Friendship Farms & Fare

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

Farm Report & Newsletter

June 22, 2015 – 38th 2014-2015 Farm & CSA Report

Friendship Farms & Fare is a division of Ecology Florida, a not-for-profit corporation.
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PO Box 596 • New Port Richey, Florida 34656-0596
http://www.fffsite.org/

FARM REPORT

81 degrees at 2:00 AM, June 20, 2015

Historic Average (for 6/19): 90 HIGH, 75 LOW–Weather Underground:
http://www.wunderground.com/
See the complete weekly weather report later in the Farm Report

WELCOME SUMMER
Solstice June 21

Summer arrives on Sunday June 21. Here at the farms, it seems like it has been with us for months already. In fact, our spring temperatures and weather condition have been virtually identical to those of mid-summer. From now until September, temperatures will be in the 90s most days, and in the upper 70s at night. Of course, we've had those temperatures since March.

This week also marks the beginning of the rainy season, when the historical average for daily rainfall is over ¼ inch. We are also about a month into hurricane season, which begins on June 1.

This year has already been very hot, with our winter temperatures well above normal, and spring so hot it feels like summer.

Of course, this is hard on the plants, and reduces production. We have good soil and give the plants plenty of attention, so our yields are probably better than most.

Sweet Potato Leaves
Summer's Secret Greens

Some of you are familiar with the secret summer green -- Sweet Potato Leaves. They are delicious and have many culinary uses. Every year about this time, we begin listing these nutritious summer greens, which are very popular in Asia, but little known in the USA. There are numerous ways to prepare these greens, and we encourage you to try a few samples, and see if you like them. Some folks prefer the flavor and texture of SP leaves to more well-known greens, like spinach or kale. Here is a site with nutritional information on SP leaves and links to recipes:
http://www.epicurious.com/archive/blogs/editor/2012/08/cooking-with-sweet-potato-greens.html

Tampa Share Transmissions on Wednesdays
Starting First Week of July
July 1, 2015

Starting the first week of July, and until mid-August, Tampa shares will be transmitted on Wednesdays. New Port Richey shares will have pick ups on Thursdays. We will likely return to Thursday Tampa transmissions in August.

Heavy Production For Okra

Okra is producing heavily now. See report later on plantings and harvests. Some of the plants are now taller than the gardeners. Okra is a wonderful summer vegetable, and we have been rather successful with it here at the farms. If you have not tried okra, now is a good time.

To further inspire you, here is a site with 12 recipes from *Southern Living:*
http://www.southernliving.com/food/10-best-okra-recipes

And here is one from *Cooking Light:*
http://www.cookinglight.com/food/in-season/okra-recipes/view-all

Seed Savers Seeds Available Through Friendship Farms & Fare

Please buy your seeds and seedlings from local growers or suppliers committed to organic, heirloom seeds.

3F is pleased to offer the highest quality organic, heirloom seeds to the community. You may order several locally acclimated seeds from our own collection as well as Seed Savers seeds from us. Seed Savers seeds are the only ones we use at Friendship Farms, unless we use our own 3F seeds saved from previous years.

If you'd like to order Seed Savers seeds form us, find the seeds you desire online, let us know the type(s) and quantities, and we'll order them for you. http://www.seedsavers.org/onlinestore/

Cost: $4.00 per packet ($3.00 for shares). We'll include them in your share or mail them to you, if you give us your address.

Please buy your seeds and seedlings from local growers or suppliers committed to organic, heirloom seeds.

See this story on the damage caused by "big box stores":
http://www.goodjobsfirst.org/smart-growth-working-families/harms-big-box-retail

See also, 10 reasons to support local commerce:
http://ilsr.org/why-support-locally-owned-businesses/

Weekly Weather Report
Rainy Season Begins
Last Week: Too Hot
This Week: Just As Hot
* Summer Begins June 21 *

90s until September

81 degrees at 3:00 AM, June 20, 2015

Historic Average (for 6/19): 90 HIGH, 75 LOW–Weather Underground:
http://www.wunderground.com/

Historically, the average high temperature is now 90 degrees (twenty degrees higher than the lowest average high of the year [70]), and the highest average high of the year [90]). Our average low is now 75 degrees, which is twenty-four degrees higher than lowest average low [51], and one degree lower than the highest average low [76]).

Average high has reached its peak and the highest average low will be reached June 24. Those averages will remain constant (at 90/76) until early September, when the annual decline begins. This means for three months the average high will be 90 degrees, and the average low will be 76. It will also be humid during those months.

