



FRIENDSHIP FARMS & FARE

Friendship Farms & Fare affirms and advances agrarian ideals to reestablish a sustainable culture

3F FARM REPORT & NEWSLETTER

MAY 23, 2016 – 34TH 2015-2016 FARM & CSA REPORT

Friendship Farms & Fare is a division of Ecology Florida, a not-for-profit corporation.

Contributions to Friendship Farms & Fare and Ecology Florida are tax deductible.

If you would like to support our work, please consider sharing a donation.

PO Box 596 • New Port Richey, Florida 34656-0596

<http://www.ffffsite.org/>

FARM REPORT

77 degrees at 3:30 AM, May 20, 2016

Historic Norm (for 5/23) 89 HIGH, 71 LOW Weather Underground: <http://www.wunderground.com/>

See the complete weekly weather report later in the Farm Report.

Welcome to Summer Enjoy Some Okra (Okra Occasion, July 25, New Port Richey)



Mr. Tag with okra ready for local-organic markets. We've trained Mr. Tag to deliver the okra to markets and homes. (Not Really!)

As has been the case for most of the past decade, summer is coming early. We've reached 90s a few times already this Spring, and we are getting close to 80 for our overnights.

No surprise, then, that okra is thriving at both gardens. We'll have plenty for all shares.

We have planted heavily this year (about 200 plants, and counting), and we are anticipating substantial harvests.

Check out recipes and consider joining us for the annual **Okra Occasion** (the only okra festival in this part of the state), July 25 in New Port Richey.

Shares Light This Week and for a Few More

We are in a transition period, with the last of our winter crops now gone and our summer crops not yet it full swing. See the share report for full details. We will have okra (as noted above), which some of the CSA family are already enjoying. The Garden Club enjoyed a great fresh vegetable medley: peppers, okra, beans, and onions. Only the onions came from outside the gardens.

Peaches Mostly Lost

Sorry to say, our first peach harvest was mostly lost. The fruit was a bit overripe, and spoiled within a day of harvesting. By eating around the spoiled portions we did get some tasty morsels, but for the most part the harvest was lost.

This again brings home the rather incredible production of the loquat trees. Small trees are producing 10-20 pounds, medium trees close to 50, and large trees 100 pounds or more. Even if all the peaches were perfect, we might have had 5 pounds.

Our rule is to find what grows were we garden, try a little of everything, find what grows best for you, and then plant those crops heavily. For us, that's the loquat when it comes to fruit trees.

Sweet Potatoes Doing Well

We have about 650 slips in the ground at both gardens, and by mid-July we should have our first sweet potatoes – early August at the latest. We'll should have sweet potato leaves by early June, and then through the rest of summer, until September. Vines and leaves are wonderful warm-weather leafy green vegetable – one of the few available through the summer in Florida. If you have not tried them, please do this year.

We are planning for one more order of slips, so if you want some, let us know. Next order should be in about a week.

Don't forget, Sweet Potato leaves and vines are a delicious warm weather green. We'll have those listed in the share report very soon.

If anyone would like seeds or seedlings, let us know. We receive a donation for seeds or seedlings. Remember: our seeds are from plants grown here at the gardens, with a genealogy going back four to six years. We save seeds from the strongest, highest yielding plants for use the following year.

Second Seeding of Peanuts Mostly Planted

Our second planting of peanuts is now mostly planted. Most are in the East Madison Gardens. Those that remain will be divided between East Madison and Grand Gardens.

We've planted Schronce's Deep Black and Texas Red and White. These are from Southern Exposure, a very responsible seed-supplier. Germination was close to 100%

We also have another variety, Carwile's Virginia, which we'll start in a week or two.

Our own variety (which we're calling Florida Blond) is doing very well. These are now third generation from an original variety of raw peanuts acquired at a local commercial market.

We are going heavier on peanuts this year, than we have in the past – our heaviest planting yet.

Pull Cool Weather Crops Plant Summer Crops

It is time to pull any of the remaining cool weather crops (e.g.: kale, broccoli, lettuce, and swiss chard) and get going on your warm-weather gardens.

