

## A Letter From Africa

The Forest, P. O. Box 7  
Penhalonga, S. Rhodesia  
May 25, 1940

The Secretary  
California Avocado Assn.  
4803 Everett Ave., Los Angeles

Dear Sir:

I have instructed the post office here to forward to you an International money order to the value of three dollars; being my subscription for 1940. I regret the delay in forwarding same.

I have a small orchard of budded avocados here obtained mostly from the Alkmaar Citrus and Avocado Estates in South Africa. They are, as you know, members of your Association and send out first class trees, but I am having difficulty with the Fuertes, and should be most grateful if one of your Advisors could assist me.

First, "Ringneck" has become very bad in these four year old trees and I should be glad to hear whether there is any known cure. Your Yearbooks do not appear to have much concrete information on the matter.

Second, fully 10% of the fruits are stoneless and consequently if allowed to remain on the trees, grow to the size and shape of a gherkin. Can that be rectified in any way. The trees are interplanted with Gottfried; Itzamna; Queen, Collison and Puebla—and I only mention this fact as I thought it might have something to do with pollination. The trees are kept damp and given periodic dressings of kraal manure.

A note or two regarding my trees may be of interest to you.

Itzamna comes easily—No. 1. It is a beautiful tree to look upon with its rich dark green foliage with large fruits well protected from the sun. (Ripens July).

The Gottfried, although putting on tremendous growth, ripens in the middle of our rainy season (February) although for the first time a second crop is setting now (May). The fact that the fruit ripens during the rains means that they will not keep and in fact tend to rot on the trees. The branches also have the straggly nature of the Fuerte with the result that the fruits are liable to sunscald or blotch.

The Fuerte seems to be an excessively heavy bearer, so much so that it seems to retard the growth of the tree, and a certain amount of the fruit, when mature, is so small as to be unsalable. (Ripens May-June).

The remaining varieties, purchased from another nurseryman, have so far been disappointing, taut I understand that is due to the fact that they were budded on West

Indian stock. Those quoted above budded on Mexican stock produce a far better growth.

Our altitude is 3,600 ft.—rainfall 30 inches per year, all of which falls between November and February inclusive; the remainder of the season we have to rely upon irrigation; streams, however, are abundant in this mountainous part of the country.

I have only about 100 trees at present, and there is not much inducement for large orchards such as you have, for the reason that I am living in a colony twice the size of England with a total white population of only 60,000.

Yours faithfully,

P. Gordon Deedes