



## **FRIENDSHIP FARMS & FARE**

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

**FARM REPORT & NEWSLETTER**

**MAY 4, 2015 – 31ST 2014-2015 FARM & CSA REPORT**

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

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

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

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

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

## **FARM REPORT**

**69 degrees at 1:30 AM, May 1, 2015**

**Historic Average (for 5/1): 84 HIGH, 66 LOW–Weather Underground:**

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

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

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Shipment of Sweet Potatoes Received Second Set Of Beds Begun**

Our second shipment of sweet potato slips from George's Plant Farm arrived on Thursday (April 30), and we began planting yesterday (May 1)

This shipment was all Beauregards – 100 total. We planted 20 today, to bring our total to **202**. A total of eight beds have been planted: the two new south beds (East and West), and old beds 5, 7, 10, 11, and 12 – yesterday, we planted bed 4. Look for the first fruits in early to mid-July.

If you would like to acquire slips for your summer garden, let us know. We will share some of ours for a modest donation.

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/>

Last year we had 300 slips in our two gardens, and total production of 250 pounds. This year, we are looking to increase the planting to 400 slips, and we are aiming for 400 pounds of harvest. We usually place three orders from George's, one in April, one in May, and one in June. This allows us to distribute the planting over three months, which means we are also distributing the harvest over three months. Those who were following the *Farm Report* last year remember that this method worked very well, and allowed us to have sweet potatoes through October.

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

## **Okra Planting Picks Up**

We picked up the pace on the okra planting, but are still a bit behind where we'd like to be. We have some of all varieties in the New South Garden, about 50, all told. We would have liked to have 80 in by now – so we are behind in the seeding project.

If you read this far in the newsletter, let us know if you would be interested in attending an Okra Festival – probably in mid-June.

## **Persimmon First Fruitings**

One of our Fuyu Persimmon trees has fruitings – 2 small fruit. These are the first fruits for this tree, which together with its companion persimmon was planted in 2013.

## **Pecan Tree Fully Leafed**

Our massive pecan tree that began leafing only three weeks ago is now fully leafed. Within three weeks, it went from bare branches to a thick lush canopy. It leafed a bit early this year, but that is to be expected with the exceptionally high temperatures. We'll try to get some pecans again this year, but the squirrels are better than us at securing these nuts.

## **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.

## **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 from 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** **Slightly Cooler Temperatures At Start of Week** **Quick Warm Up by Mid-Week**

**64 degrees at 3:00 AM, May 2, 2015**

**Historic Average (for 5/1): 84 HIGH, 66 LOW—Weather Underground:**  
<http://www.wunderground.com/>

Historically, the average high temperature has now reached 83 degrees (thirteen degrees higher than the lowest average low [70] of the year), and seven degrees lower than the highest average high [90]). Our average low is now 65 degrees, which is fourteen degrees higher than lowest average low [51], and eleven degrees lower than the highest average low [76]).

The average low and high are increasing at about a degree a week. They will peak in early June for highs and late June for lows, and 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.

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 (4/25 – 5/1):** We had a little relief from the heat this past week, with temperatures *dropping* down to normal. True. The cooler temperatures of the past week, are near normal for this time of the year. The climate-change heat we've had all spring (and most of the winter) makes these normal temperatures cool and refreshing. Everyday should feel like the past few days this week.

Last week we were at above normal for highs and lows five of seven days. Normal high for last week was 83-84 and the normal low was 65-66. Every low was at our above the normal low.

On Tuesday, we recorded close to 2 inches of rain.

**This Week (5/2-8)** Last week's cool spell will be short lived. Expect highs in the upper 80s to 90 by mid-week and through the rest of the week. Summer is still a long way off, but it will feel like summer this week and probably for the rest of the year, until November.

**Looking Ahead:** The rainy season is still about a month and a half away – mid-June. Look for above normal temperatures and high humidity. Plan for daily irrigation of gardens.

Average temperatures are gradually rising. By the end of May averages will be approaching 90 degrees.

We are currently running above historical averages.

**Garden Overview**  
**Spring Plantings Continue**  
(additional details and assessments follow)

We are composting winter plants, and trying to accelerate our seeding project. Even the summer seedlings do not like the high 80s (and now, 90s) we are getting.

We've cleared and remulched most of the south beds and planted with sweet potatoes (Beauregards and Georgia Jets).

Cucumbers and okra are both are doing well. We harvested close to 10 lbs of cucumbers this week. We expect to have more this week, but not close to 10 lbs.. Several okra plants have fruitlings. We expect okra by next week.

Eggplant shrubs are budding profusely, starting to set fruit. We can offer eggplant this week.

If anyone reading this, would like to help with the SP plantings, just let us know. Thanks to those who have helped thus far.

If you would like SP slips, let us know. We'll share for .50 per slip.

We still have large quantities of collards.

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/>).

**First Sweet Potato Beds Planted**  
**Second Set Begun**  
**202 slips planted**

Our second shipment of sweet potato slips from George's Plant Farm arrived on Thursday (April 30), and we began planting yesterday (May 1)

This shipment was all Beauregards – 100 total. We planted 20 today, to bring our total to **202**. A total of eight beds have been planted: the two new south beds (East and West), and old beds 5, 7, 10, 11, and 12 – yesterday, we planted bed 4. Look for the first fruits in early to mid-July.