For gardens in the New Port Richey Farm Network (Friendship Farms & Fare and Grand Gardens), we are recommending the following vegetables for warm-weather gardens (Spring and Summer):

Cucumbers (Spring only – plant now, and not much later)

Peppers (Spring best – plant now, and not much later)

Tomatoes (Spring best – plant now, and not much later)

Beans (Lima and string/bush and pole)- we recommend lima and bush

Eggplant

Okra

Peanuts

Sweet Potatoes

We recommend these vegetables on the basis of their suitability for our area, our history of growing them, their high-yield, and because they are relatively easy to grow. Folks are welcome to try other warm-weather vegetables.

We are offering seeds and seedlings of these vegetables to folks in the New Port Richey Farm Network (Friendship Farms & Fare and Grand Gardens) for a contribution. If you have a plot at Grand Gardens we will gift you seedlings – you can share a donation if you like.

Folks who desire seeds can acquire them for a donation (suggested \$2 per pack). If we don't have what you desire, go to Seed Saver's Exchange website, pick the items you want, then give us your order. Seeds are offered with suggested donations of \$3 or \$2 for 3F and GG participants (CSA members, plot holders, and contributors). See the SSE website: <http://www.seedsavers.org/>

Black Berries Flowering

Our black berry shrubs are flowering profusely. Look for the first berries by early June. The plants have reseeded, so we'll have some blackberry shrubs to share with others.

Spring Seedings At Gardens Seeds & Seedlings Available for Your Gardens

For our spring and summer gardens we have planted okra, three types of eggplant, lima beans, snap beans, and three varieties of cucumbers, and three types peanuts – and of course the sweet potatoes (four varieties) The cucumbers are just for the spring and they are already showing signs of stress from the heat.

We've planted okra, eggplant, beans, and cucumbers in the East Madison Gardens and at Grand Gardens. Cucumbers are struggling now with the summer heat. All others are doing well, and we are harvesting okra from both gardens.

The five okras we are featuring this season are Star of David, Hill Country Red, Silver Queen, our own hybrid Rouge Lance, and Red Burgundy. All are at or close to 100% germination.

These are all warm weather crops (except for the cucumbers), and the unseasonal heat has sped their growth. This is in part due to many of our seeds having come from our garden, and being descendents of locally acclimated plants going back at least five years and in some cases ten.

If you would like seeds or seedlings for okra, please send us a request. See below for more details.

We are harvesting the five okras noted above. Soon we'll be harvesting eggplant.

Our okra seeds and seedlings are from the 3F gardens and farms. They are acclimated to the Springs Coast Watershed, and the central Gulf Coast, generally.

We have a wide variety of heirloom organic seeds from Seed Savers Exchange. Let us know what you would like and we'll accommodate your interests.

Winter Garden Closed

Our winter garden is now closed. We might still have some collards and (surprisingly) some Swiss Chard, but the kale is now finished, and the broccoli was done a month ago.

We'll harvest collards and swiss chard *only* if it is in good shape. The heat is finally taking a toll on the collards, and most are severely stressed.

Grand Gardens Taking Off Promotional T-Shirts Available Order Now

We'll be supporting Grand Gardens with okra seedlings and sweet potato slips. We'll also share eggplant and beans as desired by community growers.

As a fund-raiser and promotional collectable object for Grand Gardens, we are offering a T-Shirt as a premium for contributions to the project. The T-Shirt has the Grand Gardens logo on the front and supporting organizations on the back. We are affirming a minimum donation of \$15 for each shirt, and receptive to greater contributions to support the project – which will allow us to make the shirt available folks who might not otherwise be able to afford the shirt.

Contributions of over \$15 (our cost) will receive formal acknowledgement of contribution for purposes of tax deductions, if requested – with actual value being \$10.

Make checks to Friendship Farms & Fare PO Box 596 • New Port Richey, Florida 34656-0596 or go to the Ecology Florida website <http://www.ecologyflorida.org/> and click on the donate button.

If you want us to mail you a shirt, please give your size, and mailing address and add a little extra contribution for postage.