Note: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reports that 2014 was the hottest year on record (since records have been kept, 1880). Ocean and land temperatures were at their all time highs. This has also been the warmest winter on record in the Arctic.

Know the Science:

This is no great surprise to us. 2014 seemed hotter than usual here at the farms, and the past few years, our highs and lows have typically run a bit higher than historic averages. Last year the trend continued, and so far this year, it is still continuing. Although humans may enjoy unseasonably warm weather, above normal temperatures stress plants and animals.

According to NASA, 97% of climate scientists agree that global warming and resultant climate change is a reality and most likely due to human activity. http://climate.nasa.gov/scientific-consensus/.

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 (6/13-6/19): We had rain Monday, Thursday, and Friday -- about an inch, total. Temperatures were stunningly high – above 90 every day, with two 93s and one 95. Anything over 91-92 is very rare on the Gulf Coast. This is due to humidity and our proximity to water (with the Atlantic to our east and the Gulf of Mexico to our west). Despite these cooling elements we are regularly reaching the mid-90s, and we will probably see many more in the weeks and months ahead.

This Week (6/20-6/26): WU is forecasting above normal highs most of the week, with highs in the 90s and rain possible most days. The lowest high for the week is forecast to be 90. This week marks the beginning of the rainy season, which for us is the week when the historical average for rainfall is more than ¼ inch.

Looking Ahead: Look for rain regularly for the rest of the month, and the rest of the summer, until September. We reached the highest historical average high for the year (90 degrees) on June 4. The highest historical average low (76 degrees) will be reached on June 24. These average highs and lows will remain unchanged for 3 months – until September.

Right now, we are seeing 80s well into the night and overnight – e.g., it is 81 degrees at 2:00 AM as this report is being composed.

Summer begins on June 21. This is the day with the longest period of time between sunup and sunset during the year – "the longest day of the year."

We are currently running well above historical averages on a consistent basis. We expect this will continue for the rest of the year – and probably the rest of our lives.

Garden Overview
Summer Plantings Continue
(additional details and assessments follow)

The summer garden is now fully planted. This occurred on June 14, when all the beds had seedlings or plants. So, we won't be doing any more major plantings, but we'll fill in for the rest of the summer, and start some seedlings in containers in new locations for testing.

We are also helping Ray finish off his garden, donating okra and lima beans.

For those interested in summer crops: We recommend sweet potatoes, okra, beans, and eggplant. It is still not too late to start a summer garden. We've had good luck with all four of these summer staples. It looks like we'll be successful with the Red Malabar Spinach.

Our most recent seeding of bell peppers has germinated nicely and is still developing very well. Eggplant seedlings are doing a little better also. You'll remember these were concerns earlier, and we are probably not out of the woods yet.

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/).

Third Sweet Potato Shipment Arrives
446 slips planted

Our third and final order of sweet potatoes (our last of the season) is mostly in the ground.

We planted 14 more slips, the last of the season, bringing our total to **446** in 16 beds. These last slips went in some open space we still had in the Big East bed (the third new south bed).

We've staggered the planting to stagger the harvest. Using this method, we'll be harvesting from July to late August and early September.

In 2013 we harvested 150 lbs. Last year (2014) our harvest was 250 lbs. This year we are aiming at 400 lbs. We'll take our first sample diggings in about a month.

Okra
12 ½ pounds

We harvested 2½ pounds of okra this week, bringing our total to **12 ½ pounds.**

We are finished with the okra plantings, but we'll still fill in a few open spaces in the north and south gardens, and we'll plant some in planters.

If you read this far in the newsletter, let us know if you would be interested in attending an Okra Festival. We are doing some advance planning for an event in mid-June, 2016.

Red Malabar Spinach

Our experiment with Red Malabar Spinach continues. The plants are not producing as much as we had hoped, but the leaves are delicious, and we are planting more.

We have the Malabar listed this week, but leaves will be few. We have about 50 seedlings ready to plant, and we'll do so later this week or early next.

Here is a good site for information on this fine summer green from South Asia:
http://www.bbg.org/gardening/article/red-stemmed_malabar_spinach

Taste tests have been very positive. The leaves have been enjoyed raw and cooked. Although this is not a "true" spinach, it *does* taste a bit like traditional cool-weather spinach, with a somewhat earthier flavor.

At your request, we'll include few leaves for you to sample.

