

California Avocado Association 1936 Yearbook 21: 127

COOPER RANCH INN, HAUULA, HAWAII

Excerpts from a Letter from an Association Member, Mr. Will J. Cooper,

"If California has ever had any nightmares over the possibility of Hawaiian avocado competition, she can afford to laugh at these fears now. But it is not for the reason that we can't grow good fruit and plenty of it; nor that the fruit fly quarantine may never be surmounted.

"I, for one, do not believe that we could ever compete with you in price, even had we an open field for competition. Certainly, with the prices that have prevailed for the past three or four years we couldn't pay freight and packing charges and have anything left for marketing costs and profit. I know it is a common notion that Hawaii is a land of 'cheap Oriental labor.' It isn't. Compared on an annual basis (because we don't have seasonal labor here) Hawaii's agricultural workers are higher paid than in perhaps any part of the mainland. Perhaps California growers are able to make a profit at from 4 to 6 cents a pound, but they must have written down very considerably that \$2000 an acre avocado land we used to hear about.

"For my own part I have never sold any fruit under 6 cents. I am getting' that now but previously I had been able to get from 7 to 8 cents.

"I haven't any doubt whatever that California's avocado industry has a wonderful future. It has been marvelous what you have already done. The men who head the industry and who have engineered its development are deserving of the highest commendation.

"I have kept up my membership in your association for a number of years past almost solely for the reason that I was interested in following the fortunes of the gritty bunch of workers who have built up a wonderful and complicated industry from nothing but a dream."