Folks interested in acquiring a plot at Grand Gardens can contact us through the 3F site. If you would like to participate, contact Travis Morehead, or stop by Grand Gardens on one of the designated work days: <http://eastmadison.org/community-garden-calendar/>

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

Arugula Finished For Now Seeding

Arugula is finished for now, but we did plant seeds to see if we might get a little summer crop. Stay tuned!

Loquat Preserves

We have locally sourced and locally produced loquat preserves. Suggested donation is \$6.00 per jar and 2 for \$10.00.

2016 Organic Seeds Now Available Rose's Bistro in New Port Richey University of South Florida in Tampa

Seeds from Seed Savers Exchange for the 2016 season are now available through Friendship Farms & Fare and our kiosk sites in New Port Richey and the University of South Florida. We are pleased to support the work Seed Savers, which is dedicated to preserving heirloom varieties of fruits and vegetables. Unless we use our own saved seeds or ones from other local gardeners, we use SSE seeds exclusively. Here is a link to Seed Savers Exchange: <http://www.seedsavers.org/>

Here is a link to Rose's Bistro: <https://www.facebook.com/TheMarketOffMain>
And here is one to USF's Botanical Gardens: <http://gardens.usf.edu/>

Fresh Honey Harvest From Daddy's Bees

For those interested in local honey, Robert has just completed a summer harvest, and we have plenty of bottles on hand. 8 oz. bottles for \$7.00 (\$5.50 for shares).

Please do not purchase or use insecticides with neonicotinoids. Here are 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/Are-Neonicotinoids-Killing-Bees_Xerces-Society1.pdf

<http://www.ecologyflorida.org/2013/12/feature-make-meadows-not-lawns-for-honey-bee-colony-health/>

WEATHER Cooler Start to the Week Heat Returns Later

77 degrees at 3:30 AM, May 20, 2016

Historic Norm (for 5/23) 89 HIGH, 71 LOW Weather Underground: <http://www.wunderground.com/>

January, February, and March shatter heat records – all were the hottest on record. Read more:

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/03/17/weather/february-warmest-ever-month/index.html>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2016/04/15/scorching-march-temperatures-set-another-global-record-for-the-third-straight-month-this-year/>

According to NASA and NOAA, 2015 was the hottest year in recorded history – replacing 2014 as the hottest year on record (since records have been kept, 1880). Read more:

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/21/science/earth/2015-hottest-year-global-warming.html?_r=0

Average temperatures are increasing and will continue to until early June, when they reach 90, and stay there until early September. Historically, the average high temperature is now 85 degrees, fifteen degrees higher than our lowest average high of the year [70]), and five degrees lower than our highest average [90]). Our average low is now 66 degrees, twelve degrees lower than our highest average low of the year (76), and fifteen degrees higher than our lowest average low [51].

Here is NOAA on the human causes of climate change and global warming. <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/pd/climate/factsheets/howhuman.pdf>

Last Week (5/14– 5/20): Temperatures were at or above normal everyday last week. Weather Underground did not record a high of 90 or higher, but we reached it twice on our thermometers.

This Week (5/21– 5/27): Temperatures will a bit below normal at the start of the week as cool front passes by early on the weekend. This is very late in the season for a cool front, but most welcome – especially if it brings some rain. Look for upper 80s to near 90 by the end of the week.

Garden Overview

As suggested in earlier sections of the report, we are well along with our spring and summer planting, and the winter garden is coming to a close.

We harvested the last of the winter vegetables last week, and began pulling the last of the collards and kale.

We will try to plant beans and bell peppers this week, and more okra.

If you would like to volunteer, please let us know.

See the Share Report for all items.

For all plantings, we use seeds from our collection or heirloom seeds from Seed Savers Exchange (<http://www.seedsavers.org/>).

=====

Honey: Local honey is available. We have a fresh harvest available now. 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: Herbs are in pretty good shape, but cilantro is down again We have good quantities of basil, tarragon, and oregano. Consult the share list for other herbs, and other available items.

