS & FARE**  
FARM REPORT & NEWSLETTER  
OCTOBER 13, 2014 – 2ND 2014-2015 FARM & CSA REPORT

**REPORT**

**71 degrees at 4:00 AM, October 11, 2014**

**Historical Average (for 10/10): 86 HIGH, 70 LOW–Weather Underground:**

<http://www.wunderground.com/>

The historical average high temperature is now 86 degrees (sixteen degrees higher than the lowest average high [70]). Our average low is now 70 degrees (nineteen degrees higher than the lowest average low [51]). The average high and average low are in their annual decline, which will continue through the fall, and then begin a gradual ascent in the early winter (late January).

**Note:** For the past few years, our summer and fall highs and lows have typically run a bit higher than historic averages. Thus far this year, the trend has continued. The higher temperatures stress even hot-weather summer crops. Our development of seed stock from plants grown in these above normal temperatures may result in plants more tolerant of the increasingly harsh climate.

**Welcome to a New Garden Year**  
**Our 5<sup>th</sup> Year**

This is the second missive of our 2014-2015 Garden Year – the fifth year of the Friendship Farms & Fare CSA. We are happy to report an excellent renewal rate, and the addition to two new shares.

Thanks to everyone who has renewed. Your support is empowering and encouraging. If you have any questions, send us a message, and we'll answer or clarify.

So far, we have ten shares. There is one share from last year that has not contacted us about renewing for 2014-2015. We are still aiming to have 12 shares in the coming year, which is about what we'd need to break even.

As most of you know, shares are relatively light in early October. We are expecting significant quantities of sweet potatoes (and leaves), and of course plenty of herbs. We will have arugula and the first small collard leaves, which we'll make available as samples. Okra will light, but we might have enough eggplant for most shares. See the Share Report for all items.

Contributions to Friendship Farms & Fare are now tax-deductable. If you would like to offer financial support, your contributions will be a wonderful enhancement to our project – and they will be tax deductible.

**Weekly Weather Report**

**First Cool Front Passed Fast – High Temperatures Quickly Return**

**Last Week (10/4-10/10):** The long awaited cool front arrived early in the week and passed very quickly. The latter part of week was dominated by extremely high temperatures and dry conditions. Once again, our highest temperature was 90, which we reached twice, and our lowest high was 78 on the first day of the front. The coolest overnight temperature was 57.

We had one surprising deluge – 1/2 and inch in about 30 minutes on Wednesday (10/8). It appears New Port Richey was one of the few communities in the region to receive rain that day.

Despite our high rainfall these past three past week, 2014 will be a very dry year for the Springs Coast Watershed – at least the Friendship Farms & Fare locations. By the end of September, 2013 we had over 50 inches for the year. This year, our total rainfall was about 40 inches, and we reached 40 inches only because of a very September.

**This Week (10/11-10/17)**: WU is forecasting our second cold front of the season this week, with an arrival of Tuesday night into early Wednesday morning. In advance of the front, as is typical, rain is expected as the cooler air behind the front encounters the warm moist air currently present. Prior to the arrival of the front, temperatures will remain well above normal, with 90s predicted for Saturday through Monday. The front will lower the highs to the low 80s, with lows in the mid 60s.

Notably, this "cold front" will bring temperatures close to there average for this time of the year.

Aside from the rain ahead of the front, the week should be very dry.

Gardeners and farmers in the area should plan to irrigate most days.

**Looking Ahead:** We are now definitely into the dry season, with average rainfall amounting to .06 of an inch per day. Most days will be dry, and humidity will be low.

Average temperatures will continue to drop. By the end of October, historical average highs will be 81 degrees and lows will be in the mid-60s. Averages are not good guides, but hopefully, we'll see the end of the 90s very soon. The plants will appreciate the cooler temperatures even more than Floridians who have become accustomed the luxury of air-conditioning.

### **Garden Overview**

**(additional details and assessments follows)**

We are in a transitional period, and harvests are light. This will continue until the end of the month. Rick Martinez reported that his seedlings were washed out or stunted and his farm (Sweetwater in Tampa) is about two weeks behind schedule. So are we.

Just as with other growers, our summer crops are largely spent and the fall crops are just getting started. It will be weeks before big harvests start coming in. In addition, like Rick and others, we had a real set back with the unseasonable rains of the past few weeks.

