



Report of the President

Robert G. Platt

September 24, 1983

At this time, I'd like to report on the highlights of your Society's activities this past year.

The resignations of two Directors were accepted with regret by the Board. Barbara Ralston McGilivray of Goleta and Rich McMillan of Temecula were, for valid reasons, unable to devote the time necessary to be active on the Board. Their service to the Society was much appreciated.

To fill these vacancies, and as provided in the By Laws, the Board appointed John Bianchin of Carpinteria and Len Francis of Rancho California. Their names will be presented as candidates to fill the unexpired terms of the resigned Directors later in the meeting.

Support of research continues to be a high priority goal of your Society. This past year the Research Committee, chaired by Dr. George Zentmyer, recommended, and the Board authorized, a research gift of \$2,500 to Dr. Michael Coffey, Department of Plant Pathology, UC-Riverside, to help defray expenses of a root rot resistant rootstock search in some of the unexplored areas of Central America. Another gift of \$1,500 was made to a graduate student of Dr. Coffey's for phosphorous acid research.

In addition, through the Nurserymen's Section, your Society provided a gift of \$800 to Dr. Paul Desjardins, UC-Riverside, for research on a faster and more reliable method of sunblotch indexing.

While I am on the subject of research, your Society is presently in the final stages of

negotiations with the California Avocado Commission on an agreement under which the Society would assume the responsibilities and functions of the Commission's Production Research Advisory Committee. This arrangement was requested by the Commission and has been accepted in principle by your Society Board of Directors. While some details remain to be worked out, it is anticipated your Society will assume this responsibility starting Nov. 1, 1984. This will be in addition to the Society's ongoing commitment to research support.

The Variety Committee has had an active year. Under the chairmanship of Oliver Atkins, the Committee has met several times to discuss and evaluate new and promising varieties. Trees at the Society-funded Variety and Germplasm plot at the University's South Coast Field Station are growing well. Additional commercially promising varieties have been grafted onto existing clonal rootstocks for comparison and evaluation. I think we all get impatient that we can't get instant results from a plot like this. But it takes time. Just think, though; it should be a prime source for varietal information and performance when the next avocado planting boom comes to California.

One other comment on varieties, this on rootstock varieties. Just this week the Society signed an agreement with the University of California to distribute for commercial use the root rot resistant rootstocks G-755A, B, and C. These rootstocks have shown root rot resistance as good as or superior to others now in use. This agreement, similar to the G-6 agreement already in effect, is monitored by the Nurserymen's Section of the Society. The fees collected are designated for avocado research at UC-Riverside.

I'm sorry to report that membership in the Society has not made great leaps upward in spite of an intensive membership campaign this year. We're not quite holding even — slipping a little. How can we boost membership? The Board would welcome your suggestions.

One event that definitely deserves mention is the Water Forum, sponsored by your Society and held in Escondido just a month ago. The Forum was open to the public and brought together a group of panelists, all experts on water matters, who had divergent views on how much water was available, where it would come from, and how much it would cost. Your Board hopes this was the first of other Forums on pertinent subjects to be sponsored by your Society, and something that will generate interest in a Society membership. Thanks go to Craig Laursen and his committee of Oliver Atkins, Don Bartlett, Cal Crawford, and Don Munro for arranging the meeting, and to Warren Currier of the Avocado Growers Association for procuring the panelists and moderating the forum.

I could go on at length reporting on the activities of the other Committees within the Society — all have worked diligently and effectively. The Awards Committee, chaired by Bill Catlin; the Budget, Policy, and Rootstock Committees, headed by our overworked Director, Hank Brokaw, who also serves as Secretary-Treasurer of the Society; the Publications Committee, chaired by Jack Shepherd, who is editor of the Yearbook and author of the monthly Society column in the Avocado Grower magazine; Jack also heads the Scholarship and Historical Committees; the Membership Committee, chaired by Lois Todd; the Nurserymen's Section, headed by Craig Laursen; and last but not

least, the Annual Meeting Committee, co-chaired this year by Lois Todd and Don Munro — they are the ones who did all the planning and arranging for our meeting here today.

My thanks to all Committee Chairmen and members of their Committees. We couldn't function without them.