

FRIENDSHIP FARMS & FARE

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

FARM REPORT & NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 24, 2014 – 8TH 2014-2015 FARM & CSA REPORT

REPORT

61 degrees at 3:00 AM, November 22, 2014

Historic Average (for 11/21): 77 HIGH, 59 LOW–Weather Underground:

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

The historical average high temperature is now 77 degrees (seven degrees higher than the lowest average high [70], and thirteen degrees lower than the highest average high [90]). Our average low is now 59 degrees (eight degrees higher than the lowest average low [51] and seventeen degrees lower than the highest average low [76]). 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.

Happy Thanksgiving November 27

All of us at 3F CSA wish you and everyone in your circle a happy Thanksgiving. We are giving thanks that you are in our circle.

This Saturday November 29 – 1:00 PM

Join Us At Market Off Main For Seed Rack Dedication

**3F to team with Ecology Florida and Market Off Main To bring Seed Savers Exchange
Seeds to New Port Richey**

Good gardens require good seeds, and Tampa Bay now has access to the highest quality seeds. These are Seed Savers Exchange heirloom, organic seeds. Your CSA has joined other groups committed to sustainability in sponsoring a Seed Savers Exchange seed rack in New Port Richey.

Through a cooperative arrangement with Friendship Farms & Fare and Ecology Florida, the Market Off Main, in New Port Richey, will soon offer a wide range of organic, heirloom, non-GMO seeds exclusively from Seed Savers Exchange. The seed display and sales area will be presented to the public on "Small Business Saturday," November 29, with a dedication event at 1:00 PM.

This is a trend-setting achievement for the Market Off Main, and another verification of New Port Richey's leadership in ecological stewardship, sustainability, and resiliency. Market Off Main in New Port Richey will be the only location on the West Coast of Florida offering these high quality packaged seeds. Some of the seed packs will be Early Jersey Cabbage, Dragon Carrots, Georgia Southern Collards, Genovese Basil, Lacinato Kale, and over 50 other heirloom, organic vegetable seeds – including some from local farms and gardens.

Market Off Main is located at 6214 Lincoln St., which is just off of Main Street, and just to the east of the Main Street bridge. It features local produce, a delicatessen, and a cafe. Friendship Farms & Fare is a local urban farm, community garden, CSA, seed bank, and nursery. Ecology Florida is a Florida-focused not-for-profit organization focusing on restoring balance and harmony in the ecologies of nature, culture, and economics. A spokesperson for Ecology Florida observed that this innovative project embodies the ideals of Ecology Florida, by bringing heirloom organic seeds into the community, enhancing local culture, and supporting the local economy. This is how we advance toward balance in ecologies of nature, culture, and economics.

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

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The Market Off Main is a meeting place, a community hub, and an entertainment center. It features local produce, a delicatessen, and a cafe.
<http://www.marketoffmain.com/>

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/>

For more information contact Ecology Florida
admin@ecologyflorida.org

Final Share Acquired

We welcomed our final shareholder into the 3F CSA last week. This brings us up to full carrying capacity, which is the projected number of shares we need to breakeven for the year. Of course, there is a lot of year left (10 months), but based on previous years, and expected income and donations for the rest of the year, the CSA may be self-supporting – for the first time ever.

Weekly Weather Report

Cold Weather Last Week and More On The Way For Thanksgiving

Last Week (11/15-11/21): Last week saw the coldest temperatures of the season. We did receive the expected rain (over an inch at the farms), and the polar vortex lived up to its chilly reputation. There was no serious damage, although leaves on the young cucumbers were a bit wrinkled, so too with leaves on the ambitious sweet potato vines.

The highest high for last week was 81 (11/16) and the lowest high was 61 (11/19). The highest low was 64 (11/17) and lowest low was 41 (11/19), although we got into the upper 30s here in the gardens.

This Week (11/22-11/28): WU is forecasting another major cold front this week. A weak warm front will push through over the weekend, with the cold front arriving by Tuesday. Look for light rain over the weekend, then more rain early in the week (most likely Tuesday) ahead of the cold front, and cold temperatures from Tuesday through Thanksgiving and Black Friday.

Forecast low on Thursday (Thanksgiving) is 43 degrees, with a high that day of 61. This cold front is another iteration of the "polar vortex" phenomena, which is again bringing unseasonably cold temperatures to most of North America.