Okra is declining quickly now, and the harvest is shrinking dramatically. We may not have enough okra for shares this week. Seed pods are gigantic, and we harvested more of those for next year's seeds. Sweet potatoes are still being harvested, and the leaves are still good. We noticed a more eggplant fruit this week, and we may have enough for all shares.

The end of the heavy rains afforded an opportunity to resume our re-seeding project. We lost about 70% of the seedlings from our first seeding, and another 10% are very weak. The good part of the story is that we have planted most of the remaining 20%, and they are doing well.

We received a great assist from our friendship farm, Cadle's Cove Farm. Cindy of Cadle's Cove shared 28 well-established kale seedlings with us, in exchange for sweet potatoes. Here is a link to Cadle's Cove: <http://ceecesfarm.locallygrown.net/>

### **Fall Planning and First Plantings**

We are beginning to recover from our early challenges. We have installed kales and collards, which are maturing nicely. Swiss chard is still lagging a bit, although some Ford Hook Giant is showing signs of health and happiness. As expected, the famous Calabrese is taking off, although we lost most of our original seedlings in the unusual deluges of recent weeks. Arugula is taking off.

As recommend by the Florida Department of Agriculture, and various commercial planting guides, we planted fall and winter crops at the recommended time. However, rather than the cooling and

drying conditions we should have had, we continued to experience full-on summer weather patterns – heat, humidity, and heavy rains. The new climate-change weather renders current planting calendars obsolete. We need new and revised planting guides that take into account climate change.

As noted above, we returned to our fall seeding this week, and started a considerable number of seeds. We will continue seeding and installing seedlings in the gardens this week. Our collards are making the best progress, and we have a number of healthy little plants. For full details on this week's plantings, see the seeding and planting summary later in the Farm Report.

The first plants into the garden are kales, collards, broccoli, and arugula.

In recent years, September and even October have been too hot for the cool weather crops to develop. Nonetheless, we have renewed our seed starting and garden transplants, and continue to hope that temperatures and precipitation get closer to their historical norms. The coming week will be very helpful in this regard.

This fall we are going heavier on the cool-weather greens than we have in the past – collards, kale, and swiss chard. Our new experimental crop this fall is spinach. Of course, we'll have a healthy planting of arugula, and the famous Calabrese. Bell peppers will be planted in October, and we expect our habaneros to continue their irrepressible ways. We'll forego cauliflower, and go heavy on broccoli. Tomatoes will be testers only, and only in set asides in the South Garden. Septoria has just been too hard on our tomatoes in previous years. For all plantings, we'll use seeds from our collection or heirloom seeds from Seed Savers Exchange (<http://www.seedsavers.org/>).

### **Summer Wrap Up**

As noted above, the summer farming season is nearly over. All that remains of the summer crops are the sweet potatoes, and we should have plenty of them for the rest of the month. Okra may not be available this week.

It continues to amaze how well the plants know their seasons and their life-spans. If only we knew our life and purpose as well as these generous plants who have sustained us since we first made them our companions 10,000 years ago.

### **Blackberries Ouachita Family**

We did a little more work in the blackberry grove this week. In the southeast corner of the south garden is coming along nicely. Christine Grovenstein of Seeds of Love Organic Farm lovingly shared these Ouachita Blackberries shared lovingly by Christine Grovenstein of Seeds of Love Organic Farm.

### **Habanero Peppers**

Habanero peppers continue to thrive. We have four habanero shrubs, and always have dozens of fruit ready to harvest.

**If anyone has a relationship with a restaurant whose chefs want to use a local organic searing-hot pepper, we'll be happy to supply for a reasonable contribution -- \$1.00 per pepper.**

### **Hart's Family Hot Sauce Ready for the Willing**

Ray (of Hart's Family Gardens) has brewed this season's first batch of habanero pepper sauce. We sampled it, and found it quite tasty, but HOT. Use in moderation. The sauce is made with various peppers (chiefly habaneros) organic vodka, and apple cider vinegar. That's it! It is all organic, with

only local peppers. It may be too hot for some palate. All peppers are from Hart's Family Gardens or Friendship Farms & Fare.

If you would like to try a bottle, just let us know. A donation of \$5.00 will be received for a 5oz. bottle.

### **Bell Peppers**

Bell peppers will be unlikely this week.

