



Gardening in St. Augustine South Tips & Tricks for Veggie & Fruit Gardening

SASIA March Meeting 2025

How many of you were here last year or the year before?

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Garden in St. Augustine South

Mostly ornamental but grow naval orange, starfruit, loquat, papaya, banana, grapefruit, limequat and mango

Seed starting for the farm – we have a great microclimate due to the Intracoastal Waterway and our live oak canopy

Our gardening zone really bounces between north & central Florida

Garden at our small farm in Spuds

36 types of fruit plants (trees & bushes)

117 different cultivars and fruit plants that grow in our climate

31 types of vegetables grown throughout the year

Number #1 Rule

Plant what you like to eat

Number #2 Rule

Don't fight where you live. (Opposite seasons from the north)
Plant what grows well in our heat, humidity and rain in Florida
with minimum pest problems. Plant during right time of year.

Number #3 Rule

Feel free to experiment with new and different vegetables!
Always new cultivars out there.

My personal gardening philosophy

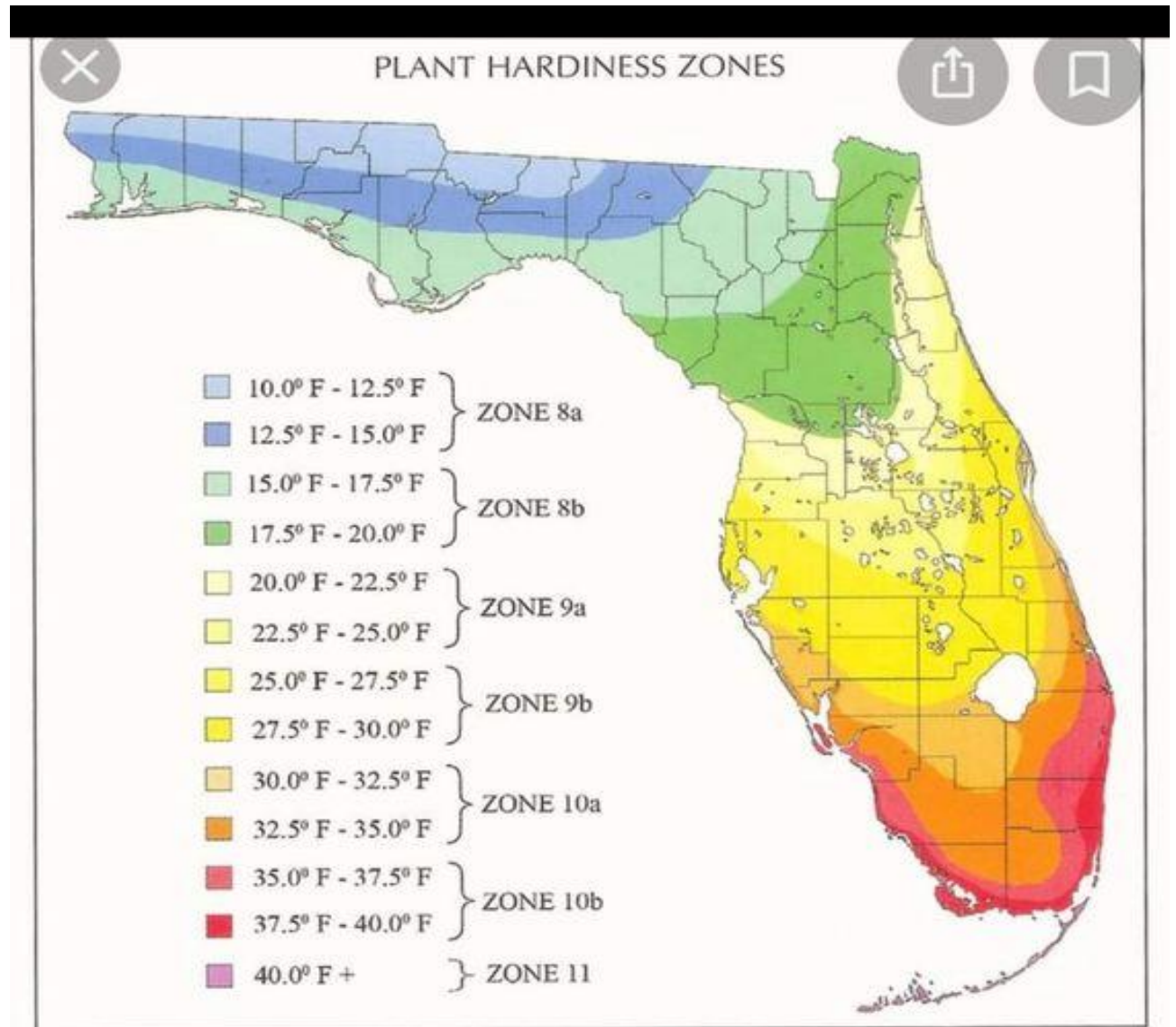
- * Plant nutrient dense foods (vitamin benefits)
- * Try to use only organic fertilizer (Espoma)
- * Very limited use of pesticides (actually none)
- * Mix my veggie beds to confuse the insects, don't plant all the same thing in one row (~~monoculture~~)
- * Interplant flowering plants to bring in pollinators & beneficial insects
- * Always look for mentors friends & neighbors, online, learn lots of things from YouTube, Facebook, Instagram
- * Sometimes buy veggies in organic part of grocery, ethnic stores
- * Check out the seed bank at the public library Southeast branch