With rain expected ahead of the front, those who use cisterns may collect enough water to irrigate for the week.

Looking Ahead: The rain last week and expected rain this week, is welcome. It is also unseasonable. We are in the driest part of the year, with average daily rainfall amounting to .05 of an inch per day – that's 1/2 of 1/10 of an inch. Most days will be dry, and humidity will be low.

Average temperatures will continue to drop. We are now into freeze season, and freezes are possible in any given week. The Polar Vortex will only heighten the possibility of freezes. By next month, we'll be approaching the coldest period of the year. Averages are not good guides, and we are currently running a bit below historical averages.

Garden Overview **Fall Plantings and First Harvests** (additional details and assessments follows)

Shares remain relatively light, but the winter greens are beginning to come in. We have arugula, collards, and first shares of kale. Kale will be light (sample size).

We might have enough late-season eggplant for shares, but we cannot guarantee. Eggplant will be first come first serve.

Sweet potatoes and okra are finished. We note November 13 as the last date for okra harvest this year. We did stumble upon a few gigantic sweet potatoes when planting in the new south garden. How could we have missed these – especially the one giant specimen. Together, the three weighed 8 pounds, with one tipping the scales at 4lbs.

See the Share Report for all items.

We've continued at a pretty good pace for seeding and garden starts. This year will be our most extensive planting ever. We are going heavier on the cool-weather greens than we have in the past, and aiming to have at least 100 each of kale, collards, and swiss chard. We are aiming for 250 broccoli. We'll forego cauliflower, and go heavy on broccoli. Our neighboring garden, Hart's Family Farm, will be growing cabbage and cauliflower.

We have installed kales and collards, which are maturing nicely. Swiss chard is doing better now. As expected, the famous Calabrese is doing well, but we are behind in getting seedlings into the gardens. Arugula is thriving.

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/>).

Swiss Chard

The swiss chard continues to improve. Several plants have large healthy leaves. It will likely be a couple more weeks before we have enough to harvest, but the cooler temperatures should accelerate growth. The most successful of the swiss chards are the Fordhook Giants. Cadle's Cove shared Swiss Chard with us, and we dedicated a bed to those in the south garden.

Last week we seeded a new variety for us, Gold Silverbeet. These were out of date seeds shared with us by Seed Savers Exchange. We thought we'd give them a try, and all germinated.

Arugula

Arugula continues to thrive. There is enough for full shares for all. We were going to start some seeds, but there have been so many volunteers springing up all over the gardens, we will probably skip the formal seeding.

Kale

Kale is getting stronger by the day. We will have small shares available this week. We started more seeds this week, and installed more kale in the south garden. At this point, we are behind in the amount of kale we'd like to have ready for harvest. We planted more kale in the south garden this week.

Scarlet Kale finally germinated (on the 4th try) and is progressing slowly – it is a slow grower. The strongest of the kales is the German Kale (Halbhoher Gruner Krauser), followed by the Lacinato. We have an entire bed of the Halbhoher in the south garden.

Collards

Georgia Southern Collards are trendsetters for the fall garden, and the Vates are coming on strong now. We seeded more Vates last week – finally. We'll aim to do seed more this week

Broccoli

We have started over 300 seeds, with 100% germination – remarkable. These are our famous (3F) Calabrese broccoli seeds. We have **64** seedlings in the gardens, which reflects our planting **24** seedlings in the new south garden.

We'll try to plant more this week; we have plenty of seedlings, now. The only challenge is one of time – specifically the time to prepare the beds with new mulch. We are aiming to have 200 planted this year. Last year, we had 144.

- If you are starting a garden, please check with us first for seeds and seedlings. Our broccoli seeds are from the Calabrese family, and we've been harvesting these seeds since 2008. They are listed with Seed Savers Exchange. We offer them (and all our seeds) for sale at \$3.00 for a packet (with a minimum of 30 seeds).

All our seeds are from our own harvests of heirloom varieties that have become locally acclimated. They are heavy producers with extended seasons. They typically out perform any commercially produced and packaged seeds. Also, by acquiring seeds from us (or other responsible local growers), you are keeping resources in the community. All 3F income goes directly back into the farms. Friendship Farms & Fare operates as a not-for-profit business under the charter of Ecology Florida, a 501 C3 corporation.