### **Tomatoes**

We'll try a few tomato varieties this fall, but increasingly it looks like peppers are a more reliable crop. Here is a YouTube video from a avid video gardeners with 10 reasons why he suggests focusing on peppers rather than tomatoes: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_3rRf32IGLY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_3rRf32IGLY)

### **Eggplant**

We are listing eggplant again this week, and a number of plants are setting fruit. There continues to be abundant flowers on all the plants (more than at anytime during the summer), but many of the flowers are not maturing into fruit. There will be some small ones this week, and fruits shared by our friends at Cadle's Cove Farm may augment our production. Include in your share request if you like, but we cannot guarantee supply.

The Florida High Bush variety is living up to its name. Several plants are over six feet tall, and a couple are close to seven. They are producing prodigious amounts of flowers (more than they have all year) but the flowers are not transitioning to fruit. Sources we consulted indicate that this is likely due to heat, humidity, or excessive moisture.

See archives for April 7, for detailed account of eggplant varieties and cultures of origin. [http://media.wix.com/ugd/643592\\_6fd736191eff46a8bf7c91e04bd5c78f.pdf](http://media.wix.com/ugd/643592_6fd736191eff46a8bf7c91e04bd5c78f.pdf)

We'll go with eggplant again next year, but the tantalizing profusion of flowers that do not transition to fruit is discouraging.

### **Purslane**

Purslane continues to thrive, although it has passed its warm weather prime. There is plenty available.

### **Viticulture (Grape) News**

All vines have been cut back to primary stems, and all are putting forth new leaves. We'll monitor for the dreaded skeletonizers, although their season as passed.

### **Pre-Season Loquat Budding Exciting News About Two Young Trees**

As first noted five weeks ago, our loquat trees have early buds, including our young trees (less than three years old), which were grown from seeds of our existing trees. There are more buds on the trees this year than we've ever seen before, and now some of the buds have formed flowers.

A third young tree has now started budding.

It is likely that these buds will transition to fruit, although no fruit is yet evident. It does seem early, and we are concerned by the total absence of bees, but the sheer volume of flowers and buds suggests that these are genuine fruit-buds.

It remains to be seen if the young trees will produce fruit, but if they do, they will be true champions, sharing their first harvest two full years earlier than the earliest possible date given in the literature. This will definitely be something to celebrate – and publicize!

### Okra

As noted previously, harvests continue to decrease. Gradually, the plants are perishing, and there are fewer each week that are very strong and vigorous.

This past week we harvested  $\frac{3}{4}$  pound, bringing our total for the season to **96 $\frac{1}{4}$**  lbs., total. Last year we harvested a total of 31 pounds. It now appears that we will probably just miss our target of 100 lbs, but this is still an impressive harvest.

Harvests have dropped off dramatically. We'll make special note of the last harvest of the season. The first, by the way, was June 1 – a Hill Country Red. So, we can safely note that okra produces for four solid months (June 1 to October 1).

Shares should not count on okra in the coming weeks, but feel free to request it. If we have enough, we'll include in the shares. All plants that are still with us are being saved for seeds, edible pods are now accidental. Good, but accidental.

### Sweet Potatoes Harvest Continues

We harvested **32** lbs of sweet potatoes this week. The total harvest is now **213** lbs.

Shares can expect sweet potatoes this week. All the New South beds are harvested and we finished harvesting one of the Old North beds, and most of a second. We have two beds to harvest.

The Old North beds are all regeneration plants; that is, plants sprouted from roots and missed fruit from last year. Many were coming up in the north beds, so we collected regeneration plants from other beds and transplanted them to there. The fruits from the first Old North were beautiful, and free of all blemishes. Hopefully, those in the remaining beds will be as good.

Sweet potatoes are by far the most labor-intensive crop to harvest, surpassing even creating new beds in energy expenditure, physical exertion, and demands on stamina.

Last year, we harvested 150 lbs of SPs. This year, we are aiming at 250 lbs. We will probably come close to that, depending on the yield from the remaining beds.

Some recently harvested SPs may be a bit rugged in appearance now, with clefts and splits. due to excessive moisture and ground-dwelling fauna, most likely grubs, and beetles. Many shares who have enjoyed SPs in previous years are familiar with the appearance of these fruits, which would be "seconds" or "thirds" by commercial standards. You'd never see them in the stores.

Working with these seconds and thirds is not difficult: cut off the damaged skin, then bake the "naked" taters, whole, or slice the fruit into thin wafers or coins. Perfect and delicious! We need to make a video or slide show of how this works. It is really quite easy, and saves a large number of potatoes.

Please let us know if you'll accept these special fruits. We also have plenty of good "bakers" (well-formed and blemish free) so don't hesitate to request them. The "bakers" are usually smaller than the seconds.