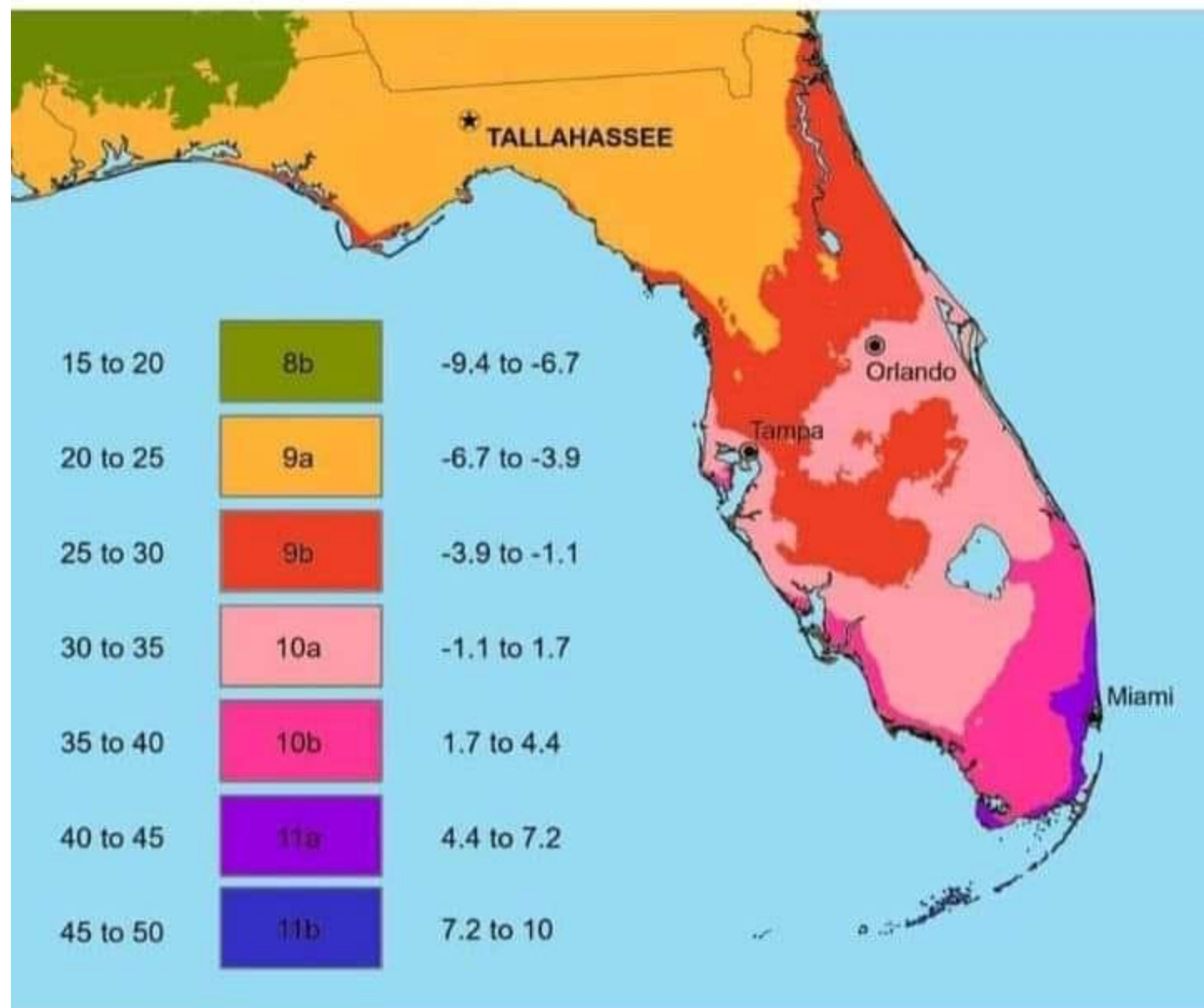
This has been the only remedy at the farm for fire ant mound destruction. Most organic remedies we have tried have not worked. Even some we purchased developed at UF. The ants usually just move not far where we treated and we are in the same situation. This product works, we add about a cup in a paint bucket and mix with about three gallons of water. Then we coat the mound and a little of the surrounding soil. Perfectly safe to use on food growing plants.