Tomatoes and Peppers

Volunteer tomato plants are thriving and we are still hoping for a few tomatoes in the coming weeks. If you do not want tomatoes let us know. We have a nice MesoAmerican Midget tomato that is producing nice clusters of small tomatoes.

Despite our challenges with seedlings, our Arkansas Travelers are doing pretty well.

Persimmon First Fruitlings

The Fuyu Persimmo's first fruit continues to mature. This is the first year this tree has fruited.

Ouachita Blackberries

Done for the Season

Old Canes Cut

The blackberry vines are spent, and we cut down the old canes. The new canes for next year's harvest are growing long and strong.

Habanero Peppers

Habaneros are coming back very nicely now, and bearing abundant blossoms – and the first fruits. Order if you like this week.

Eggplant

65

Eggplants are flourishing. We harvested nine more this week, bringing our total to **65** so far. This week, we harvested our first Prosperosas (a beautiful eggplant, but aren't they all?). Here is an image from another grower: **http://casaverdecsa.com/2012/01/13/prosperosa/**

You may order eggplant this week, but we may not have enough for all shares.

Purslane

Purslane is a thriving, and there are many healthy plants throughout the garden. Purslane has the highest concentration of omega oils of any terrestrial organism. Only some fish have a higher concentration.

Viticulture (Grape) News

Vines are thriving, and we have a couple of bunches ripening up.

East Madison Growers and Friendship Farms & Fare Team Up:

New Community Garden Planned in East Madison Neighborhood

3F has teamed up with friends and supporters to develop a new community garden in the East Madison neighborhood of New Port Richey.

The property owner has committed to having East Madison Growers and 3F use a vacant lot for a community garden. There is still some paper work that needs to be reviewed and signed, but the project looks to be solid. We'll have more about this exciting new development in the future Farm Reports.

Black Cat Growers Preserves In Recess

Our preserves from Black Cat Growers will be in recess until further notice.

Eggs If Desired

Organic eggs from free-range, humanely treated chicken are available for $6.50 ($5.00 for shares) for a dozen. We are now generally getting them from Mandy's Monster Farm/Suncoast Acres Poultry Farm. Here is a link to Mandy's Monster Farm, which has a link to the Suncoast Acres Poultry Farm: http://www.mandysmonsterfarm.com/index.html

We also get them from other local farms, if and as they are available. Our major secondary supplier is Juan's Chicken Farm.

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. We have good quantities of basil, tarragon, and oregano. Basils will continue in recess. Consult the share list for other herbs, and other available items.

Tampa deliveries will be Thursday this week. West Pasco transmissions at the farm will be determined on the basis of share request and distance, with Wednesday being the best day.

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.fffsite.org/#!contact/cl4l

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

June 22, 2015 (38)

*** larger quantity available if desired**
FCFS = limited supplies, early submissions given preference
Tampa Transmissions TBA

Vegetables
Eggplant
Lettuce – Romaine
Okra
http://www.southernliving.com/food/10-best-okra-recipes
Peppers – Habanero (burning hot)
Spinach – Red Malabar NEW (not a true spinach) – samples for now (taste trials very positive)
http://www.bbg.org/gardening/article/red-stemmed_malabar_spinach
Sweet Potato Leaves (a wonderful summer green)*
http://www.epicurious.com/archive/blogs/editor/2012/08/cooking-with-sweet-potato-greens.html

Fruit -

Herbs (* larger quantity available if desired)
Basil
Italian
Chives (small quantity)
Cranberry Hibiscus
Cilantro (in recess)
Culantro (small quantity – tastes like a strong cilantro)
Oregano
Parsley
Peppermint
Purslane
Rosemary*
Smilax (in recess)
Tarragon
Thyme

Cottage Foods & Samples

Eggs: Mandy's Farm and Juan's Farm These are eggs from small organic growers. Fowl are humanely treated and free roaming: $6.50 ($5.00 for shares). Here is a link to Suncoast Acres Poultry Farm (which is the egg and fowl division of Mandy's Monster Farm) http://www.mandysmonsterfarm.com/Poultry.html

Honey: Local West Pasco honey from Daddy's Bees is available in 8 oz. bottles for $7.00 ($5.50 for shares).

Seedlings **(Start your spring garden with locally grown organic seedlings!)**
1 for $2.00
2 for $3.00
4 for $5.00

Okra (Silver Queen, Red Burgundy)
Red Malabar Spinach
Peanuts

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

COMPANION FAUNA
Spring Report
Animal companions are active and abundant

Swifts: Swifts are not as active as they were earlier, but they are still nesting in their lodge, and they are visible in the mid-sky every afternoon.