We planted 300 slips in our two gardens, and added another 50 or slips of our own. We acquire our slips from George's Plant Farm in Martin, Tennessee. George's is a family farm, with a wonderful story. To learn about the Dellinger Family and their farm, here is a link to their website: <http://www.tatorman.com/>

Here is a link to a story about USF FARM students who visited the farm for a learning tour and to assist with the SP harvest:

<http://www.ecologyflorida.org/2014/10/usf-students-learn-to-harvest-in-new-port-richey-gardens/>

### **Sweet Potato Leaves**

SP leaves are still available in quantity, and will be for at least two more weeks, but the end draws neigh. Once they are gone, we will have no more until late next spring. The leaves taste like dark leafy vegetables (spinach, kale, collards), but with a slight sweetness. They are a wonderful replacement for fresh greens, which are usually difficult to find locally from sustainable organic farms in the summer.

Well, they are fresh greens! They have a multitude of uses: fresh (in salads or as a side), in soups, in omelets, sautéed, baked, or microwaved (if you use that technology) -- and as an exciting addition to pasta sauce.

Please note, due to processing and transportation systems, at this time of the year, the SP leaves may experience some wilting. Fresh harvest is best. Most leaves in a share will be just fine, but some will probably wilt.

### **Cat Briar (Smilax)**

Smilax is closed for the season. We removed brush from the old citrus grove, and with it went the smilax vines. Do not be concerned, the roots are very strong and healthy, and by next spring we will have plenty of smilax.

### **Eggs Now Available Suncoast Acres Poultry Farm**

We have found a local fowl and egg farm, and acquired our first share of eggs. Initial reports on the eggs are positive, and we are making arrangements with the farm for a regular supply. All indications are that the farm family we have met looks after their animals with interest and care.

The farm is called "Suncoast Acres Poultry Farm," in Spring Hill, just south of the Hernando County line. Be advised, the family raises chickens, ducks, turkeys, and rabbits for human consumption. In addition to chicken eggs, they also have duck and turkey eggs.

If you would like to sample duck or turkey eggs, let us know.

Chicken eggs are \$6.50 a dozen (\$5.00 for shares), and \$4.00 a half-dozen (\$3.00 for shares). These prices are a bit higher than prices for organic eggs at commercial grocers. Acquiring eggs from a local farm (Suncoast Acres Poultry Farm) keeps resources in our community, supports local farming, and directly benefits a local farm family.

Let us know if you would like to tour Suncoast Acres Poultry Farm. We are planning to take a tour, and would welcome any shareholders who would like to join the tour.

**Honey:** Local honey is again available. Our bee husbander, Robert, has been very successful with recent harvests. We support Robert's work, which is as much about sustaining and regenerating bee populations as it is about honey distribution. Robert's bees live in West Pasco County, near New Port Richey, they pollinate wild flowers, domestic fruit trees, and vegetables. Honey is available in 8 oz. bottles for \$7.00 a bottle, \$5.50 for CSA Shares.

**Herbs:** Tarragon is thriving, along with rosemary. Basils are a bit weak, but we have Italian and Lemon in quantity. Consult the share list for other herbs, and other available items.

**Tampa deliveries will be Wednesday this week.** West Pasco deliveries will be determined on the basis of share request and distance, no later than Tuesday morning.

Shareholders can call your farmer directly. If you are not a shareholder, and would like to schedule a visit to the gardens or to acquire seeds, seedlings, plants, or produce, please use the address on the website to contact us. <http://www.ffffsite.org/#!contact/cl4l>

