

Avocado Culture Calls for Work and Good Judgment

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The avocado is not a passing fancy, for its cultivation has been practiced for many years. The first avocados were introduced into Florida in 1833. They came to California in 1856. However, the fruit did not gain popularity very rapidly until about 1900, when the public began to have a better realization of the relationship of diet to health.

Avocado culture has been more or less shrouded in romance and mystery and this has in times past been seized upon by reckless promoters as a means of inducing people to buy land for producing it. Much land totally unfit for the growing of this fine fruit has been planted, subdivided and sold to people weary of the city and hungry for simple country life. "Tall" tales have been told about the fortunes to be made from it on small plantings. The result is that many persons have found disappointment and loss in avocado ventures.

This is a shame, for avocado growing, stripped of romance and fairy tales as to fabulous returns, is a good, sound, profitable business when carried on in the proper locality by people suited to that type of work. They must enter into the business, not to retire from active work, but prepared to work the same as any other farmers must do, in order to succeed.

An avocado orchard of sufficient size and properly situated is a good investment and should pay a reasonable rate of interest on the investment, plus a reasonable wage to the owner, provided the investment is not too large. The orchard must be situated advantageously from a soil and climatic standpoint. The trees must be of the proper varieties and on good thrifty growing stock. They must be properly irrigated, fertilized and cared for, and that care must include the control of insects and diseases. All these operations cost money, and the crop must be reasonably heavy and must be sold at a fair price to cover the costs before interest on investment, wages and profits can be returned.

While many avocado plantings have not been commercial successes, there is a substantial percentage of growers who have found them profitable. While there have been a lot of unwise and improper avocado promotions, some of our best plantings have been started by conscientious promoters who have a true interest in their work and who take pride in delivering to their patrons orchards which have been properly planted and cared for at a fair price and with a reasonable profit to themselves.