Bat update: No bats.

Tree Frogs: At least 30 frogs are on the estate. Frog songs are heard every night, and new egg clusters appear each week. There were two more this week.

Owl: No owls or calls this week.

Mediterranean Gecko: Medium sized gecko on East side of the dwelling – 2:00 AM June 16.
http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/nonnatives/reptiles/mediterranean-gecko/

Greenhouse Frog: None observed this week.

Leopard Frogs: Last listing on the Leopard, unless he appears in the coming week. The solitary male was not observed this week, nor did we hear his song. He may have left for another location in search of a mate.

Eastern Blue Bird: No blue birds

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1WlYEmuUhKI
http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Eastern_Bluebird/id
http://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/eastern-bluebird

Southern Toad: No toads.

Sweet bees: None observed.

Pileated Woodpecker: None this week.

Here is a good site for the Pileated :
http://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/pileated woodpecker?gclid=Cj0KEQiA4OqnBRDAj9aazvPji9ABEiQANq28oLTa9kUEg7khhIiQxXQSzXno1KGGEkjlUYhQcrnafj8aAnMP8P8HAQ

And here is a video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SpYsdZ8gUU8&index=3&list=PLFMP2eIAO8oQFZ3IyCJhIKXCi914uI8uu

Florida Black Snake: None.

Florida Ringneck Snake: None.

Honey Bees: None.

As noted previously, we noticed a sharp decline in all winged insects have a night of mosquito fogging in the area. butterflies, dragonflies, and wasps were routine visitors until the night of the fogging. Since then, there has been very little insect activity.

"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

Bald Eagle: Not observed this week.

Bumble Bees: None.

Hawk: None

Raccoon: No raccoons, no signs of raccoon activity.

Opossum: Not observed.

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=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

Grapeleaf Skeletonizer: No GS caterpillars observed. Ray and I are alert to these predators. Here is a link to a site with information on the Skeletonizers:
http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/fruit/grapeleaf_skeletonizer.htm

Nocturnal Garden Spider – Evident and more numerous – like stars in the ground.

"Asian Tramp Snail." Abundant on greens and planters.

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

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%20UW04600.pdf

Woodlouse – Common but not thick. These warm weather creatures are proliferating. Several were observed this week.

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

For information on pinworms, see this University of Florida site:
http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/veg/tomato/tomato_pinworm.htm

Cats: Neighborhood cat, Frankie, appears regularly. Moving slowly, probably due to the heat. Lady Gray visits occassinally.

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 form 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 deductable.

Planting & Harvest Notes
Winter Seeding and Garden Starts This Week

Seedings: none

Garden Starts: okra, peanuts, Lima beans, Red Malabar Spinach

Harvest Notes: okra, eggplant, herbs, red malabar spinach, sweet potato leaves

Vermipost: none

Bat Guano: no harvest

3F, Ecology Florida, and Market Off Main Offer Seed Savers Exchange Seeds in 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 kiosk in New Port Richey.

Through a cooperative arrangement with Friendship Farms & Fare and Ecology Florida, the Market Off Main, in New Port Richey, now offers a wide range of organic, heirloom, non-GMO seeds exclusively from Seed Savers Exchange.

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.

Ecology Florida News carried a feature article on the kiosk by your 3F Farmer, which you can read at this link:

http://www.ecologyflorida.org/2014/12/on-the-lighter-side-the-story-of-the-seed-kiosk-in-new-port-richey/

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

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/

Next Workday: TBA

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

Nursery Certification and Registration Renewed
2015-2016 Nursery Certification and Registration
Friendship Farms & Fare
48015239

Our nursery registration has been renewed for 2015-2016.

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

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 deductable.

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

3 F 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 June.** 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/

Community Garden Projects

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

Together with East Madison Growers, we are developing another community garden plot on Montana Ave. in New Port Richey.

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

We have installed sample community garden beds. Each is about 100 square feet.

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, Permiculture 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 a 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 items for $5.00 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 $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 local farms 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 $2.00 per plant ($1, for shares), $3.00 for 2, $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 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 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 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.fffsite.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
Hart's Family Farm
Seeds of Love Organic Farm
Tarry Lane Tasting Station

June 22, 2015 – 38th report for the 2014-2015 Garden Year
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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.
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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

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