

## California Avocado Association 1924-25 Annual Report 10: 48-51

### PRESIDENTS ADDRESS

**Dr. J. Eliot Coit**

*Pasadena, California*

Ladies and Gentlemen: During the past year the attention of most avocado growers has been centered largely on the development of a sound marketing organization. While much remains yet to be done, we count the *results* as successful and we now look into the future with encouragement. On account of the foot and mouth disease outbreak and attendant difficulties of marketing, the past year has been a trying one.

Soon after the organization of the Exchange there was a sentiment among some of the members that the Association as previously organized might as well be abandoned, and such work as properly remained to it be carried on by a special Committee of the Exchange Board of Directors. After some discussion this plan was decided against and the Association as such is now considered permanent.

The following list of activities has been approved by the Board of Directors as proper functions of the Association:

VARIETY COMMITTEE to study and report on new and old varieties, thus saving a great amount of useless duplication in testing varieties. It enables nurserymen to concentrate on the most desirable commercial kinds, and gives desirable publicity in regard to good new seedlings.

ANNUAL REPORT which chronicles the history of the industry and is of great educational value.

RESEARCH AND INVESTIGATIONS. Encourages and assists in research into problems confronting the industry by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and the University of California Experiment Station.

INFORMATION BUREAU. Carries on heavy general correspondence, and furnishes reliable free information about California avocado industry.

LEGISLATION. Carries membership in State Agricultural Legislative Committee, and influences legislation in regard to maturity standards, packages, brands, quarantine regulations, etc.

QUARANTINE. Cooperates with the Federal Horticultural Board and State Department of Agriculture in devising and putting into effect measures to prevent the introduction and spread of injurious insect pests and diseases from other localities.

MEETINGS. Holds meetings at which growers get acquainted and have voice in all activities looking toward the benefit of the industry. Also holds field demonstrations for the dissemination of useful information in regard to cultural methods.

ADVERTISING. A continuous advertising campaign is carried on by news notices, general

publicity, printed recipes, booklets, leaflets, letter stickers, automobile signs, etc., etc.

EXHIBITS. Makes exhibits of avocados at county fairs, orange shows, etc., for the general education of the public.

OPPOSES EXPLOITATION. Is active in suppressing any improper use of avocados in the real estate exploitation of worthless land.

SPEAKERS BUREAU. Furnishes qualified speakers for home economic meetings, women's clubs, the avocado store, etc.

SUPPORTS THE EXCHANGE? Encourages and supports the Avocado Exchange in every way in connection with the acquisition of new members and the orderly marketing of the fruit.

An arrangement has been made whereby the Association pays \$100.00 per month to the Exchange toward the Secretary's salary, office room, phone, stenographic service, etc. The present active membership is three hundred fifty-four and there are seventeen honorary members. The possible revenue therefore is \$1,770.00. The fixed overhead being \$1,200.00. There is left but \$570.00 per year with which to carry on the activities outlined above, meet assessments from the State Agricultural Legislative Committee, pay for postage, printing and other incidentals. It is not sufficient for the work and inasmuch as some members are slow in paying their dues, the Association is often several hundred dollars in debt to the Exchange and with nothing in the treasury with which to carry on necessary work. The only logical remedy for this situation is a large increase in membership. As the fixed overhead expense is met by the dues of present members, it is evident that all money received from dues of new members will be available for development work. At this time I wish to appeal with all possible force for active assistance from every present member in the work of gaining additional members.

On account of the foot and mouth disease epidemic the annual meeting scheduled for May 16 and 17, 1924, at Pasadena, could not be held. Later through the courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. D. Eyman Huff a field meeting was held at Hewes Park near Orange on July 26. The attendance was good, and after the picnic lunch and speaking program a tour of observation was conducted through various interesting avocado plantings of that district.

The Fall meeting was also held as a field meeting and through the courtesy of the Abbot-Kinney Company was held at the Kinneloa Ranch near Pasadena on November 8.

During the past summer the Variety Committee was prevented from carrying on its work by the foot and mouth disease situation. This worked to the disadvantage of seedlings maturing during summer. While specimens of various new seedlings have been sent in, it is realized that the seedlings brought to the attention of the Committee represent but a small part of the seedlings which are fruiting in yards and gardens throughout Southern California. There was a great need for some way to bring these new forms into the light where they could be studied by the Committee. When this matter was brought to the attention of Mr. R. A. Dallugge, a member of the Association, he generously donated \$100.00 to be offered as a prize for the best new seedling exhibited at the annual meeting on the condition that five hundred buds be furnished the Association for free

distribution in such a way as to bring about a wide testing of the variety under varied climatic conditions. This made it possible to get the publicity needed and it is confidently expected that the results will be a large increase in the number of promising seedlings under study.