*** larger quantity available if desired**

Vegetables

Arugula – in recess (we'll try for a summer crop)

Collards

Kale – End of season

Lettuce – in recess

Okra

Peppers – Sweet Bell (possible)

Peppers – Habanero (burning hot)*

Peppers – Scotch Bonnet (burning hot)*

Sweet Potato Leaves coming soon

Swiss Chard – light (end of season approaches)

Fruit -

Herbs (* larger quantity available if desired)

Basil – Italian

Basil – globe (in recess)

Basil – Red Basil (in recess)

Chives

Cranberry Hibiscus *

Cilantro – end of season – too hot

Culantro – in recess

Mint

Oregano

Parsley

Rosemary*

Tarragon

Medicinal

Aloe*

Other items and Samples

Eggs: In extended recess. When we again have a reliable local, organic producer, we will add eggs back to the list.

Honey: Local West Pasco honey from Daddy's Bees is available in 8 oz. bottles for \$7.00 (\$5.50 for shares). Daddy's Bees just harvested their summer honey. Ready for shares, if desired.

Loquat Preserves: Made from local cottage industry producers. All organic materials, local source loquats. Suggested donation: \$6, two for \$10

Red Panax Ginseng (liquid, tonic) 3.5 oz bottles (10 bottle box) \$6.50 (\$5.00, shares)

COMPANION FAUNA

Early Spring Report

Animal companions are fewer and less active

Armadillo: We welcomed an armadillo to the estate last week – our first in a few years. The good-sized creature enjoyed rooting around in the fern garden. That fern garden seems to be a favorite place for native creatures. It is frequented by opossums, citrus rats, raccoons, and leopard frogs. Frankie even spends time there – and now, an armadillo.

Lubbers: We have not seen the lubbers released last week, but we'll keep an eye out for them as we move further into the summer.

For the first time in two years, we again have Lubbers in the garden.

We are very happy to have this ancient creature back with us.

These largest of all North American grasshoppers, Lubbers seem to have few friends. Growing up, one gardener remembers everyone he knew killing them on sight, either with poison sprays or in acts of physical violence. They are welcomed in our garden, and we are honored to share our fare with them.

Their scientific name is ***Romalea guttata***. See UF site on the creatures: <http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/orn/lubber.htm>

We like a Cajun nickname for them: The Devil's Horse (*cheval-diable*). The insect is also colloquially known as a "graveyard grasshopper".[4]” <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romalea_guttata#cite_note-4>

Honey Bees: Fewer than recently, mostly at the beggar ticks.

“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/Are-Neonicotinoids-Killing-Bees_Xerces-Society1.pdf

Leopard Frogs: Male sings day and night

Here is good site for information on Leopard Frogs

http://www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife_info/frogstoads/rana_utricularia.php

Tree Frogs: Abundant, with two more egg clusters, and swarms of tadpoles – which means no mosquito larva.

Bald Eagle: None this week.

Raccoon: None this week.

Opossum: None this week.

Citrus Rat (also called Roof Rat): Right at home in laurel oak in natural habitat near street – late at night.

Here is the IFAS report on these rats ("the worst rodent pest in the state of Florida and most abundant"):

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/uw/uw12000.pdf>

Florida Ringneck Snake: None

Mediterranean Gecko: None this week.

<http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/nonnatives/reptiles/mediterranean-gecko/>

Owl: No owls or calls this week.

Greenhouse Frog: None this week.

Eastern Blue Bird: No blue birds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1WYEmuUhKI>

http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Eastern_Bluebird/id

<http://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/eastern-bluebird>

Southern Toad: None this week.

Sweet bees: None

Pileated Woodpecker: None this week.

Here is a good site for the Pileated :

http://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/pileated_woodpecker?gclid=CjoKEQiA4OqnBRDAj9aazvPji9ABEiQANq28oLTa9kUEg7khhIiQxXQSzXno1KGGEkjUYhQcrnafj8aAnMP8P8HAQ

And here is a video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SpYsdZ8gUU8&index=3&list=PLFMP2eIAO8oQFZ3IyCJhIKXCi914uI8uu>

Florida Black Snake: One observed crossing street (Jackson) near gardens. Stopped car to let the snake pass.

Bumble Bees: Adam reports several at this native plant garden (across the street).

Hawk: Red shoulder hawk flying south east over the East Madison Gardens.

