

A NEW SUGAR IN THE AVOCADO

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Despite the fact that various analyses have reported small amounts of sugar in the avocado, it has often been claimed that this fruit contains no sugar. Recently, however, some systematic studies have been made on this subject with the result that a new sugar has been discovered in the avocado. This investigation was made by Dr. F. B. La Forge, in the Bureau of Chemistry, at Washington, who has found a new sugar, one hitherto not known to exist in any of the natural fruits.

This sugar differs from all previously known natural sugars in that it contains seven carbon atoms, the first sugar of the kind ever found in nature. It is also peculiar in the fact that it is apparently unfermentable, a characteristic likewise not common among the natural sugars. The name that Dr. La Forge has assigned this sugar is D-Mannoketoheptose.

The investigations thus far have been of a very technical nature and little is known regarding the practical aspects of it. Nothing, for example, has been determined regarding its digestibility, nutritive value, etc., and for the present little can be said regarding the practical importance of this sugar. It is, however, a matter of special scientific interest and further investigations may reveal information of general interest.

It is, however, interesting to avocado growers to know that this fruit does contain small amounts of sugar. While this investigation is not very definite, it would seem that the amount of sugar contained in the fruit, varies from .5 to 1 per cent.