For sometime past there has been a sentiment that the Avocado Exchange should undertake the marketing of subtropical fruits other than avocados, such as persimmons, loquats, feijoas, sapotes, cherimoyas, guavas, etc. After much consideration it appears that such a procedure would introduce too many complications into the development of the Exchange and would be an unwise policy at this time. The first duty of the Exchange is to market avocados, and until that is on a substantial and permanent footing, nothing should be done which might create any confusion in the main plan. The Board of Directors of the Association, however, went on record as in favor of continuing to include subtropical fruits among the exhibits at Association meetings, and of including in the Annual Report such worthy educational papers on subtropical fruits as may be submitted.

The Annual Report of this Association has come to be an institution which is appreciated. During the time when the disbanding of the Association was talked of, many members expressed themselves as of the opinion that the value of the reports was alone sufficient to warrant the continuance of the Association. However, the straightened financial condition of the Association for the past two years has resulted in a marked curtailment in number of illustrations and a reduction in size. This is unfortunate, and with enlarged support coming from an increased membership it is planned to make material improvements, both in scope and style of illustrations. • There is an increasing demand for the Annual Report from libraries in various parts of the country and this is a type of publicity which we should foster to the extent of our resources.

During the past year the Association has encouraged work on various research problems the solution of which has been undertaken by the University of California. The cold storage work by Professor Overholtser has been reported on today. At the instance of the Association, Professor Hodgson made an investigation of avocado possibilities of the Rio Grande Valley which is being reported upon. Professor H. J. Quayle of the Citrus Experiment Station is undertaking some work on the life history of the Sérica Beetle which is doing considerable damage to young avocado trees in the Carlsbad district.

Certain varieties of avocados are subject to a russetting of the skin which under certain conditions results in cracks in the skin and dropping of the fruit. Specimens were submitted to Dr. H. S. Fawcett of the Citrus Experiment Station who has made a study of the disease and isolated the causal organism. I do not wish to anticipate Dr. Fawcett's publication on this subject, and must be content to say the investigation is continuing and promises to be of great value to the industry.

Professor M. E. Jaffa of the University of California has been in Europe on leave of absence and the interesting work on vitamine content of avocados which he began sometime ago has been marking time. It has already been shown, however, that avocados are an excellent source of vitamine B, but we are very anxious to know as to

vitamine C. The Association is ready to furnish fruit to anyone qualified to make a careful animal feeding experiment to test this matter.

Both the Quarantine and Standardization Committees have been active during the year and their reports appear elsewhere.

The exhibit at the Valencia Orange Show at Anaheim was called off last year on account of foot and mouth disease. This year we are planning on making a comprehensive exhibit at Anaheim. We look forward to the time when the Association will be in a position to make a similar exhibit at the National Orange Show at San Bernardino.

During the year the officers and members of the Association have been active in filling speaking engagements on avocados at Women's Clubs, Luncheon Clubs, the Avocado Store, Farm Bureau meetings and elsewhere. A large number of such addresses have been given but no record has been kept of them. I wish to recommend at this time that all members who fill speaking engagements on avocados, report the same to the Secretary giving date, place and attendance, so that a record may be kept and the list with the speaker's names published in the Annual Report.

The office of the Association acts as a general information bureau. This occasions a large volume of correspondence but no actual count has been made of such letters.

The cold wave of January, 1922, resulted in a reduced number of seeds being planted in 1923 for root-stocks. This brought about a shortage of nursery stock during the Spring of 1925. While many large plantings have been made within the past year there is a fair amount of good nursery stock in sight for 1926 planting. It is interesting to note that in avocado nurseries the tendency is to refrain from disbudding and grow a lower, stockier tree with many side branches, which are cut back at digging time. Experience has shown that tall spindling trees are less desirable, and such are often cut back heavily at planting. It is the custom in Florida to grow avocado nursery trees in boxes, while we grow all trees in the open field and ball the trees after the fashion of citrus trees.

In this connection I am glad to announce that during the past year Florida growers have organized the Florida Avocado Association, the purpose of which is the "improvement of the culture and production of the avocado." I take pleasure in extending greetings to the organised Florida growers, and assure them that the California Association will be glad to cooperate with them at all times and along any lines which hold promise of mutual benefit.