Here in St. Augustine South we have been officially upgraded to Zone 9B by the United States Department of Agriculture. We have assumed that based on temperatures for quite a few years but now it is official. Lowest temp in St. Aug this year was 32 degrees.

That is why I say it is wise to look at North Florida and Central Florida recommendations in our area for IFAS guides.



This map is derived from NOAA data and the Plant Hardiness Zone Map published by the United States Department of Agriculture. It shows the average lowest temperature that can be expected on an annual basis.



Giving fruit trees and plants a try, easiest from my experience
Least amount of care and cold protection, no spraying necessary
May need netting to protect fruit (blueberries)

1. Mulberry, Thai, Dwarf Everbearing, Pakistani
2. Blueberries (Southern Highbush and Rabbiteye)
3. Blackberries (Thornless Prime Ark Freedom)
4. Plums (Scarlet Beauty)
5. Citrus that is Citrus Greening Tolerant (SugarBelle, Tango, UF Sundragon, UF 3-13-51 Mandarin)
6. Starfruit (Carambola)
7. Muscadine Grapes
8. Persimmons
9. Strawberry & Lemon Guava (Very cold hardy)

Fruits you can grow in our area

- * Low chill stone fruits, apples, peaches, nectarines, plums
- * Citrus Greening resistant mandarins (Sugarbelle) & Finger limes
- * Berries, blackberries, blueberries, strawberries, mulberry, elderberry, muscadine grapes
- * Cold hardy avocado, loquat (Japanese plums), mayhaw, olives, persimmon, pomegranate, pears, sugarcane, figs
- * Tropicals that may need protection bananas, carambola (starfruit), tropical cherries (Barbados cherry), guavas, condo mangos Pickering, moringa, papayas, passionfruit
- * New fruits last year June Plum, Vietnamese Pomogranate, Cotton Candy Tree,


Fruits Cultivars That Have Been Successful

- * Peach – “Tropic Beauty”, “Florida Prince” /Nectarine- “Sunraycer”
- * Citrus – “Sugarbelle”, “Tango”, Limequat “Lakeland”
- * Blueberries – “Windsor”, “Emerald”, “Premier”, “Woodard”, “Climax”,
- * Cold hardy avocado – “Joey”, “Brogden”, Loquat “Bradenton”,
Olive “Arbequina”
- *Persimmon- “Jiru”, “Fuyu”, “Tanashi”, “Hachiya”
- * Starfruit – “Kari” and Fwang Tung”

