

**FRIENDSHIP FARMS & FARE**  
FARM REPORT & NEWSLETTER  
SEPTEMBER 1, 2014 – 48TH FARM & CSA REPORT

**REPORT**

**75 degrees at 4:30 AM, August 30, 2014**

**Historical Average (for 8/29): 90 HIGH, 76 LOW–Weather Underground:**

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

The historical average high temperature is now 90 degrees (twenty degrees higher than the lowest average high [70]). Our average low is now 76 degrees (twenty-five degrees higher than the lowest average low [51]). The average high and average low will remain the same until early September – the 9<sup>th</sup> for the low and the 10<sup>th</sup> for the high. At that time, the historic averages drop one degree.

**Note:** For the past few years, our summer 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.

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

Our loquat trees are doing some early budding. This is not uncommon in the summer, although the regular (and full) budding season is late fall. In the fall, budding is generalized and buds (then flowers, then fruit) cover the entire tree – a beautiful show. The summer buds are pleasant reminders of the abundance to come later in the year, but these early buds do not lead to fruit – at least not in our experience.

The exciting news, however, is not the early buds, but that two of our young trees (planted in March 2012) have buds. We are very happy to share this report, which suggests that the trees have reached sexual maturity. Most resource sites on loquats (few though they may be) report that trees started from seed do not produce fruit for at least five years. Some report that the trees grown from seed do not produce for ten years or longer, and some report trees-from-seeds never produce fruit – but are attractive ornamentals.

Now, these two young trees are a long way from producing fruit. We are noting only pre-seasonal budding, but this budding is occurring at the same time as the pre-seasonal budding of all the local trees that regularly produce fruit in season. It remains to be seen if these two trees will bud, flower and produce fruit next spring, 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!

We'll post images of these early buds on the website, if possible.

(this article will also appear later in the Farm Report)

**4 Weeks Left in Garden Year**

We have four weeks remaining in the 2013-2014 Garden Year. Current shareholders may renew at the current membership rate. There will be new membership rates for new shares. Please let us know your intentions for the coming year. If you plan to renew, please let us know, and send the fee before the end of September. If you have any questions, send us a message, and we'll answer or clarify for your convenience. Thanks.

So far, we have received one renewal. We are aiming to have 12 shares in the coming year.

The next Garden Year will begin on October 6. In the next four weeks, we are expecting significant quantities of sweet potatoes and okra, eggplant, and perhaps some bell peppers. 3F can now receive tax-deductible contributions. If you would like to share financial support, your contributions will be a wonderful enhancement to our project – and they will be tax deductible.

### **Weekly Weather Report: Dry Summer Continues**

**Last Week (8/23-8/29):** Temperatures ran well above normal this past week. We reached 95 degrees twice, and did not have a high below 92 degrees. Remember, the normal high at this time of the year is 90 degrees. We had a trace of rain on Wednesday (8/20) and Friday (8/22). The rain was most welcome, but there was so little that irrigation was still necessary. So far, August's rainfall is looking a lot like July's – below normal. We average about 7 ¾ inches for August. Our August rainfall this year is a little over 6 inches. Last year, by comparison, we received 9.7 inches.

So, this has been a dry summer; with only September remaining to help us catch up a bit. It is likely that, all told, 2014 will be a very dry year here on the Gulf Coast of the Springs Coast Watershed – at least the Friendship Farms & Fare locations. Last year, we had over 40 inches by the end of August. This year, we've received a bit less than 30 inches.

Temperatures were very high throughout the region. Leesburg and Bradenton both had record-breaking highs of 100 degrees last Saturday (8/23). This is extremely unusual for Florida. Yes, it does get hot here, and the humidity intensifies the heat; but the humidity also tends to cap the temperature at about the mid-90s. We also benefit from Gulf and Atlantic winds, which tend to cool the state and also stimulate our familiar summer thunderstorms that may bring significant cooling to specific areas.