Earth Worms: One in mulch pile at East Madison Gardens

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=eaTfKLO96gE>

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>

"Nocturnal Garden Spider" – Very numerous – like stars in the ground. More in the south garden than in the north.

"Asian Tramp Snail." None this week.

Woodlouse – Several.

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

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/frogstoads/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%20UWO4600.pdf

Cats: Neighborhood cat, Frankie, appears to have taken up residence on the property. She is a pleasant little cat.

Planting & Harvest Notes Winter Seeding and Garden Starts Continue

Seedings: okra, eggplants, beans, peanuts

Garden Starts: okra, eggplant

Harvest Notes: collards, kale, swiss chard, peppers, all herbs that were mature

Vermipost:

3F Stories, Events, and Policy Updates

Programs and Plans

We often receive questions about the Friendship Farms & Fare project. We are happy to send an information brochure with details on our mission and our various programs. Here is a brief sketch of our programs:

We offer heirloom organic **seeds**, including seeds from plants acclimated to local climate and soils. We have a good stock of several types of okra (including the much desired Red Burgundy), robust arugula, and our famous Calabrese Broccoli. Friendship Farms & Fare is a licensed seed dealer in the State of Florida, and a member of Seed Savers Exchange (with several listings in the SSE Yearbook).

Seed Kiosk Friendship Farms & Fare also sponsors a sales kiosk featuring organic seeds from Seed Savers Exchange at the Market Off Main, in New Port Richey. We never offer seeds from for-profit commercial seed sellers, and we discourage others from doing so as well. Acquiring your seeds from local seed dealers supports local ecologies and economies, and will usually result in stronger, healthier plants – and seeds for next season!

Organic **seedlings** are available throughout each growing season. We use our own seeds from previous years whenever possible, and otherwise, we use only organic seeds and heirloom varieties when available. We never use seeds from for-profit seed sellers, and we do not offer seedlings grown from such seeds. Friendship Farms & Fare is a licensed nursery in the State of Florida.

A developing area of our mission is our **fruit tree project**. At present, we offer loquat and avocado trees, with a few native flowering shrubs. We are a state-registered nursery, and among a small number of nurseries in the region offering loquat trees. We also are pleased to host (along with Ecology Florida) the **Florida Loquat Festival**, held each spring in New Port Richey.

Our original project, and still our central focus is a **Community Supported Agriculture** program. This is a small (“boutique”) CSA, featuring organic produce from our gardens and local cottage industry foods. We are 100% organic and have a no-kill policy. Our program is recommended for single persons, couples, or (at most) three-person families.

When quantities are sufficient, we offer produce to the general public through **local markets**, such as Tasty Tuesdays and Market Off Main in New Port Richey. Folks can also make requests through our website. Non-members can request any and all items on the share list for \$20.

Our newest project is a **community garden**, dedicating a portion of the 3F farm for use by others in the community. The community garden is located in New Port Richey, and operates through the City's urban agriculture ordinance. The 3F community garden follows the standard policies of Friendship Farms & Fare. We are 100% organic, non-GMO, and have a no-kill policy. With the exception of the predatory Marine Toad, no animals are harmed on our farm. We follow permaculture principles, and working with and within our natural systems.

If you would like to know more about any of these programs or would like to volunteer to share in our mission, just let us know. Folks interested in the Friendship Farms & Fare project can contact us through our website. <http://www.fffsite.org/> See the "Let's Talk" section for an email connection.

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.

Spring 2016 Seeds Have Arrived 3F, Ecology Florida, Rose's Bistro, and USF Offer Seed Savers Exchange Seeds

Through a cooperative arrangement with Friendship Farms & Fare and Ecology Florida, Rose's Bistro, in New Port Richey, and the Botanical Gardens of at the University of South Florida offer a wide range of organic, heirloom, non-GMO seeds exclusively from Seed Savers Exchange.

Spring seeds are in at both locations.

This is a trend-setting achievement for the Bistro and the Botanical Gardens, and another verification of Friendship Farms & Fare and Ecology Florida's leadership in ecological stewardship, sustainability, and resiliency. These two locations are the only location on the West Coast of Florida offering these high quality packaged seeds.