EDIBLES TO PLANT IN

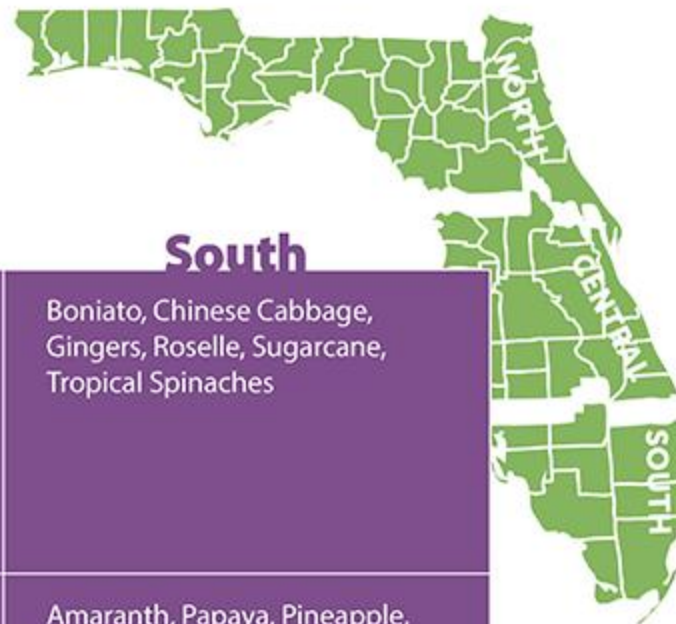
March






	North	Central	South
 EASY TO TRANSPLANT	Arugula, Eggplant, Kohlrabi, Ginger, Peppers, Swiss Chard, Tomatillo, Tomatoes	Arugula, Chinese Cabbage, Ginger, Kohlrabi, Peppers, Roselle, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard, Tropical Spinaches	Arugula, Chinese Cabbage, Endive, Ginger, Roselle, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard, Tropical Spinaches
 TRANSPLANT WITH CARE	Boniato, Spinach, Sweet Potatoes	Amaranth, Boniato, Calabaza, Cassava, Celery, Long Squashes, Luffa, Papaya, Passionfruit, Pigeon Pea, Pineapple, Seminole Pumpkin, Spinach, Sweet Potatoes	Amaranth, Boniato, Calabaza, Cassava, Celery, Papaya, Passionfruit, Pineapple, Seminole Pumpkin, Sweet Potatoes
 USE SEEDS	Beans (bush, lima, pole), Cantaloupes, Carrots, Corn, Cucumbers, Okra, Onions (bunching), Peanuts, Peas (English, southern), Radish, Squashes, Watermelon	Beans (bush, lima, pole), Cantaloupes, Carrots, Chayote, Corn, Cucumbers, Okra, Onions (bunching), Peas (southern), Radish, Squashes, Watermelon	Beans (bush, lima, pole), Cantaloupes, Carrots, Chayote, Corn, Okra, Onions (bunching), Peas (southern), Radish, Squashes, Watermelon



EDIBLES TO PLANT IN *April*



North	Central	South
 EASY TO TRANSPLANT Boniato, Gingers, Roselle, Tomatillo, Tomatoes	Boniato, Chinese Cabbage, Gingers, Roselle, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard, Tropical Spinaches	Boniato, Chinese Cabbage, Gingers, Roselle, Sugarcane, Tropical Spinaches
 TRANSPLANT CAREFULLY Amaranth, Calabaza, Long Squash, Luffa, Papaya, Seminole Pumpkin, Sweet Potatoes	Amaranth, Calabaza, Long Squash, Luffa, Papaya, Pigeon Pea, Pineapple, Seminole Pumpkin, Sweet Potatoes, Yucca	Amaranth, Papaya, Pineapple, Sweet Potatoes, Yucca
 USE SEEDS Beans (bush, lima, pole), Cantaloupes, Chayote, Corn, Cucumbers, Okra, Peanuts, Peas (southern), Squashes, Watermelon	Beans (bush, pole), Chayote, Corn, Okra, Peanuts, Peas (southern), Squash	Beans (bush, lima, pole), Chayote, Peas (southern)



EDIBLES TO PLANT IN *May*



North	Central	South
 EASY TO TRANSPLANT Boniato, Gingers, Roselle, Tropical Spinaches	Boniato, Gingers, Roselle, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard, Tropical Spinaches	Boniato, Gingers, Sugarcane, Tropical Spinaches
 TRANSPLANT CAREFULLY Amaranth, Calabaza, Long Squash, Luffa, Papaya, Pigeon Pea, Seminole Pumpkin, Sweet Potatoes	Amaranth, Cassava, Calabaza, Long Squash, Luffa, Papaya, Pigeon Pea, Pineapple, Seminole Pumpkin, Sweet Potatoes	Amaranth, Cassava, Papaya, Pigeon Pea, Pineapple, Sweet Potatoes
 USE SEEDS Chayote, Okra, Peanuts, Peas (southern)	Chayote, Okra, Peanuts, Peas (southern)	Chayote



