

## MORE AVOCADOS HAVE NEW TOPS

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Avocado growers continued to improve fruit quality and production through top-working in 1959. According to data collected by University of California Farm Advisors in the principal avocado producing counties, nearly 10,000 trees were top-worked from one variety to another last year.

Number Avocado Trees Topworked

County	1956	1957	1958	1959	Total 4 Yrs.
Los Angeles	4,928	4,242	2,600	1,801	13,571
Orange	2,568	5,266	4,097	929	12,860
Riverside-San Bernardino	1,183	1,554	1,135	-----	3,872
Santa Barbara	6,833	2,453	6,287	3,953	19,526
San Diego	7,438	7,402	5,134	2,453	22,427
Ventura	3,698	3,000	3,470	700	10,868
	26,648	23,917	22,723	9,836	83,124

In the four years since the topworking program for variety improvement was started, a little over 83,000 trees, or approximately 1,000 acres, have been top-worked. This represents a real step towards variety improvement and stabilization of production. Many of the poor quality, low producing varieties now support tops of proven production, marketability and consumer satisfaction.

Of the total number of trees topworked during the four-year period 1956-1959, 47% or nearly 39,000 have been Fuertes. The principal reason for this has been the grower's desire to have a more consistent producing variety in areas where the Fuerte had proven to be a poor producer. The bulk of the other 53% or 44,000 trees is made up of unnamed seedlings together with many named varieties too poor in shape, taste, shipping ability, etc., to put on the market.

During the same four-year period, the new tops have been predominately of the Hass variety. Of the 83,000 trees topworked, 64% have been topworked to Hass, 14% to Bacon, 7% to Zutano, 5% to Fuerte, 3% to Rincon and the remaining 7% to Jalna, MacArthur, new experimental varieties, etc.

Variety improvement by topworking has a good start. There are still many trees producing fruit that are poor examples of what people should recognize as good quality California avocados. Continued improvement in varieties will help stabilize the avocado industry in California.