See feature story earlier in the Farm Report for details on the sweet potato project.

**Okra Seedlings**

Okra is taking off now. Several plants are over a foot tall. There is less predation than last week. The predation is fine. It toughens the plants, and these plants are the descendants of plants that were nibbled and gnawed and partially eaten by every okra-loving insect in the area. They can take it. This is the way it is done in a permaculture system. The plants are stronger for the predation, and

the predators themselves become prey of carnivorous creatures – but only if you leave them on the plants.

### **Cucumbers** **26 Harvested**

Cucumbers are thriving. The most successful are the Japanese Climbing. We have planted Double Yields, Armenians, Japanese Climbing, and Nippon Sanjaku Kiuri. They are growing in all gardens with those in the blackberry colony doing the best. We've harvested 12 this past week (nearly 10 lbs), bringing total to 26.

We have seedlings, if any one desires: \$2.00 each, 2 for \$3.00, 4 for \$5.00.

### **Tomatoes and Peppers**

We have started more tomatoes and will start peppers as soon as this SP planting is completed.

Several of the tomato plants are thriving and we might (just might) have some tomatoes. If you do not want tomatoes let us know.

### **Kale**

Kale is past peak. We have enough for small shares this week. This may be the last call for kale.

### **Arugula**

Arugula is past peak. We won't be listing it this week. We'll start some more seeds, and see if we can get a summer crop.

### **Collards**

The collards continue thrive - as hardy now as in mid-winter. Please stop by for extra large shares of our three varieties, Georgia Southern, Georgia, and Vates, are large, lush, and ready for harvest.

### **Blackberries** **Ouachita Family**

The blackberry vines now have numerous berries. If these make it to maturity, we'll have a good-sized harvest. These are Ouachita Blackberries shared lovingly by Christine Grovenstein of Seeds of Love Organic Farm. Look for first fruits later this month.

### **Habanero Peppers**

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

### **Eggplant**

Eggplants are now flourishing, producing flowers, and a few fruit! These are exciting times for the eggplant colony.

You may order eggplant this week.

### **Purslane**

Purslane is a thriving, and there are many healthy plants throughout the garden.

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

Vines are taking off.

## **Jamming with the Cat: Black Cat Growers Offers Jams To 3F Family**

As reported last week, we are delighted to announce that Black Cat Growers has joined the 3F family. Black Cat is a small local grower, cottage food producer, and designer of edible landscapes. Some of you may remember the wonderful assistance of Black Cat Growers shared during our Loquat Festival last year.

Our work with Black may well evolve over time, and for now we are happy to list their line of outstanding local organic jams. Shares can acquire these for \$5.00, for a 1/2 pint container, which includes their CSA discount.

If you would like a sample of any of the jams, let us know in your share request this week. If you would like to order some for holiday gifts and parties, now is the time to order.

### **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.

### **Eggs If Desired**

We can include organic, free-range eggs in your share this week. These are from a new local contact, Juan's farm. These are the eggs the staff at Market Off Main use in their organic egg recipes. Mandy's farm appears to be back in operation, so we may have eggs from there as well.

Last week's eggs were from Mandy's 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 a little weak this week. They do not like the cold, damp conditions. We have good quantities of thyme and dill. 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.fff-site.org/#!contact/cl4l>

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

**May 4, 2015 (31)**

**\* larger quantity available if desired**

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

**Tampa Transmissions TBA**

**Vegetables**  
**Collards\***

**Cucumbers (FCFS)**  
**Eggplant **New This Week** (FCFS)**  
**Kale**  
**Lettuce – Romaine (possible – from other local organic grower)**  
<http://edibleplantproject.org/okinawaspinach/>  
**Peppers – Habanero (burning hot)**

**Fruit -**  
**None at present**

**Herbs (\* larger quantity available if desired)**  
**Basils**  
    **Italian (small quantity)**  
**Dill**  
**Chives (small quantity)**  
**Cilantro (late and leggy)**  
**Culantro **New This Week** (small/sample quantity – tastes like a strong cilantro)**  
**Mint**  
**Oregano**  
**Parsley**  
**Purslane**  
**Rosemary\***  
**Smilax (in recess)**  
**Tarragon**  
**Thyme**

### **Cottage Foods & Samples**

**Eggs:** Juan's Garden or Mandy'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).

**Hot Sauce:** Hart's Habanero Hot Sauce, made from our 3F Habanero peppers, 5oz. bottle \$6.50 (\$5.00 shares), - Very Hot

**Jams, Jellies, Preserves:** Black Cat Growers featured jams and fruit spread. All organic, with most fruits locally sourced. Half Pints for \$6.50 (\$5.00 shares). Available jams:

