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# WEST PASCO URBAN FARM REPORT

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NEW PORT RICHEY FARMNET  
WEEK OF MARCH 31, 2025



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[www.FarmNetNPR.com](http://www.FarmNetNPR.com)

## WEEKLY UPDATE

BY DELL DECHANT

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### Weather Update

Temperatures this week will be above normal with little chance of rain. Best chance of rain in Sunday (March 30) and Tuesday (April 1) - no fooling! Both days are forecast to have less than a 50% rain probability.

We are running a bit below normal for winter rain, but close enough to avoid having our severe drought conditions worsen.

This is the dry season, so keep up with the irrigation. Using a watering can conserves water and allows for targeted irrigation. For sustainable growing, hand and watering-can irrigation is recommended. It is the most responsible and conservative approach during a drought - or anytime for that matter.

Automatic systems do not allow for such focused and conservative water use - even drip systems are often less thrifty. Watering can irrigation also allows gardeners to observe and interact with each bed, each row, and every plant.

## Historical average for week: High, low-80s. Low, low-60s

**Growers' Notes:** As noted in recent weeks, plants are bolting and flowering.

The bolting and flowering is welcome, even if early this year. This means the plants are healthy and following their natural course of life. Bees and other pollinators thrill at the seasonal vegetable flowers.

So do we. Flowering broccoli and mustard are favorites, with arugula not far behind.

Gardeners may want to harvest winter greens now while they are at peak to cook, can, or freeze.

Growers should start seeds or open sow for spring gardens. Winter crops should be culled.

In our nursery we have Dragon Tongue Beans and cucumber seedlings. Shortly we will have eggplant, and peppers. Others are encouraged to consider these reliable Springtime transition crops - and certainly, add tomatoes to that list. We are not starting tomatoes now, because we already have an abundance, having avoided a hard freeze. The nursery has dozens of tomato seedlings - available to the community for donations. Remember, these seedlings are acclimated to the region and especially West Pasco. They will also produce reliable seeds for regeneration.

The tomato harvest has been exceptional this year. At our main garden we have harvested over 50 pounds so far. If you started tomatoes in the fall, you are likely also enjoying abundant harvests now.

As you cull your crops, please donating the cullings. Share your harvest with friends and neighbors (human and others), compost, and return to the soil. FarmNet advocates no waste gardening.

Those using regenerative methods, should see tomatoes coming up in last-year's tomato beds. Same with sweet potatoes in the sweet potato beds. Two other great spring crops are Dragon Tongue Beans and Pigeon Peas. See featured stories on both these high-yield legumes in recent issues of the Farm Report.

## Market News

**Mark your calendar:** The next FarmNet Evening Market at Plants and Pints is April 15 (4/15).

Mark your calendar: FarmNet will have fresh local produce at Plants & Pints, at Ordinance One, in downtown New Port Richey, on Tuesday April 15, 5:30 to 7:30. April will feature tomatoes, loquats, collard greens, and possibly kale and arugula.

FarmNet also has a booth at Tasty Tuesday and Wright's Famers Market.

CSA & Fresh Harvest Feature: Tomatoes. This week's CSA fresh harvest feature is loquats. If you'd like a market basket (about ½ a pound) of locally-grown tomatoes from one of our gardens, let us know. Suggested donation, \$3 (more if you can, less if needs be).

Other CSA produce includes tomatoes, kale, collards, and arugula.

CSA shareholders can pick up their shares at the homestead every Tuesday evening. If you are interested in acquiring a share contact us through the FarmNet website <https://farmnetnpr.com/>

Weekly shares and single items are also available. Suggested donations: \$10 one item, \$20 any four, \$30 five or more.

If you are interested in acquiring a share, contact us at <https://farmnetnpr.com/> We'll give you a day and time to pick them up.

FarmNet also has a booth at Tasty Tuesday and Wright's Famers Market. Ask for Steve at the Market

## Check out our CSA

Costs of annual shares are very modest compared with other CSAs.

Weekly, monthly, and quarterly shares are also available. Suggested donations:

Weekly \$10 one item, \$20 any four, \$30 five or more.