**This Week (8/30-9/3):** WU is forecasting above normal highs and normal lows in the coming week, with higher chances of rain earlier in the week. Gardeners and farmers in the area should again plan for daily irrigation.

### **Garden Overview**

**(additional details and assessment that follows)**

Summer is coming to a close. Many okra plants are in decline and a several more expired this week. Some sweet potato leaves are yellowing, and it is past time to harvest the sweet potatoes. Eggplant is producing rather well. We appear to have outgrown the tomato pinworms that had plagued us earlier.

We harvested okra and sweet potatoes yesterday.

We did a considerable amount of seeding for the fall.

### **Looking Ahead to Fall**

Fall seeding began this past week, and will continue today and into next week. We will begin planting the fall garden in the second week of September (9/8). The first plants into the garden will likely be kales, collards, and broccoli. We will definitely plant arugula, whose seeds have generated with enthusiasm.

This is an early planting, judging from the new climate-change weather patterns, although it is consistent with recommendations from Florida Department of Agriculture and several planting calendars. We need new and revised planting guides that take into account climate change.

In recent years, September and even October have been too hot for the cool weather crops to develop. Nonetheless, we are again taking our chances and hoping for temperatures closer to

historical norms. If it is too hot and the seedlings do not flourish, we'll start others later in the season.

This fall we'll go heavier on the cool-weather greens than we have in the past – collards, kale, and swiss chard. Our new experimental crop this fall will be spinach. Of course, we'll have a healthy planting of arugula, and the famous Calabrese. Bell peppers will be planted in October, and we expected 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/>).

There has been little interest in cabbage, so we will not pursue that experiment.

### **Summer Wrap Up**

As noted above, the summer farming season is coming to an end. Okra harvests will be lighter in the coming weeks, but if we can get 22 more pounds, we'll reach 100 pounds for the season. We will be putting energy into harvesting sweet potatoes over the next two weeks. It looks like the eggplant may hold on for several more weeks.

### **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.

### **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.**

### **Bell Peppers**

We have a few good looking bell peppers for shares this week. All plants have been severely impact by the heat and dry conditions, and we may lose some, but others have survived and are producing.

### **Tomatoes**

As noted above, we'll try a few tomato varieties, 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)

### **Watermelon**

We harvested the one watermelon that reached full maturity. Look for a report on its quality next week. We will probably not plant watermelon next year.

### **Eggplant**

We are listing eggplant again this week – and trusting the maturing fruit will continue their progress and be large enough to warrant harvest for shares. There are a number of fruit on the plants, and plenty of flowers. Our production will be augmented by fruits shared with us by our friends at Cadell's Cove Farm. Include in your share if you like.

The plants are producing much later than expected, and later than indicated in the literature.

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)

Most likely, we'll try eggplant again next year. The late-season production has been very encouraging.

### **Purslane**

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

### **Pecan Tree**

The pecans are getting very close to maturity. The nuts are full sized now, but still green. We are making a point of checking them every day now. So far, there has been no predation of the nuts, which grow larger, seemingly by the day. We are getting close to the time in previous years that the predation begins, so we are being especially vigilant.

The tree produces nuts each year, but other residents of the community consume the nuts before we can harvest them. Most likely, squirrels are enjoying the nuts, although this is not a certainty. Our only challenge is (as always) the height of the tree. We cannot stop predation in the upper branches, and it is not yet clear how we could harvest the nuts from more than those branches closest to the ground. Remember this tree is over 40 feet tall.

There are large pecan groves in Florida's Big Bend and further north into the middle south. The groves are harvested using a machine that shakes the tree when the nuts are mature, dislodging the nuts from the branches.

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

Ray finished the grape arbor this week. He did a wonderful job, and the arbor is most attractive. We'll try to include images on the 3F site, or send them along in a special mailing.

