

REPORT for the THIRD ANNUAL MEETING, 1931, of the HAWAIIAN AVOCADO ASSOCIATION, on VARIETIES at HAIKU FARM

Dr. W. D. Baldwin

Chairman, Varieties Committee

MY REPORT this year will again be brief, as there is little to add to my previous reports. I still consider that the three most valuable winter and spring varieties are the Nabal, Panchoy, and Itzamna. All three are undoubtedly fine producers of excellent fruit.

There is one new variety to report: namely, the "*Collinson*," a Guatemalan West Indian hybrid from Florida. The tree is a healthy grower, with irregular branching habit. The fruit is a pound or over, roundish, shiny green, very attractive externally. The seed is a bit too large; the flesh is yellowish and quite rich in flavor. The tree gives indications of being a heavy bearer, and appears to be a fine variety, probably maturing here in November, December, and January; but it has one serious defect in that, according to word from Florida, the fruit does not withstand cold-storage well.

Of the large-fruited varieties, we consider the *Linda* as decidedly the best of the Guatemalans. It bears heavily where there is not too much wind.

Our latest experience is that, with better cultivation and heavy manuring, some of the varieties that we have condemned in the past, such as the *Queen* and the *Mayapan*, will bear fairly good crops. The avocado is not a heavy drinker, but it is a veritable glutton for food: give it plenty of nourishment and it will grow fast and bear heavily. But, of course, the varieties that do well under less favorable conditions are far more preferable to those that have to be stuffed with food before they will produce.

As far as I know our fall-maturing hybrids have one defect in common: that is, they bear in alternate years, bearing too heavily one year, and too lightly, or not at all, the following year. This is a bad characteristic, as the trees will sometimes kill themselves from over-bearing. If anyone knows of a fall variety that bears with reasonable regularity, and is a good sort commercially, I hope he will report the information.

From the behavior of different types of the avocado at Haiku, I would say that the best growers and the most hardy are,—first, the Mexicans and the Mexican hybrids; next comes the pure Guatemalans; then the Guatemalan-West Indian hybrids; and last of all the West Indians. To me, this observation is very astonishing, for I would have predicted, in this tropical country, the exact reverse of this order.

I will close with a few words in regard to our seasons relative to those of California and Florida. In general, I would say that any given variety of pure Guatemalan type will mature its fruit at Haiku about four months earlier than the same variety will mature in California—sometimes as much as seven months earlier—and about one month earlier than in Florida.

California produces avocados in every month of the year, but with their "peak" of production in March, April, and May; with May, I think, as their heaviest production month.

The Florida crop is mostly from August 1st to February 1st, with their "peak" in September and October; but as their growers are taking a big interest in the hybrids that mature in November, December, and January, the Florida "peak" may eventually be advanced one or two months.

It would seem that at present, on the Mainland, the months of lowest production and of highest prices, are October, November, and December.