Spinach

The "American" spinach seeds have germinated, at about 80%. They are spindly with narrow leaves.

Cucumbers

Cucumbers are not a typical fall crop, but we've had success before, so we are trying again this year. These are a Japanese variety, Suyo. All have sprouted and we shared some with the folks at the EcoFest. We've germinated another variety we've had success with (Longfellows), and we'll get

those in the garden shortly. Of the new varieties we tried (Double Yield and Picklebush) only Double Yield germinated. This was a Seed Savers Exchange out-of-date experiment. Germination rate was 100%. The other variety (Picklebush) was an organic offering from Burpee. It did not germinate. We'll be planting our Suyos and Longfellows as companions to our blackberries. They can train on the blackberry trellises.

Tomatoes

We are going with a good producer from previous seasons – the Wapsipinicon. This is a peach tomato, with ancestry going back to 1890. These are a bit larger than cherry tomatoes, and yellow to almost white. They have a wonderful flavor. We are going with the Wapsipinicon because they have proven to be the most resistant to blight and septoria. So far the seedlings are thriving. Now, if we can avoid a freeze!

Blackberries Ouachita Family

All blackberry vines are healthy, and most are producing new leaves. These are 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 not be available this week. We missed our start date again! We will try to start peppers this week

Eggplant

We are listing eggplant again this week. The volume continues to surprise. Plants are flowering and many are still setting fruit. The Florida High Bushes have quite a few small fruit on them. Hopefully, they will make it through the cold temperatures coming our way now.

Purslane

Purslane is thriving. There is plenty available.

Viticulture (Grape) News

Vines appear dormant.

Loquat Budding Exciting News About Young Trees

As first noted over a month ago, our loquat trees are budding, including our young trees (less than three years old), which were grown from seeds of our existing trees. There are more buds and flowers this year than we've ever seen before

It is likely that these buds will transition to fruit, although no fruit is yet evident. 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!

On Friday (11/21) there were a considerable number of bees at the flowers – the most thus far.

Okra
Last Harvest November 13, 2014

Okra season is now officially over at the 3F farms. This past week we harvested $\frac{1}{4}$ pound, bringing our total for the season to **99 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.**, total. This triples our harvest of last year -- 31 pounds.

Sweet Potatoes
Harvest Concludes
Last Harvest October 27, 2014
Last major spuds discovered November 21, 2014

We are adding the surprising spuds we discovered when planting the fall garden this past week – 8 lbs, total, bringing the total harvest for this season was **249 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.** We had a wonderful season. Last year, we harvested 150 lbs and this year 250 lbs., and most were in good to excellent condition.

Sweet Potato Leaves

SP leaves will not be listed again until next spring.

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. This is also the home of "Mandy's Monster Farm," which raises Flemish Giant rabbits. So, be advised, the family raises chickens, ducks, turkeys, and (of course) rabbits for human consumption. In addition to chicken eggs, they also have duck and turkey eggs.

Due to an accident involving Mandy and family, we'll be getting our eggs from other sources, temporarily.

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

November 24, 2014 (8)

*** larger quantity available if desired**

FCFS = limited supplies, early submissions given preference

Tampa Transmissions TBA

Vegetables

Arugula

Collards (small quantities)

Eggplant (small) (possible) (FCFS)

~~Hibiscus Leaves, Cranberry~~ **small quantities (samples)**

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/346372-nutrition-information-on-cranberry-hibiscus/>

Kale (small quantities – first samples)

Peppers – Habanero* – very hot

"Spinach" – Okinawa – small quantities (samples)

<http://edibleplantproject.org/okinawaspinach/>

Fruit -

Kumquat – Nagami (tart) (small quantities, "sample size")

Kumquat – Meiwa (sweet) (small quantities, "sample size")

Lemon – Meyer

Fungus/Mushrooms – Shitake Mushrooms (TBA) (from Cadle's Cove)

Nuts – pecan (TBA)

Herbs (* larger quantity available if desired)

Basil – Lemon

~~**Basil – Cinnamon**~~

Basil – Italian

Basil – Globe

Basil – medley (mix of all basil)

Chives

Cilantro (small quantities – first samples)

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: A nice gathering at the loquat flowers Friday (11/21). This is the largest number to date at the Loquat trees.