Our Spring and Summer Favorites (40% shade cloth to extend season into summer)

1. Peppers Cubanelle (New info Cap 455, Inquitos Sweet Pepper) Cody Cove Farm
2. Tomatoes (Cherry Tomatoes last longer in the heat & Everglades)
3. Bush Beans (Blue Lake & Tendergreen)
4. Cucumbers (plant under netting) “Beit Alpha” “China Jade” new this year
Zambian Cucumber
5. Zucchini (plant under netting)
6. Sweet Potatoes (in containers)
7. Okra (bug magnet for us)
8. Luffa (squash substitute when 1 inch wide)
9. Kajari Melons
10. Watermelon (Sugar Baby & Crimson Sweet)
11. Eggplant
12. Sugarcane



Seed Starting Tips

1. Soak seeds overnight
2. Put in container with wet paper towel covered in plastic wrap
3. Plenty of light for germination
4. When you see sprout, plant



Florida Summer Tough Food Plants

1. Sweet Potatoes (purple are toughest)
2. Seminole Pumpkin (shelf life 1 year)
3. Everglades Tomato
4. Okinawa Spinach
5. Rosselle (Sorrel)
6. Cassava
7. Cranberry Hibiscus
8. Ginger (Will sprout from organic pieces from store)
9. Turmeric
10. Okra
11. Luffa
12. Katuk
13. Chaya (Tree Spinach)



Sweet
Potato



Roselle
Or
Sorrel
Or
Florida
Cranberry



Seminole
Pumpkin



Cassava



Everglades
Tomato



Cranberry
Hibiscus

Summer Greens

You have probably never heard of before

1. Okinawa Spinach
 2. Longevity Spinach
 3. Jewel of Opar
 4. Malabar Spinach
 5. Red Amaranth (bug magnet for us, others have suggestions)
 6. Katuk (tropical asparagus)
 7. Chaya (tree spinach) (Needs to be cooked not eaten raw)
 8. Egyptian Spinach (Molokhiya)
- Number match the photos on the next slide



1 Okinawa Spinach.



4. Malabar Spinach



7. Chaya



2.Longevity Spinach



5. Red Amaranth



8. Egyptian Spinach (Molokhiya)



3. Jewel of Omar



6. Katuk

Fall and Winter (Oct-Mar) favorites for our family – Greens can take less light than other veggies

1. Lettuces (30-70 days)
2. Kales (EASY) (70-90 days)
3. Broccoli (70-100 days)(don't forget after you harvest the main head it will continue producing small side shoots)
4. Carrots (60-80 days)
5. Bok Choy (FAST) (45-60 days)
6. Hakurei Turnips (38 days)
7. Radishes (21-30 days)
8. Collard Greens (60-80 days)
9. Spinach (45-50 days)
10. Daikon Radish (50-60 days) (vegan specialty)
11. Arugula (50-60 days) goes to seed quickly for us, maybe next year grow in shade or under shade cloth
12. Onions (90-100 days)
13. Garlic (vernalize 4-8 weeks in refrig) (Inchelium Red Garlic)
14. White Potatoes (90-100 days)
15. Swiss Chard (45-60 days) (white variety, rainbow varieties seem to attract pest for us)
16. Brussel Sprouts (80-110 days)
17. Celery (100-140 days)
18. Snow Peas (60-70 days)



Daikon Radish



Hakurei Turnip

Pest Control without chemicals

Interplanting, not the same plant in a row

Netting of vegetable beds

Insecticidal soap

Pick off method

Companion plants, marigolds, basil, garlic, onion, mint, nasturtiums, peppermint, radish, rosemary, calendula interplanted in your garden

Encouraging diversity of insects and lizards, etc.