We continue to monitor the Grapeleaf Skeletonizer, whose larvae reappeared in great numbers this week. We petitioned for exemption from our no-kill policy, and killed hundreds of the little worms on the leaves of the grape vines. Ray's again treated with organic (OMRI certified) repellent and insecticide. We have seen no Skeletonizer moths, but they must have been present due to the abundance of the larvae. See this site for background information on the Skeltonizers:

[http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/fruit/grapeleaf\\_skeletonizer.htm](http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/fruit/grapeleaf_skeletonizer.htm)

We are thinking that by next year, we may have grapes in the CSA. Just as a note, a portion of the annual CSA membership contribution is being directed to the completion of the grape arbor.

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

(article appeared earlier in Farm Report)

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### Okra

As noted previously, harvests are down, and will continue to decrease in the coming weeks. Gradually, the plants are perishing, although there are still many that are very strong and vigorous.

This past week we harvested **5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>** pounds, bringing our total for the season to **78 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>** lbs., total. Last year we harvested a total of 31 pounds. We have adjusted our target upward (from 50 pounds) to 100 pounds this year. We should reach that goal easily.

We are past the highest production period, and harvests will decline over the coming weeks.

We should have okra through September, and the close of the garden year.

Our larger plants are now over 8 feet tall, and remember, these are all from our own saved seeds.

As noted previously, we experimented with large (long) Red Burgundy pods and found some remained tender up to 7 inches. Some Silver Queen pods also remained tender at a length of about 6 inches. If you'd like to try these longer pods, let us know. It is certain the Hill Country Red and Star of David get woody and fibrous when more than 3-4 inches. We'll keep those pods in that range for shares.

This past week in our kitchen, we used only large-long pods, and found that every few were dense, woody, or fibrous. Yes, some where, but most were not.

Working with the pods has been an adventure. It appears that an important key to harvesting is picking them just before the pods stop growing. But how do you know? Well, that's hard to say, but we've been squeezing them at 3-4 inches. If they are especially pliant, we'll give them another day; if they are the slightest bit tough we harvest them, then and there. One 6 inch Silver Queen was as soft and easy to cut as ripe tomato, but a Red Burgundy of about the same length was tough and woody.

Also, as a reminder, all of our plants are grown using seeds from the 3F seed bank, saved from previous years. So, these are closed loop, sustainable seeds and plants. If you'd like seeds or seedlings, let us know.

### **Special note on Kathleen's experiment with pickled okra**

With regret, Kathleen's experiment with pickling our okra has come to an end. As a cottage industry, she is not allowed to prepare pickled products. Such an unfortunate rule.

For those who may be interested, here is the FDACS brochure on Cottage Food Operations:

<http://www.freshfromflorida.com/content/download/10223/137606/CottageFoodAdvisoryWithFormNumber.pdf>

### **Sweet Potatoes Harvest Continues**

Harvest stands at **119½** lbs., total

We harvested two more beds last week, and we'll aim to do three more this week.

This is probably the most labor-intensive crop to harvest. It surpasses even planting in terms of 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 are probably now close to pace to reach that goal.

Some of the fruit are coming in a bit rugged in appearance now. They have clefts and splits. Ground-dwelling fauna, most likely grubs, have sampled some. 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. What we do, is cut off the damaged skin, then bake the "naked" taters, whole, or slice the fruit into thick wafers or coins. Perfect and delicious. Please let us know if you'll accept these special fruits.

Using the additional beds of the New South Gardens, we started earlier this year and staggered the planting of slips over two months. This allows for earlier harvests and also extends the harvest over an extended period – from early July through early September. We'll see how that works out, but so far the spuds are maturing on schedule.

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/>

### **Sweet Potato Leaves**

SP leaves are available in quantity, and will be for the rest of the garden year. 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 will 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 still producing, but it is slowing down now. Some in the CSA community have enjoyed this wild, native-Florida specialty, and repeated share requests every week.