Peach  
Cherry  
Strawberry  
Orange Marmalade (bitter orange)  
Loquat

**Seedlings** (Start your spring garden with locally grown organic seedlings!)

**1 for \$2.00**

**2 for \$3.00**

**4 for \$5.00**

**Cucumbers (climbing variety)**  
**Okra (All varieties: Star of David, Hill Country Red, Silver Queen, Red Burgundy)**

### **COMPANION FAUNA**

#### **Spring Report**

*Animal companions are active and abundant*

**Swifts:** Swifts are busy The lodge is alive with chittering, peeping, and squeaking.

**Bat update:** No bats.



**Eastern Blue Bird:** No blue birds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1WlYEmuUhKI>  
[http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Eastern\\_Bluebird/id](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Eastern_Bluebird/id)  
<http://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/eastern-bluebird>

**Southern Toad:** Young toad on east side of Old North Garden

**Sweet bees:** None observed

**Pileated Woodpecker:** One observed, hunting in decaying parts of oak tree north of Old North Garden. I think this is the same one observed earlier this year in the South Garden.

As large as this bird is, the Ivory-bill was about twice its size, and the Imperial even larger. Imagine!

Here is a good site for the Pileated :

<http://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/pileated-woodpecker?gclid=CjoKEQiA4OqnBRDAj9aazvPji9ABEiQANq28oLTa9kUEg7khhIiQxXQSzXno1KGGEkjlUYhQcrnafj8aAnMP8P8HAQ>

And here is a video:

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

**Tree Frogs:** Frog songs are heard every night now. Two mating pairs in north cistern. Four new egg clusters. Tadpoles from earlier broods are maturing quickly.

**Florida Black Snake:** None.

**Florida Ringneck Snake:** One young snake near back porch (north side) of the dwelling.

**Honey Bees:** None observed this week.

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

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

<http://www.xerces.org/neonicotinoids-and-bees/>  
[http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/NeonicsSummary\\_XercesSociety.pdf](http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/NeonicsSummary_XercesSociety.pdf)  
[http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Are-Neonicotinoids-Killing-Bees\\_Xerces-Society1.pdf](http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Are-Neonicotinoids-Killing-Bees_Xerces-Society1.pdf)

**Bald Eagle:** Not observed this week.

**Bumble Bees:** Several on the flowing jasmine.

**Hawk:** None

**Raccoon:** No raccoons, but signs of raccoon activity in South Garden.



**Greenhouse Frog:** None.

**Opossum:** Not observed.

**Leopard Frogs:** None observed, but leopard song possibly heard amid cacophony of the tree frog chorus.

**Earth Worms:** None

**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](http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/fruit/grapeleaf_skeletonizer.htm)

**Nocturnal Garden Spider** – Evident but not numerous.

**"Asian Tramp Snail."** Abundant on greens and plastic pots (of all things).

**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 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/frogstoats/rhinella\\_marina.php](http://www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife_info/frogstoats/rhinella_marina.php)

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

**Woodlouse** – 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](http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/veg/tomato/tomato_pinworm.htm)

**Cats:** Neighborhood cat, Frankie, appears regularly. Lady Gray occasionally joins her.

# 3F Stories, Events, and Policy Updates

## Gulf Middle School Students Visit 3F South Gardens

On Earth Day, Wednesday April 22, we presented a mini-seminar for students from Gulf Middle School in New Port Richey. The school is only a few blocks away from 3F's South Gardens on Illinois Ave, and the students were able to walk to and from the garden. The students learned about winter and summer vegetables, seed saving, harvesting, and planting. We look forward to future visits from the students of Gulf Middle School, and we are already planning programs for these students.

Here is another story about the visit from a second local paper: <http://suncoastnews.com/su/list/news-pasco/gulf-middle-students-tour-community-garden-20150502/?page=1>

Here is the story from last week: <http://newsportrichy.org/2015/04/23/gulf-middle-students-celebrate-earth-day-in-local-community-gardens/>

## Programs and Plans 2015

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

If you would like to know more about any of these programs or would like to volunteer to share in our mission, just let us know. Folks interested in the Friendship Farms & Fare project can contact us through our website. <http://www.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** **Winter Seeding and Garden Starts This Week**

**Seedings:** **Okra** (Star of David, 54; Silver Queen 54), **Watermelon** (Stone Mountain, 27; Chris Cross, 33), **Eggplant** (Florida High Bush, 54; Rosa Bianca, 54), **Basil** (Genovese, 24)

**Garden Starts:** okra, sweet potatoes

**Harvest Notes:** herbs, arugula, collards, kale, eggplant, cucumbers

**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 spring workday, we'll have a lot to do. Please send your best Saturday(s) in April, after April 4.

**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 deductible.

**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**

Have received two new applications for our community garden on Illinois Ave., and we've been contacted by another interested gardener. 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 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
- \* 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

**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 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.ffffsite.org> >

### **Friendship Farms & Fare**

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

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

**Cadle's Cove Farm**

**Black Cat Growers**

**Freedom House Farm**

**Friendship Farms & Fare: First Farm**

**Hart's Family Farm**

**Seeds of Love Organic Farm**

**Tarry Lane Tasting Station**

**May 4, 2015 – 31st 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.

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

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



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

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

[www.EcologyFlorida.org](http://www.EcologyFlorida.org)