Monthly (full share, 4 weeks): \$70

Quarterly (full share): \$180

Half Year (5 months) \$250

Annual Share \$400

If you would like to acquire local seeds and seedlings, send a message to New Port Richey FarmNet on Facebook and ask to be added to our mailing list.

If you are looking for seeds and seedlings for local growing, FarmNet is the place to go. FarmNet features organic heirloom seeds from Seed Savers Exchange, and the FarmNet seed bank – the largest collection of local seeds in the area. Seedlings are also available. Right now, we have a good supply of seedlings, including tomatoes, mustard greens.

If you desire seeds and seedlings, contact us through FarmNet web site, and join our mailing list for the Seed & Seedling Project. Go to <https://farmnetnpr.com/>



## Harvest & Ripening Update

**Tomatoes:** If you took a chance and planted in the fall, and did not have a freeze, you should have ripe tomatoes in abundance. If you planted in January or February, you have a few more weeks before harvesting – but you should have fruit forming.

**Broccoli:** Broccoli should be producing heads, with bolting increasing. Nearing end of season.

**Loquats:** Loquats continue to ripen. Because of the erratic weather, this will be a light season.

**Peaches:** Look for increasing fruitlings. Peaches follow loquats by about a month. Some are ripe now.

**Mangos:** Look for the buds on mango trees. Look for first tiny fruitlings.

**Winter Greens:** Season ending, look for bolting on some plants. Harvest now or let them seed.

**Beans:** Dragon tongue beans will be producing flowers and first pods.

**Lettuces:** Look for bolting. Harvest now. Season is nearly over and may be over for some.

### Starts

**Tomatoes:** Continue planting and start more now.

**Beans:** Start bush and pole beans now. Continue planting Dragon tongue beans and start more now.

**Pigeon Peas:** These reliable legumes are flowering and producing pods now and until fall. Start more now.

**Peppers:** Start peppers now.

**Okra:** Start okra or open sow. Okra starts best in cells.

**Black-eyed Peas:** Start now.

**Eggplant:** Start now.

Ecology Florida

Friendship Farms & Fare

NEW PORT RICHEY FARMNET

NEW PORT RICHEY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

The 12th Year Florida Loquat Festival

NEW PORT RICHEY

SERVPRO TEAM GEORGE

NLG DIVORCE & FAMILY LAW

COTEE RIVER BREWING COMPANY NEW PORT RICHEY, FL

CREATIVE INSTITUTE OF DENTAL ARTS CIDA EST. 1974

THE CITY OF NEW PORT RICHEY FLORIDA

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

RELAX RESULTS STRENGTHEN, CENTER, & SOOTHE

New Port Richey

CELEBRATE FLORIDA'S URBAN FRUIT

April 12, 2025 10 AM - 2 PM  
at Peace Hall - Sims Park  
6431 Circle Blvd, New Port Richey, FL

LEARN TO GROW, CULTIVATE, PREPARE  
AND EAT THIS VERSATILE FRUIT  
PURCHASE SAPLINGS, TREES, FRUIT, PRESERVES  
ENJOY TEACHINGS, LECTURES, & POETRY

The Rotary Club of NEW PORT RICHEY DISTRICT 6950

Ecology Florida and New Port Richey FarmNet, with support of the City of New Port Richey, will host the 12<sup>th</sup> annual celebration of the Florida Loquat Festival on Saturday, April 12 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in New Port Richey at Sims Park in and around historic Peace Hall. This is the only loquat festival in the United States. Thanks to our major sponsor, The New Port Richey Rotary Club; our community supporters, SERVPRO – Team George, NLG Divorce and Family Law; and other businesses, groups, and individuals in the community.

The festival is a learning and sharing event to help expand the knowledge and appreciation of the loquat tree and its fruit. There will be presentations on the cultivation of loquat trees, various uses of the fruit and leaves, and presentations about community markets and agrarianism.

**Thanks to all who support New Port Richey FarmNet and its agrarian mission.**

If you know anyone who would like information on acquiring a share in the CSA, send a message to New Port Richey FarmNet on Facebook.

<https://farmnetnpr.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/NPRFARMNET/about>

Cost of annual shares are very modest compared with other CSAs.

If you would like to acquire local organic produce, seeds, and seedlings, send a message to New Port Richey FarmNet on Facebook and ask to be added to our mailing list.