**For this week, here is what we have** (FCFS, as always):

### **THE SHARE**

**October 13, 2014 (2)**

**\* larger quantity available if desired**

**FCFS = limited supplies, early submissions given preference**

**Tampa Transmissions TBA**

### **Vegetables**

**Arugula (small quantities)**

**Bell Peppers (possible) small-medium (FCFS)**

**Collards (small quantities "sample size")**

**Eggplant (small) (possible) (FCFS)**

**Okra (small quantities) (possible)**

**Peppers – Habanero\* – very hot**

**Sweet Potatoes**

**Sweet Potato Leaves**

**Fruit - none this week**

**Fungus/Mushrooms- Sorry, still not ready. Maybe next week.**

**Nuts – none this week**

**Roots – none this week**

**Herbs (\* larger quantity available if desired)**

**Basil – Lemon**

**~~Basil – Cinnamon~~**

**Basil – Italian**

**~~Basil – Globe~~**

**Basil – medley (mix of all basils)**

**Chives**

**Cilantro**  
**Oregano**  
**Parsley**  
**Purslane**  
**Rosemary\***  
**Tarragon\***  
**Thyme**

### **Cottage Foods & Samples**

**Hart's Habanero Hot Sauce, 5oz. bottle (suggested donation \$5.00)**  
**- Very Hot**

### **COMPANION FAUNA**

**Bat update:** No bats at the lodge this week. None overhead at twilight.

**Honey Bees:** One observed this week. This is really concerning. One of their favorite treats is loquat blossoms – and we have an abundance of those right now. When flowering, these trees are usually swarming with bees. We continue to expect to see these helpful creatures on the loquat flowers, which they love. There are also flowers on many native plants in the gardens – lantana, golden dewdrop, salvia, porter weed, and begger's ticks. The solitary bee was observed flitting between the flowers in a little patch of begger's tick.

It is possible that the release of commercial/residential "home and garden" insecticides containing neonicotinoids are destroying our once abundant honey bee populations. This is just a guess offered in an effort to understand what has happened to these important companions to human life.

*"If the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe, then man would have only four years of life left. No more bees, no more pollination, no more plants, no more animals, no more man."*  
– attributed to Albert Einstein.

Please do not purchase or use insecticides with neonicotinoids. Here are three reliable sources on the neonicotinoids, and the commercial "home and garden" insecticides that contain them.

<http://www.xerces.org/neonicotinoids-and-bees/>

[http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/NeonicsSummary\\_XercesSociety.pdf](http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/NeonicsSummary_XercesSociety.pdf)

[http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Are-Neonicotinoids-Killing-Bees\\_Xerces-Society1.pdf](http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Are-Neonicotinoids-Killing-Bees_Xerces-Society1.pdf)

**Leopard Frogs:** None observed, but song was heard most nights.

**Earth Worms:** Earth worms present in Old North Beds.

**Sphinx Moth:** No sphinx this week. Here is Youtube video of a Sphinx Moth feeding at 4 o'clocks, very much like the moth at the 3F farm. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eaTfKLOg6gE>

**Pygmy Rattlesnake:** No pygmy rattler this week. Here is a good site on the pygmy rattlesnake from the University of Florida: <http://ufwildlife.ifas.ufl.edu/pdfs/Pygmy%20Rattlesnake%20Info%20Sheet.pdf>

**Grapeleaf Skeletonizer:** No GS caterpillars observed on leaves of one vine. See report in [Viticulture \(Grape News\)](#) section. Here is a link to a site with good information and images of the Skeletonizer: [http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/fruit/grapeleaf\\_skeletonizer.htm](http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/fruit/grapeleaf_skeletonizer.htm)

**Southern Toad:** No toads this week.

**Swifts:** None observed, although the lodge is again busy with sounds of life.

**Tree Frogs:** Abundant and busy. More egg clutches, and tadpoles.

**Greenhouse Frog:** This fall and winter friend is now appearing regularly. Several observed in the main nursery area and in planters in the south garden

**Nocturnal Garden Spider** – Many in both gardens.

**Sweet bees:** Several in Hart's Family Garden and the Friendship Farms gardens.

**"Asian Tramp Snail."** The snails are uncommon now. Only a few were observed. It is likely that their heavy season is the Spring. We will continue to monitor these creatures.

**Mediterranean Gecko:** Two observed this week – one young gecko captured a moth while we observed. Here is a good site for the Mediterranean Gecko, and Florida fauna in general: <http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/nonnatives/reptiles/mediterranean-gecko/>

**Southern Ringneck Snake:** Not observed this week. Here is a site on the Southern Ringneck Snake from the Florida Museum of Natural History and the University of Florida: <https://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/herpetology/fl-guide/Diadophispunctatus.htm>

**Marine Toad (aka: Brazilian Cane Toad, *Rhinella marina*, Giant Toad):** None observed. Good.

Marine Toads are destructive of ecosystems and poisonous to mammals. They are omnivorous, aggressive, and drive out native and assimilated frogs and toads. A survey of several professional sites found none that recommended killing the frogs, although this has been advocated by several folks in the area.