See earlier Farm Report for an extended narrative about 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." 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.

The cost for these eggs will be slightly higher than our previous costs, but they are coming from a local farm, which treats their animals with compassion.

Starting next Garden year, prices will be \$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.

**Honey:** Local honey is again available. Our bee husbander, Robert, has just brought in an ample honey harvest. 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.

We have found a local humane fowl and egg farm, and acquired our first share of eggs. First 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." 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.

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**Herbs:** Tarragon is thriving, along with rosemary, and oregano. We also have Lemon and Cinnamon Basil, and a little Italian Basil. 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.fff-site.org/#!contact/cl4>

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

### **THE SHARE**

**September 1, 2014 (48)**

**\* larger quantity available if desired**

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

**Tampa Transmissions TBA**

### **Vegetables**

**Arugula (small quantities)**

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

**Eggplant (likely) (FCFS)**

**Okra**

**Peppers – Habanero\* – very hot**

**Smilax (Cat Briar) (small quantity) (FCFS)**

**Sweet Potatoes (please let us know if 2<sup>nds</sup> are acceptable)**

**- see narrative on SPs in Farm Report for details**

**Sweet Potato Leaves**

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

**Basil – Lemon**

**Basil – Cinnamon**

**Basil – Italian**

**Chives**

**Cilantro**

**Mint – Citrus**

**Oregano**

**Parsley**

**Purslane**

**Rosemary\***

**Tarragon\***

**Thyme**

### **COMPANION FAUNA**

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

**Leopard Frogs:** Little male in north pond active but skittish of humans (which is good)

**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>

**Grapeleaf Skeletonizer:** Abundant GS caterpillars observed on grape leaves. 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)

**Mediterranean Gecko:** Small MG observed on east wall of dwelling. Here is a good site for the Mediterranean Gecko, and Florida fauna in general:

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

**Southern Toad:** No southern toad.

**Lubbers:** No lubbers this week. We'll keep this beloved companion on the list through September. We have seen them that late in the year. Usually there are mature lubbers throughout the estate at this time of the year. It looks like this summer will be remembered as the first year without lubbers. We did have one who reached maturity, but apparently did not find a mater. Perhaps, we will call it The One Lubber Summer.

**Swifts:** None observed.

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

**Greenhouse Frog:** Several observed in the South Garden, disturbed when moving blackberry shrubs.

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

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](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%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.

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

**Honey Bees:** No honey bees observed this week

**Sweet bees:** Several in Ray's herb garden.

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

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

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

**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 morning. 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:** Cilantro, SS (72); Arugula, 3F (54) **S**; Kale, Red Russian, SS (18)**S**; Collards, Georgia Southern, SS (128); Broccoli, 3F Calabrese, 3F (108).

**Garden Starts:** Some kale transplanted to small pots

**Harvest Notes:** okra, sweet potatoes, herbs, arugula

**Vermipost:** no harvest

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

**Next Workday: TBA**

If you would like to join us in the late summer, send your best Saturday(s) in September.

## **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/>

**3F Produce for non-shareholders**

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 \$12.

If requested items remain after shares have been distributed, they may be acquired by non-members. Just reply to this email if you desire anything on the list. We suggest non-shareholders start an account to cover costs of items

**The Florida Loquat Festival: Celebrating Florida's Urban Fruit  
April 5, 2014 – 11:00 – 2:00  
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 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:

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## 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

**Non-Members may order shares for \$10 per week.** For this nominal amount, contributors may request any 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.

**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.

**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 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 (\$3.20) 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 \$4.50 each (\$3.50 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 – 1:00 PM) for a good selection of locally grown organic vegetables. [New Port Richey Public Library, 5939 Main St, New Port Richey, FL](#)

**West Pasco Urban Market:** Saturdays.

**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, and Organic Wholefoods Kitchen**

## **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**

**September 1, 2014 – 48th report for the 2013-2014 Garden Year**

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