

PROGRESS REPORT — AVOCADO NURSERYMEN'S SECTION OF THE CALIFORNIA AVOCADO SOCIETY

The Avocado Nurserymen's Section is approximately one year old. Our first annual meeting was held at the Fallbrook Country Club October 19, 1968, prior to the Avocado Society's annual meeting. Plans were made at that time to hold meetings every three months, on an average, appoint section members to be responsible for various aspects of nursery concern such as variety work, avocado root rot, certification, sanitation, various methods of propagation, nursery containers, new improved varieties etc. A brief description of our meetings this past year is as follows.

On November 1, 1968 a joint meeting was held with the Variety Committee of the C.A.S. at the South Coast Field Station. Dr. Bergh and Dean Millen conducted a tour of the station avocado breeding plots. Of particular interest were the fall maturing varieties, as the industry is looking for a satisfactory new fall variety to stabilize this period of low supply and replace some of the current inferior varieties such as the Jalna. This is probably the most interesting experimental avocado variety plot in the world.

On February 21, 1969, our section's executive committee met with Dr. J. M. Wallace and Bob Platt and made tentative plans and procedures for establishing seed and scion source testing for the Sunblotch virus. This is an area long overdue in the avocado industry. Dr. Wallace is the leading authority on this virus and has over the years with his assistants worked out an index procedure.

On March 7, 1969 another C.A.S. Variety Committee and Avocado Nurserymen's Section meeting was held in the Fallbrook area to review effects of the December, 1968 freeze on various avocado varieties. Nursery stock was severely damaged in the Fallbrook area. Most of the other areas came through fairly well. A report on variety frost damage will be given elsewhere. At the afternoon meeting at the Pala Mesa Inn, section chairman Atkins appointed the following committees:

Propagation: Alvin Lypps (chairman), Dave Hedrick, Jack Maddock. *Growing Containers:* Ted Todd (chairman), W. H. Brokaw, Charles Griffith, Dieter W. Lodder, Alvin Lypps.

Avocado Fruit & Rootstock Varieties: Crawford Teague (chairman), Allan Atmore, Richard Bennett, Troy Gary, Paul McEwen, Noel Walker.

Certification & Registration: E. W. Frey (chairman), Kenneth Glenn, Paul McEwen, Crawford Teague, W. H. Brokaw. *All Committees:* O. Atkins (ex officio).

On April 7, 1969, another Executive Committee meeting was held at the University of California at Riverside with Bob Platt, Agricultural Extension Service, U.C.R., Dr. George Zentmyer and Dr. Wallace U.C.R. and Stan Mather, State of California Chief of Nursery Service. Tentative plans were set up for a combined Sunblotch and Phytophthora Cinnamomi state certification program on a voluntary basis.

On May 28, 1969, our nurserymen's section held a most successful business meeting in Glendora with approximately forty in attendance, including nurserymen, State Department of Agriculture personnel, Agricultural Extension Service specialists and several top U.C.R. pathologists. After discussion at this meeting it was decided it would facilitate the certification program if we separated the Sunblotch and Phytophthora Cinnamomi programs at this time. Recommendations were sent to Nursery Chief Stan Mather for his approval. In the afternoon we had the pleasure of touring the vast Monrovia ornamental nursery growing grounds. This is one of the largest nursery operations in the world and all the nurserymen were most appreciative of our hosts.

On July 11, 1969, another meeting was held at the South Coast Field Station. The purpose of this meeting was to observe Dr. Bergh's seedling progeny of Hass and other spring fruiting varieties before the fruit was harvested. Budwood of some of the promising varieties was collected by the nurserymen for experimentations.

Our second annual meeting was held October 17, 1969 in Ventura County in order to tie in with the Avocado Society's annual meeting and to save duplicate traveling. A most interesting tour was arranged by Hank Brokaw and Ventura County farm advisor Bud Lee. The tour included a visit to the Ventura County avocado seed heat treating facility in Santa Paula. Following this we observed Ventura County plantings and interesting spaghetti individual tree irrigation system. The tour finished with a visit to the W. H. Brokaw Nursery. This was the highlight of the tour and Mr. Brokaw explained the many new innovations he has worked out. Mr. Brokaw has a very efficient operation on a large scale. He has an excellent liquid fertilizer and individual container irrigation system using spaghetti tubing. The nurserymen were impressed with the excellent percentage of propagators and budders, also the vigor of the young trees.

A business meeting was held that evening at Westlake Inn. W. H. Brokaw was elected to a three year term on the executive committee. Oliver Atkins still has two years to go and W. Frey one year. Atkins was elected chairman and Brokaw Secretary-Treasurer. The highlight of the meeting was an excellent program by San Diego County farm advisor Don Gustafson. Don had just recently returned from his year's sabbatical leave in Israel. All the nurserymen had been looking forward to hearing firsthand the progress of the avocado industry in Israel, especially the parts that dealt with avocado nursery trees and propagating techniques. Of special interest were their methods of rooting cuttings and their recently developed salt tolerant rootstock varieties. The avocado industry and avocado nurserymen I'm sure will draw on the experiences and knowledge that Don has brought back with him. This was a well attended meeting by avocado nurserymen from all of the avocado growing counties, University of California specialists, Farm Extension specialists and representatives of the State Department of Agriculture.

The following day after breakfast a business meeting was held discussing certification, clonal rootstock propagation, disposition of the Duke seed from the avocado root rot project in Santa Barbara County.

I sincerely feel our nursery section has made fine progress this past year, in spite of the fact that it has been few in number with limited funds. Being a part of the California Avocado Society I'm sure will help insure the future of our group. Bob Platt of the Extension Service at Riverside and the avocado farm advisors from the main avocado

producing counties are to be commended for their help and guidance this past year. Dr. George Zentmyer and Dr. J. M. Wallace, U.C.R. and Stan Mather, Chief of Nursery Service and their staffs have been most generous with their time and help in working on our certification program. Most of the credit for the excellent reports on our meetings and detailed minutes goes to our hard working Secretary-Treasurer, Hank Brokaw. This has enabled members who have been unable to attend all the meetings to know what has been going on and feel closer to the section.

The fine attendance at the Society's annual meeting that followed ours is an indication of the revived interest in avocados. The Avocado Society, in obtaining the services of Jim Todd as Executive Secretary has already been paid dividends with the obtaining of new members and reviving interest. I feel most optimistic on the future of our industry.

Chairman, Executive Committee

Oliver Atkins