Here is the Extension Office's website on the Marine Toad (which includes an audio of its call): [http://www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife\\_info/frogstoats/rhinella\\_marina.php](http://www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife_info/frogstoats/rhinella_marina.php)

Here is a very detailed, professional study of the Marine Toad, also from the Extension Office. This site has instructions for humane euthanizing of the creatures: [http://www.egovlink.com/public\\_documents300/winterhaven/published\\_documents/Winter%20Haven/Lakes/Backyard%20Wildlife/Animal%20Information/Frogs%20and%20Toads/Marine%20Toads%20UW04600.pdf](http://www.egovlink.com/public_documents300/winterhaven/published_documents/Winter%20Haven/Lakes/Backyard%20Wildlife/Animal%20Information/Frogs%20and%20Toads/Marine%20Toads%20UW04600.pdf)

**Florida Black Snake:** Not observed.

**Woodlouse** – A few in various locations.

**Raccoon:** No raccoon activity this week.

**Opossum:** None observed. Observers were absent for the week.

**Tomato Pinworm:** None observed. The season for these eggplant-loving moth larvae may have passed.

For information on pinworms, see this University of Florida site:

[http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/veg/tomato/tomato\\_pinworm.htm](http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/veg/tomato/tomato_pinworm.htm)

**Cats:** Neighborhood cat, Frankie, appears regularly. She has a kind disposition and has lived in the neighborhood for nearly a decade.

## **3F Stories, Events, and Policy Updates**

### **Planting & Harvest Notes Start of Fall Seeding**

**Seedings:** Kale (Gruner Krauser, 64; Scarlet, 32); Broccoli, 72.

**Garden Starts:** Kale, broccoli, swiss chard, collards

**Harvest Notes:** okra, sweet potatoes, herbs, arugula, bell peppers, eggplant

**Vermipost:** no harvest

**Bat Guano:** no harvest (no bats)

### **Next Workday: TBA**

If you would like to join us for a fall workday, we'll have a lot to do. Please send your best Saturday(s) in November.

## **Nursery Certification and Registration**

### **Friendship Farms & Fare**

**48015239**

Friendship Farms & Fare is a registered nursery in the state of Florida. Our registration number is 48015239.

In accord with state regulations, our nursery was inspected in April. Mr. Daniel Merced from the Florida Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Plant & Apiary Inspection conducted the review.

Mr. Merced gave the nursery a very positive evaluation, and recommended the 3F Nursery for certification and registration. We have now received the official documentation. While with us, Mr. Merced also inspected our groves, and offered extremely helpful insights into citrus growing, and the conditions of our trees. Interestingly, Merced discovered Asian Citrus Psyllids on every citrus tree in our grove – that's the transporter of Citrus Greening. More interesting, perhaps, he detected no Greening in any of the young trees planted in the New South Grove in January, 2013. Your Farmer (now technically and officially a "Nurseryman") learned a great deal about identifying specific challenges citrus trees may face and treatments for these challenges.

Our successful pursuit of certification and registration is another step in the development of the Friendship Farms and Fare sustainable urban agriculture project. As most of you know, we are already a registered seed seller. The nursery certification is an important expression of our farm's mission and our commitment to responsible community development.

If you would like to support the work of Friendship Farms and Fare and help us cover expenses related to the project, please feel free to share a contribution. Friendship Farms and Fare operates under the umbrella of Ecology Florida, a not for profit corporation, so your contributions are tax deductible.

**2014-2015 Renewal  
Seed Dealer License & Registration  
Friendship Farms & Fare  
S009451**

3 F is a licensed Seed Dealer. We just renewed our license with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, which issues these licenses that are required to sell seeds to the public. Through our friendship with Ecology Florida, we applied for the license as a subsidiary of Ecology Florida – a federally sanctioned Not For Profit organization. Want to buy some seeds? To explore the Ecology Florida project, see: <http://www.ecologyflorida.org/>

**The Florida Loquat Festival: Celebrating Florida's Urban Fruit  
April 5, 2014  
Market Off Main, New Port Richey**

<http://www.ecologyflorida.org/2014/03/florida-loquat-festival-celebrating-floridas-urban-fruit/>  
<http://tbo.com/Local/CommunityNews/festival-to-promote-little-known-loquat-tree-20140319/>

The first annual Florida Loquat Festival was a great success. Hundreds attended the festival. Fruit, trees, and preserves were sold or shared for donations. The educational program was well received. Folks are already looking forward to next year's festival.

**Friendship Farms and Fare Pursues Non-GMO and USDA Organic Certification**

As a matter of policy, Friendship Farms and Fare opposes the use of GMOs in food. We are exploring Non-GMO certification for our First Farm in New Port Richey, and possibly Tarry Lane Kitchens. We have the application in hand, and will be submitting it in the near future. Of course, we have never used GMO seeds or products containing GMOs, so you can rest assured that even without the certification, everything we share is free of GMOs.