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

Raccoon: No raccoons, although neighbors report seeing several, and there were holes characteristic of raccoon activity in the north garden.

Southern Toad: None

Greenhouse Frog: None.

Leopard Frogs: None observed.

Florida Black Snake: None observed

Florida Ringneck Snake: None 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>

Earth Worms: None observed.

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. Here is a link to a site with information on the Skeletonizers:

http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/fruit/grapeleaf_skeletonizer.htm

Swifts: None observed, and the lodge is quiet.

Tree Frogs: Several observed. All are quiet, weak, and solitary – no breeding, no singing, no tadpoles.

Nocturnal Garden Spider – Some in both gardens.

Sweet bees: Several at native flowers.

"Asian Tramp Snail." The snails are uncommon now, but a few do turn up.

Mediterranean Gecko: None this week. Here is a good site for the Mediterranean Gecko, and Florida fauna in general:

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

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/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

Woodlouse – None. Woodlice are likely slowed by cold.

Opossum: None observed.

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

Cats: Neighborhood cat, Frankie, appears regularly. She has a kind disposition and has lived in the neighborhood for nearly a decade. Another old cat, Lady Gray, has returned to the neighborhood. Frankie and Lady Gray get along very well.

3F Stories, Events, and Policy Updates

Programs and Plans

Our 5th Year

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. We are expecting one new share this week, which will give us eleven – just one short of our goal of twelve, which is about what we need to break even.

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). Later this year, in cooperation with local markets, we will begin offering an extensive line of Seed Savers organic seeds.

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.ffffsite.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.

Planting & Harvest Notes **Fall Seeding and Garden Starts**

Seedings: Collards, Vates (51)

Garden Starts: Swiss Chard; Kale; Collards; Broccoli

Harvest Notes: okra, herbs, arugula, eggplant, collards, kale

Vermipost: no harvest

Bat Guano: no harvest (no bats)

3F to team with Ecology Florida and Market Off Main To bring Seed Savers Exchange Seeds to New Port Richey

(repeat of article earlier in newsletter)

Heirloom Seeds Coming in November to Market Off Main In New Port Richey

Through a cooperative arrangement with Friendship Farms & Fare and Ecology Florida, the Market Off Main, in New Port Richey, will soon offer a wide range of organic, heirloom, non-GMO seeds exclusively from Seed Savers Exchange. The seed display and sales area will be presented to the public in November.

This is a trend-setting achievement for the Market Off Main, and another verification of New Port Richey's leadership in ecological stewardship, sustainability, and resiliency. Market Off Main in New Port Richey will be the only location on the West Coast of Florida offering these high quality packaged seeds. Some of the seed packs will be Early Jersey Cabbage, Dragon Carrots, Georgia Southern Collards, Genovese Basil, Lacinato Kale, and over 50 other heirloom, organic vegetable seeds – including some from local farms and gardens.

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

For more information contact Ecology Florida

admin@ecologyflorida.org

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

Tentative Date Set for 2015 Festival

April 4, 2015

Market Off Main New Port Richey

We've set a tentative date of April 4 for the 2015 Festival. Mark your calendars (in pencil for now), and we'll get back with confirmation in next month's issue. In the meantime, please spread the word about Loquats and the event.

We starting preliminary work on the festival, and are happy to share our initial plans and visions.

First, we've had requests from a number of folks to share their loquat wares. So, if you are interested in sharing loquats, or loquat products and wares, please contact us. This is a "Loquat Exclusive" event, so everything being shared (for sale, contribution, or gift) must be a loquat or loquat-derived product. Space is limited, and proposals will be reviewed. Sharing will be contingent on proper paperwork (including disclaimers on foods), fees if any, available space, and commitment to the Festival.

Second, if you have a loquat tree that volunteers can harvest for the festival, please let us know your location (and phone number); we'll make arrangements for the harvest in season.

Third, and this is a new event for 2015, we are planning a Loquat poetry contest. Yes! That's right. We'll have more information on this in next month's mailing, but we wanted to get the word out now, so contributing poets will be aware. By the way, what rhymes with Loquat (besides Kumquat)?

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, 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.

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)
- * 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

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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**

November 24, 2014 – 8th report for the 2014-2015 Garden Year
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