

How to Make the Avocado Tree Bear

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Bud selection, pollenization of flowers, either by mechanical methods, by the use of bees or by some scheme of planting, fertilization, irrigation, and pruning are all special problems to be worked out by observing farmers and scientific men.

Climate, elevation, and soil conditions for the different varieties are problems of equal importance. I am confident that these problems all will be solved, but it will be at a heavy expense because the future success of the avocado will be made possible by the failures of today.

The San Joaquin Fruit Company of Tustin expects to have 240 acres of avocados, intersert with oranges and lemons, planted by July, 1923. Now, this company knows that it does not know how to make an avocado bear, but I will tell you briefly of their plan to grow an orchard that they hope will eventually bear.

In the fall of 1921 avocado seeds were carefully selected and planted in beds. These seeds were sprouted under glass and the strongest plants with straight roots were put in the nursery in the early spring of 1922. Budding began in August and is still going on.

We have learned during the past two years where the best trees of the best varieties are located and from these trees we are selecting wood and budding the vigorous seedlings.

The plan is to set out next spring and summer only the good trees and to set the varieties according to their hardiness on the higher or lower part of the ranch.

The trees will be cared for much the same as citrus. They will receive the same amount of water and cultivation but *less* fertilizer. They will be staked and protected against sun-burn. Very little pruning will be done.

Past experience teaches us that avocado buds do not come as true to type as do citrus buds, and because of this experience, we do not expect over 60% of these new trees to bear early and to bear consistent crops of high quality fruit, but we believe that by starting with a healthy tree and by using only fruit buds from the best trees of the approved varieties, we will have an orchard in which will be some very superior trees.

The young trees will be kept under observation, and those that bear well during the fourth, fifth, and sixth years will have proven their adaptation to this particular location, and will be used for propagation and for the selection of grafts or buds to top-work the drones or the producers of poor quality fruit.

In this way the San Joaquin Fruit Company believes that an orchard can eventually be built up that will bear avocados at a profit.