We have also taken the initial steps to secure USDA Organic certification. The cost for USDA assessment (with no guarantee of approval) will be between \$950 and \$1300 depending on how much of the 3F project we desire to have assessed. As with our non-GMO commitment, we are fully committed to organic farming.

**Community Garden Project at New South Garden**

We are ready to receive applications for our community garden project. Folks interested in acquiring a plot can contact us through the 3F site.

Shareholders interested in acquiring a plot may participate for reduced rates.

We have installed sample community garden beds. Each is (108 sq feet) 12 x 9 or 18 x 6.

**Farm and Fare Tours (Local Urban Gardens and Organic Kitchen)**

If you would like to schedule a tour local urban gardens in New Port Richey and/or the 3F Kitchen (Tarry Lane Tasting Station), please let us know, and we can make arrangements. Our tours are experiential, informational, educational, and fun. Donations are greatly appreciated.

Typically, and depending on the season, participants visit several urban farms, learn about organic farming in an urban environment using permaculture philosophies and practices, observe and learn about urban wildlife and helpful plants, enjoy samples of live produce, and share in the preparation of the vegan cuisine. Tours are structured on the basis of participants' interests and background. We can also arrange focused learning sessions at the Gardens and/or the Kitchens.

Please note that an appropriate contribution for the tours and learning sessions will be suggested when tours are scheduled.

There are four categories of tours:

- \* Urban Farming, Gardening and Soil development
- \* Urban wildlife and helpful plants (note if you desire a bat observation, which requires special scheduling)
- \* Vegan, Organic food preparation
- \* General (including two or more categories)

Please note that an appropriate contribution for the tours and learning sessions will be suggested when tours are scheduled.

### **3F: A Florida Friendly Farm**

The 3 F gardens are certified as a "Florida Friendly" environment – a certification we have held for over a decade.

Florida Friendly recognition is given to environments (typically residential yards) that support and enhance natural ecosystems. Certification is given in three categories (bronze, silver, and gold) based on a point system rating various features of the property and practices followed by the property owner. We received a high score but only a silver rating because of some changes in the program of which we were unaware.

Attention is given to features such as water-retention, native and drought tolerant plants, diversity in plant species, responsible irrigation systems, and amenities for native pollinators. Positive practices include minimal use of fertilizers (with organic preferred) and little or no use of poisons, groundcovers rather than turf, composting, and rainwater collection systems.

We encourage all our members and friends to pursue Florida Friendly designation for their properties. It is a wonderful way to learn more about Florida's natural ecology and what you can do to create a healthy environment right where you live. It is also a great way to go green.

Folks who wonder what they can do to be more environmentally responsible are encouraged to review the Florida Friendly checklist. If you can change even one thing about your yard or your landscape practices to bring it into agreement with the guidelines, you will have made a difference. Even if you do not apply for the designation, reviewing the criteria will be an enriching educational experience. Putting the guidelines into practice will make a definite difference. Here is the website for the program:

---

## **Other News and Reports**

==

## **COMMERICAL PRODUCE REPORT**

**Our Commercial Produce News Report is currently in repose.**  
**We will resume when time and talent allow.**  
**If anyone would like to volunteer to collect market prices, please let us know.**

## **OTHER PRODUCTS FOR THE CSA FAMILY**

**3F Produce for non-shareholders:** Non-Members may order shares for \$20 per week, or \$50 per month. For this amount, contributors may request any and all items they desire from the weekly Share. Although we will assist with transmissions, it is the responsibility of the contributor to make arrangements for pick up of the share.

As always, non-CSA Members may request single items from the share list for \$5 per item. A full share for one week (any/all items) is \$20, and \$50 for one month. Annual shares are recommended, at \$300 per year. Five month shares are \$200.

Just reply using the website contact link if you desire anything on the list. We suggest non-shareholders start an account to cover costs of items.

**EGGS.** Prices are \$6.50 a dozen (\$5.00 for shares), and \$4.00 a half-dozen (\$3.00 for shares). These prices are a bit higher than prices for organic eggs at commercial grocers. Acquiring eggs from a local farm (Suncoast Acres Poultry Farm) keeps resources in our community, supports local farming, and directly benefits a local farm family.