Ecology Florida advances the harmonious integration of healthy natural, cultural, and economic ecologies to regenerate a sustainable world
<http://www.ecologyflorida.org/>

Seed Savers Exchange is a non-profit organization dedicated to saving and sharing heirloom seeds. Since 1975, our members have been passing on our garden heritage by collecting and distributing thousands of samples of rare garden seeds to other gardeners.

<http://www.seedsavers.org/>

USF Botanical Gardens

<http://gardens.usf.edu/>

Rose's Bistro

<https://www.facebook.com/TheMarketOffMain>

Next Workday

TBA

2016-2017 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. We just received confirmation of our renewal for 2016-2017.

Our successful re-certification and registration renewal is another step in the development of the Friendship Farms and Fare sustainable urban agriculture project. As most of you know, we are also 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.

2015-2016 Renewal

Seed Dealer License & Registration

Friendship Farms & Fare

S009451

We are also a licensed Seed Dealer License for 2015-2016.

3F is a licensed Seed Dealer, through the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, which issues these licenses that are required to sell seeds to the public.

We renew in July every year. Through our friendship with Ecology Florida, we apply 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/>

Grand Gardens Project

The Grand Gardens' project is proceeding very nicely. If you would like a Grand Gardens' T-Shirt, send us a donation (\$15, suggested), your shirt size, and mailing address.

If you would like to participate, contact Travis Morehead, or stop by Grand Gardens on one of the designated work days: <http://eastmadison.org/community-garden-calendar/>

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

See earlier part of the letter for full report and opportunity to order shirts.

Folks interested in acquiring a plot can contact us through the 3F site.

Farm Tours (Local Urban Gardens)

If you would like to schedule a tour of local urban gardens in New Port Richey, 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 will spend an hour or so in two or more gardens, learn about organic farming in an urban environment using permaculture philosophies and practices, observe and learn about urban wildlife and helpful plants, and enjoy samples of live produce. Tours are structured on the basis of participants' interests and background.

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, Permaculture and Soil development
- * Urban wildlife and helpful plants
- * Seasonal produce, from seed to harvest
- * 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 – typically, \$100.

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 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

==

COMMERCIAL 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 items for \$10.00 each, 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 \$10 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 Eggs are suspended.

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 \$2.00 per plant (\$1, for shares), \$3.00 for 2, \$5.00 (\$4) for four, \$8.00 (\$6.00) 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 spring and summer.

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, arugula, 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). You may order Seed Savers seeds from us. Find the seeds you desire on line, and let us know, and we'll order them for you. <http://www.seedsavers.org/onlinestore/> Florida Central West Coast acclimated Broccoli seeds are offered by 3F: \$3.00 for 30.

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

Rose's Bistro Off Main: We encourage folks to patronize Rose's Bistro in New Port Richey, and other local produce markets. The Bistro often has organics, usually has local produce, is locally owned, and is a distributor of Seed Savers Exchange Heirloom Organic Seeds. Here is the facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/TheMarketOffMain>

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 weekend 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
Black Cat Growers
Freedom House Farm
Friendship Farms & Fare: First Farm
Good Chance Farm
Hart's Family Farm
Seeds of Love Organic Farm
Tarry Lane Tasting Station**

May 23, 2016–33rd report for the 2015-2016 Garden Year

Friendship Farms & Fare is a branch of Ecology Florida, a not-for-profit corporation.
Contributions to Friendship Farms & Fare and Ecology Florida are tax deductible.
If you would like to support our work, please consider sharing a donation.
PO Box 596 • New Port Richey, Florida 34656-0596

Friendship Farms & Fare affirms and advances agrarian ideals to reestablish a sustainable culture



Ecology Florida advances the harmonious integration of healthy natural, cultural, and economic ecologies to regenerate a sustainable world

PO Box 596 • New Port Richey, Florida 34656-0596
www.EcologyFlorida.org

Ecology Florida, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization, with 501(c)(3) designation. Contributions to Ecology Florida, Inc. are tax deductible under section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Ecology Florida is a registered charitable organization in the state of Florida. Registration number, CH 33333. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.