

REPORT OF THE AVOCADO VARIETY COMMITTEE - 1954

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Chairman

The planting of avocados is continuing at a rapid rate in southern California, especially in Ventura and San Diego Counties.

There is a steady increase in acreage in Orange County and in parts of Riverside County.

In Ventura, avocados are replacing other crops. In San Diego County, the expansion of avocado acreage will be governed by the increase in the availability of good water for irrigation. Land for planting is available, but planters should be cautious in the selection of the type of soil.

This report has primarily to do with the variety to select for the avocado enterprise.

The results obtained from a study of the relationship of climate to the production of certain varieties in the several southern California areas have indicated which of the ones tried appear to be the best for commercial planting in those areas.

Recommended Varieties According- to Agricultural Areas

Area 1. *Fuerte* and *Hass*. That portion of San Diego County which includes Fallbrook, Vista, Escondido, and La Mesa.

Area 2. *Anaheim*, *Carlsbad*, and *Hass*. The coastal district of San Diego County.

Area 3. *Fuerte* and *Hass*. North Orange County and that portion of Los Angeles County which includes East Whittier and La Habra Heights.

Area 4. *Fuerte*. Orange County south of the Santa Ana River.

Area 5. *Fuerte* and *Hass*. Foothill sections of San Gabriel Valley and other intermediate districts of Los Angeles County. The *Fuerte* may not be found profitable on the valley floor and in the colder parts of this area. The *Hass* may also not be found profitable in the colder sections of this area.

Area 6. *Anaheim*, *MacArthur*, *Hass*, *Rincon*, and *Fuerte*. The coastal districts of Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties.

Area 7. *Fuerte*, *Hass*, and *MacArthur*. The intermediate section of Ventura County, including the communities of Camarillo and Santa Paula.

Area 7a. *Fuerte*. The interior section of Ventura County, including the communities of Ojai, Fillmore, Piru, and the district east of Santa Paula.

Area 8. *Fuerte*. The communities of San Bernardino, Riverside, and Corona. The *Fuerte*, however, is successful only in warm, sheltered locations in these communities.

Experimental Varieties Being- Given Wide Distribution

Bacon. The Bacon originated near Buena Park. Trees of this variety have been planted in locations throughout southern California. They fruit early, and production is good in all districts. Quality of the fruit is best in districts within 20 miles of the coast. Marketability has not yet been determined. The tree is quite resistant to cold; and the fruit may usually be harvested between November 15 and January 1, thereby being harvested before the major frost hazard period.

In very dry locations away from the coast, the Bacon may have rusty and corky skin and end spot.

Bonita. This variety was developed as a seedling near Goleta, and has been planted by Dr. Pierce of Santa Barbara on his properties, both in Santa Barbara County and Ventura County. Experimental plantings are located mostly in those two counties. The fruit is of good quality.

Clifton. The Clifton has been found after about twelve years to bear better in warm inland districts than in intermediate or coastal. The fruit has quality if not allowed to remain on tree more than three or four weeks after it reaches maturity. The tree will stand quite low temperatures.

Corona. The Corona has been grown for several years at the Stanley Shepard Ranch at Carpinteria. It has promise, and is being tried quite generally in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties.

Decem. The Decem has borne best under coastal conditions, but has not been consistent, and may not be continued in new locations. It is a good quality fruit.

Elsie. The Elsie is slow to indicate whether or not it will be satisfactory from all standpoints including factors concerned with marketing.

Emerald. It has borne quite satisfactorily at the Citrus Experiment Station, and produced a good quality green, fine textured fruit. Thirty-five Emeralds at Corona, about three years old, produced thirty-five 40-lb. boxes of fruit in January 1954. It may have a place in the plantings in intermediate districts.

Frey. The Frey tree, although susceptible to frost, has borne consistently in the San Gabriel Valley, and is now being propagated and many trees are being sold in the coastal area of San Diego County.

Gehee. The Gehee, which is being tested mostly in the San Gabriel Valley, is a tree which is cold resistant and a consistent producer of fruit with a good skin texture. In some locations, it has a very large seed. Young trees are doing very well in the Fillmore area of Ventura County.

Irving. The Irving variety is not giving satisfaction in some locations because of several factors, although it is a high quality fruit with an excellent flavor. It is a weak growing tree, has not produced satisfactorily, and in some locations it has been observed to be

less cold resistant than the Fuerte.

Mayo (Covocado). The planting of this variety has been promoted by one grower and nurseryman who has sold many trees in Los Angeles, Orange County, and a few trees in other counties. The tree is cold resistant and the fruit matures early enough to get into a veVy early market in the fall which results in a high price per pound.

Mesa. With the few trees of the Mesa growing in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, the variety has promise of being a good one in coastal areas, but has not been tried to any extent in more inland areas. Its flavor is good, and bearing records would indicate that it will be a worth while variety.

Rincon. A very fine green fruit, mature from January to March. The tree is a heavy bearer in the coastal area of Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties. It is also bearing well in the Avocado Society variety plots near Brea in North Orange County.

Silliman. The Silliman has grown and borne very well in the north Orange County district, but the skin has been quite corky. It is now being tried in more coastal locations.

Wurtz. The Wurtz has been more satisfactory in the immediate coastal districts, and is being propagated to some extent in the San Diego coastal area. There is some interest now in the Wurtz in Santa Barbara County, where young trees are showing indications of good production.

Zutano. The Zutano is a vigorous grower and an early and consistent producer. It is resistant to frost. The fruit comes into the market during October to January, and therefore may usually be harvested before a frost period. The Zutano is being planted quite widely in several counties. **Other Experimental Varieties**

Other varieties being grown in certain restricted areas are: *Arturo, Carlos, Gardiner, Halsted, Harms, Jalna, John, Karen, K'nnbail, King, Lodge, Lois, Nowels, Regina, Routh, Strong, Susan, Westivood, and Yatna.*

The committee planned for a series of Avocado Variety Conferences during 1953 and 1954. Four of these were held during the fall in Los Angeles, Riverside, Orange, and San Diego Counties.

Plans are being made to hold another in Santa Barbara County, and for a meeting of the Variety Committee in Ventura County this spring.