As required by our policies, our supplier is local, follows organic principles, practices compassionate husbandry, and allows chickens free range. If you would like to be included on the egg list, please start an account (\$20 suggested), and make requests accordingly. Eggs are from humanely treated chickens, and fed non-GMO feed.

**Honey:** Local West Pasco honey is available in 8 oz. bottles for \$7.00 (\$5.50 for shares).

**Seeds:** If you would like organic vegetable seeds for your garden, we will order them for you. Seed packs are \$4.00 each, 2 for \$7.00, and 5 for \$14.00. Just tell us what you'd like. Be sure to send your mailing address. No charge for shipping.

**Seedlings:** We are also happy to start plants for you. Just give us the word on the plants you want us to start, and we'll do the rest. Starter plants in cells are \$1.50 per plant (\$1, for shares), \$5.00 (\$4) for four, \$8.00 (\$7.00) for nine. When available, small plants are \$3.00 (\$2.40) each, and medium plants are \$5.00 (\$4).

**Let us know if you want to acquire seeds or starts for the Fall.**

**Trees:** Young Loquat trees are available in small (half-gallon) and medium (gallon) pots - \$10.00 (\$8.00 for shareholders). \$20 (\$18) for two-gallon pots. Larger trees in five-gallon pots are \$50 to \$70, depending on the size of the tree.

**Vermipost and Worms:** For folks interested in organic gardening, we have the best all-natural soil amenities you can find: Vermipost and Worms! Vermipost is compost that has been broken down and enriched by Red Worms. We also have the worms themselves. **Vermipost** is available in 32 oz containers for \$2.50 each (\$2.00 for shareholders), with discounts for orders of five or

more. Vermipost containers will most likely have some worms in the mix. We recommend mixing the vermipost 1 to 1 with regular soil, and 1 to 3 or 4 with organic soil. Remember, if you use synthetic chemicals (such as fertilizers or pesticides), the vermipost will be compromised. Pesticides will kill the worms and synthetic fertilizers will kill the worms or drive them away.

**Worms** are available in 32 oz containers for \$7.50 (\$6 for shareholders). We cannot specify the exact number of worms in a container, but there should be 30-50. By the way, if you are developing an organic garden, always look for the OMRI seal of approval on fertilizers, soils, and insect deterrents.

**Seeds:** Shareholders are entitled to samples of seeds from our seed bank – three types of okra and our famous Calabrese broccoli. Our seeds are organic and derived from heirloom stock. They are listed with Seed Savers Exchange, and also available at the New Port Richey Library Seed Exchange. Let us know if you are interested – additional packages of seeds for \$4.00 (\$3.00) a packet (of 30). We cannot guarantee germination, but in our tests germination rates are close to 100%.

Heirloom, organic seeds from Seed Savers Exchange are \$4.00 each (\$3.00 for shares).

Florida Central West Coast acclimated Okra Seeds offered by 3F are: Silver Queen, Star of David, Red Burgundy, and Hill Country Red.

## **Local Markets and Growers' Sites Open to the Public Endorsed by Friendship Farms & Fare**

**Market Off Main:** We encourage members of the TBN G&G CSA to patronize the Market Off Main in New Port Richey, and other local produce markets. They often have organics, usually have local produce, are locally owned, and are now a distributor of Cow Pots. Here is their website: <http://www.marketoffmain.com/>

**Tasty Tuesdays:** Visit the New Port Richey Library Tuesday (10:00 AM – 12:00 noon) for a good selection of locally grown organic vegetables. [New Port Richey Public Library, 5939 Main St, New Port Richey, FL](#)

**Freedom House Farms:** Open to visitors on Saturday afternoons. Featuring freshly harvested produce available for purchase. 5642 Virginia Ave., New Port Richey

**First Farm:** Receptive to visitors on Sunday afternoons. Featuring seeds, seedlings, Loquat trees, and select produce in season. Call for appointment afternoons or evenings: (727) 849-1626. New Port Richey.

**To Return to our website,** go to: < <http://www.ffffsite.org> >

### **Friendship Farms & Fare**

An Urban Farm Community, CSA, Seed Saver, Community Garden, and purveyor of seeds, seedlings, fruit trees, and organic cottage-industry foods.

### **Friendship Farms & Fare Community**

#### **Cadle's Cove Farm**

#### **Freedom House Farm**

**Friendship Farms & Fare: First Farm  
Hart's Family Farm  
Seeds of Love Organic Farm  
Tarry Lane Tasting Station**

**October 13, 2014 – 2nd report for the 2014-2015 Garden Year**

**###**