Netting to provide Insect Protection

Dwarf citrus that is not resistant to citrus greening HLB (Limequats, Satsuma, Meyer Lemon)

Cucumber varieties that don't require pollination (Beit Alpha, China Jade) developed for greenhouse production (parthenocarpic varieties-grows without pollinators)

Zucchini and other squashes but must be hand pollinated (Partenon F1 and Cavili F1)



Beit Alpha Cucumber



China Jade Cucumber



Tree Defender

<https://thetreedefender.com>

Specifically sold for young citrus trees

Hard time growing? Consider container gardening. Move to catch sun.

Raised Beds

Earthbox

Grow Bags

Green Stalk

5-15 Gallon Buckets

Benefits

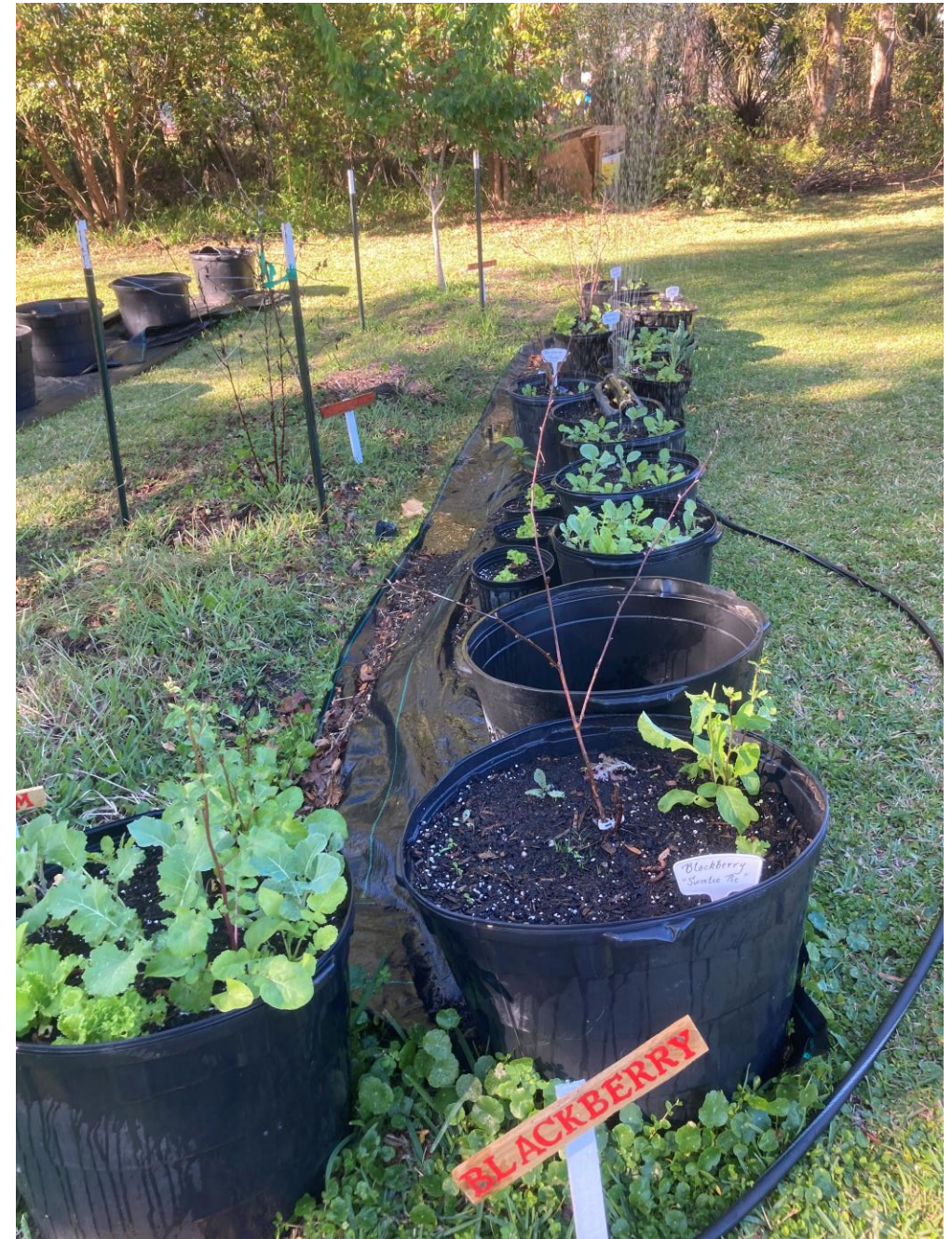
Use less water

Reduced weeding

Reduced fertilizer use

Easier to harvest







Any suggestions from the audience?

