

Avocado Growers to Visit Mexico

Proposal presented at Annual Meeting. May 8, 1937

Carter Barrett: In opening this business meeting, I am going to first ask Dr. Coit to give us a very short report on the proposed trip to Mexico to honor Señor LeBlanc, owner of the parent Fuerte tree.

Dr. Coit: Ladies and Gentlemen: I have to report on a matter which is only in the process of incubation. It is not yet hatched out of the shell. Our members should know about our plans and we would welcome your criticism and suggestions.

Twenty-six years ago the original Fuerte avocado tree was discovered in a certain yard—that of Señor Alexander LeBlanc—of Atlixco, Mexico, and Mr. Carl Schmidt cut budwood from that tree and sent it to Altadena where it was established, since which time the Fuerte variety has come to be the backbone of the California industry. This year, as a result of the freeze, it appears that its supremacy is still on the increase on account of its hardiness. During the intervening years, since its discovery on various occasions, Californians have visited this original seedling Fuerte tree. It has been photographed a number of times by various people. Mr. LeBlanc has been most cordial and hospitable but so far as we know, he has never profited one peso because of the tree being the "Father" of the California commercial industry.

DR. HURLEY'S SUGGESTION

It recently occurred to Dr. Hurley of La Mesa that it might be a good thing to give Señor LeBlanc some long over-due and well merited recognition. There has been a good deal of discussion and the following general plan is formulating. This Association, representing the California industry, proposes to have made a bronze tablet on which will appear a suitable inscription. Wilson Popenoe has suggested the wording and has given both the Spanish and English words of a very appropriate message to be placed on this bronze tablet. The tablet itself is to be attached to a large, rough stone monument to stand beneath the original tree.

In addition, we wish to have a small medal, with suitable engraving, honoring Mr. LeBlanc as the owner and contributor of budwood from this original tree. We plan to contact the Mexican Consul in Los Angeles and through him, in an appropriate and diplomatic way, start the machinery for the Mexican Department of Agriculture, and also the U. S. Department of Agriculture to take part in the ceremonies.