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Can Citrus Grow Here?

When I was a child, my Christmas was an old shoe box filled with fruit and maybe a pair of blue jeans. Kids today would be disappointed, but I really looked forward to getting the fruit. I still love fruit, especially citrus. Therefore, every year I look forward to being a judge at the S.C. Citrus Expo. The third annual S.C. Citrus Expo is scheduled for Saturday, November 19th at Cypress Gardens near Goose Creek. The event will begin with registration, admission, and fruit contest entries between 9:00 and 10 a.m. Expo admission is \$3 and includes free admission to Cypress Gardens (normally \$10).

If you grow citrus and have at least three of the fruits with stems and one leaf attached, you may enter it in the citrus contest. Many categories of citrus will be judged including lemons, oranges, tangerines, kumquats, etc. Winners will be announced between 2:30 and 3:00 p.m. Also, all attendees will be able to taste various types of S.C. grown citrus.

Many so-to-say experts doubt S.C. citrus, but I have seen citrus trees in Florence County as tall as houses and loaded with bushels of fruit. Therefore, education will be a major part of the Expo. Mr. Mike Barwald of Flying Dragon Citrus Nursery of Jacksonville, Florida, will discuss how to grow cold-hardy citrus trees in the Southeast, including rootstock selection and cold protection methods. Dr. Wayne Hanna of the University of Georgia will give a talk describing current testing, experimentation and development of seedless cold-hardy citrus.

Also, there will be open discussion with the citrus experts and a plant sale featuring many cold hardy and rare varieties of citrus, palms and just weird plants. One of our own Florence County Citrus celebrities, Stanley McKenzie, who was recently featured in Horticulture Magazine and the New York Times is leading the Expo. For further information, you may contact Stanley at 843-389-4831 or citrusman99@hotmail.com. Also, the website for the Expo is too long to include but do a search for the Southeastern Citrus Expo.

To learn more about gardening and country living watch both of our Emmy Award winning T.V. programs, Making-It-Grow (MIG) and Down Home with Tony and Amanda. MIG can be seen at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday nights on regular ETV. However, at present Down Home can only be seen on digital cable and some satellite systems on the SC Channel (channel 802 on Time Warner Cable).

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