What vegetables or fruit plants would you recommend for other gardeners in St. Augustine South grow that I may have not mentioned? Gary is growing mushrooms successfully.

Vegetable/Fruit resources / Contacts for Tips

Maggie's Herb Farm

Eatyouryardjax.org

Thereidfarm.com

Codycovefarm.com

St. Johns County Extension Office

YouTube Channels – David the Good, Growing Your Greens, GreenDreams TV, Frugel Hugel Gardener, The Millennial Gardener, Wild Floridian

Facebook Groups – Permaculture Florida, Northeast Florida Gardener, North Florida Food Forest, Florida Backyard Gardening, Florida Food Forest

Instagram – anaturalfarm, man.in.overalls, the_farm_at_okefenokee, edibleflorida,

End of Each Season (Reflect)

What grew well

What didn't grow well

What would you do differently

What varieties worked best

How many pounds of things

Would you change the timing early or later

Hard reflection of each season

Dependable Physical Materials Used In Our Garden

Insect Netting

AMAZON - Garden Netting, Plant Covers 10x33Ft Net Ultra Fine Mesh Protection Netting for Vegetable Plants Fruits Flowers Crops Greenhouse Row Cover Raised Bed Barrier Screen Protection Net Cover

[Visit the FARAER Store](#)

Fruit Bags (Use on Peaches, Nectarines, Plums, Guavas)

AMAZON - 100 Fruit Protection Bags, Reusable Netting Bags 6 x 10 Inch Mosquito Bug Insect Bird Nylon Net Barrier Bag with Drawstring for Protecting Plant Fruits Flower

[Brand: June Fox](#)

Nets to support (Cucumbers, Flowers, Snow Peas)

AMAZON - White Trellis Netting 5x100 ft Heavy Duty Garden Trellis Netting Polypropylene Plant Support Garden Net for Climbing Vegetables Fruits Flowers

[Brand: HHTHH](#)

Landscape Fabric

AMAZON-Premium 5oz Landscape Fabric, 3ft x 50ft Pro Garden Weed Barrier - Durable & Heavy Duty Weed Block Gardening Mat, Easy Setup & Superior Weed Control, Eco-Friendly & Convenient Design

Landscape Staples

AAGUT 100 Pack Landscape Staples with Gasket Washer Caps, 6 Inch Vapor Barrier Stakes, Metal Garden Stakes Landscape Fabric Staples for Gardening Landscaping, Sod Fence Yard Lawn Ground Weed Mat Pins

[Visit the AAGUT Store](#)

Physical Materials in Garden

Greenhouse Plastic

AMAZON -Farm Plastic Supply - Clear Greenhouse Plastic Sheeting - 6 mil - (25' x 40') - 4 Year UV Resistant Polyethylene Greenhouse Film, Hoop House Green House Cover for Gardening, Farming, Agriculture

[Visit the Farm Plastic Supply Store](#)

Shade Cloth (peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers)

AMAZON - E.share 40% Black Shade Cloth Taped Edge with Grommets UV 10ft X 20ft

[Visit the e.share Store](#)

T-Posts

Tractor Supply

Cattle Panel for Arches

Tractor Supply

Roselle/Sorrel juice

Recipe

2 cups frozen or dried rosselle

12 cups water

1 cinnamon stick

1 tablespoon vanilla

1 cup of sugar or sweetner of your choice

Boil water with rosselle until all the red is gone from the calyxes, then add cinnamon and vanilla boil for 3-5 minutes, turn off heat and add sugar and stir.

(Many different recipes online)

PowerPoint Available

Ingrid will post the PowerPoint presentation

Questions & Answers

If you want a copy of this presentation Ingrid will post on the SASIA page.



Cuttings to Share

Seeds to Share

Roselle (Sorrel) Fl Cranberry

Seminole Pumpkin

Texas Yellow Bells (Esperanza)

Pigeon Pea (Gandules in PR)

