

REPORT OF THE VARIETY COMMITTEE

Plans for this year's Variety Committee were interrupted by the death of Walter Beck, Chairman, and his leadership was missed. Prior to his passing, he had planned for a fall tour of avocado groves of the San Joaquín Valley and San Luis Obispo County. The following are summaries of our observations on that tour, conducted October 5th and 6th.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY - Tour conducted by James La Rue*.

Approximately 600 total acres are now planted in this region. 400 acres are of bearing age. Plantings so far are mostly limited to the eastern slopes and extend from Orange Cove in the north to Delano in the south.

Nearly all trees seen were in a very healthy condition. Crops of the Zutano were fair and the fruit large, attractive, with slight blossom end blemish. Bacon generally matures ahead of the Zutano and harvest may precede slightly the early picks of corresponding varieties in early areas of Southern California. Zutanos normally hold on the tree into November. Susans are ready about one month earlier than Bacons. They are attractive and yield a fair crop. They do not keep well on the tree. They have a large seed cavity and the seed coat clings to the meat. Bacon yields have been disappointing in most locations. They apparently set a crop but tend to have an excessive early summer fruit drop. Most plantings are in thermal belts on foothill side slopes.

Amorbia is a problem and often requires two or more sprays of parathion.

Trees should be planted further apart than in Southern California.

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY - Tour conducted by Jack Foott*.

Approximately 250 acres are planted, of which 25 are of bearing age. The coastline between Cambria and Morro Bay is marked by protected canyons which appear suitable for avocado production. Also, elevated areas to the east of San Luis Obispo, and canyons, and plains south to Nipomo are being planted. The severest limitation of these areas is the scarcity of water.

Conditions here are somewhat different from the San Joaquin Valley and Southern California, being intermediate between the two. Fruit matures rather late. We saw green mature Hass in Nipomo. Zutanos can be picked in March.

There are some distinct climatic zones. The hills back of San Luis Obispo are an intermediate climatic zone.

A notable problem is the six spotted mite. Members of the tour remarked that it was once a serious pest in Carlsbad. Much of the area has a heavy, black, rich, adobe soil. No root rot is yet known. The coastal area is Nipomo Mesa Sand.

We met again, for planning purposes, at Fallbrook on October 21st. At that meeting, we divided into three groups to discuss future organization. The resulting plans follow:

A. Revise and refine our recommendation sheet for avocado varieties. The new

recommendations will be based on climatic regions or zones.

B. Appoint a coordinating secretary to direct regular observations of seedling trees of interest. Assisting him will be area scouts who are committee members who will write field observations so that the secretary may record them for evaluation. Appropriate fruit sampling results will accompany the field observations.

C. Revise the C.A.S. Variety Registration procedure to require that varieties be observed for a minimum period of three years prior to registration.

D. Provide for the systematic field testing of registered varieties by finding grower cooperators and the means for propagating the trial trees.

E. The Variety Committee will meet during the spring and fall for tours of San Diego, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties. Chairmen in charge of tour organization will be Don Gustafson and Stan Shepard.

I am personally pleased with the enthusiasm and imagination demonstrated by this year's Variety Committee members. They deserve our thanks.

Serving this year were Oliver Atkins, H. Leonard Francis, Frank Gilkerson, George Goodall, Don Gustafson, James La Rue, Bud Lee, Marvin Miller, Robert Platt, Stan Shepard, Crawford Teague, Theodore Todd, Elwood Trask.

Respectfully submitted,

W. H. Brokaw, Temporary Chairman

* *Farm Advisors in Tulare and San Luis Obispo Counties respectively.*

REPORT OF THE NURSERYMEN'S SECTION

This report is brief, not because of inactivity of the Section, but because some of its important activities are described elsewhere in this yearbook. See pp. 44 for a description of the Sunblotch Registration Program.

Worthy of notice this year was the release from quarantine status of four new rootstocks from Israel. They are a Lula seedling, Anaheim 3, Fuchs 20, and Gvar-am 13. To take full advantage of their characteristics, they should be reproduced vegetatively. They are expected to show exceptional salt tolerance and, hopefully, resistance to chlorosis producing soil conditions. They are being tested for resistance to *Phytophthora cinnamomi*.

Newly imported this year were four winter-producing scion varieties from Israel. Israeli growers, as well as California producers, are concerned with the bearing habits of the Fuerte. The new varieties will be green, pear-shaped, and, hopefully, productive. They are the Netaim, Horshim, Tova, and Nordstein.

Chairman of this year's Nurserymen's Section was E. W. Frey, Jr. Don Durling served as vice-chairman and W. H. Brokaw was secretary. The 1973 Executive Committee will be comprised of Frey, Durling, and Lois Lohneiss.

Respectfully submitted,

W. H. Brokaw, Secretary