

Varieties in Florida

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DEAR SIR: I have about thirty varieties of avocados growing at my grove at Avon Park, Florida, but I believe that my future operations will probably be confined to six, or less, varieties.

Up to the present time the outstanding varieties I have which are bearing are Taylor, Lulu, and Collinson. The Winslowson bears exceedingly well, but there has been some trouble from shipping under ice as it has a tendency to cut black. The Eagle Rock does quite well in our section, but my trees of this variety are not yet in bearing.

I have a large number of Itzamna trees which are very vigorous growers and a very beautiful tree, but I do not yet know how they will bear and ship with us. I was glad to note the encouraging note on this variety in the 1931 Yearbook of the California Avocado Association. The Panchoy has proven to be a very vigorous grower, but last season much of the fruit dropped just prior to the time that we had expected it to ripen. It is possible that my superintendent left the fruit on the trees too long, believing it to be still immature because of the hard shell, and the fruit dropped because it was too ripe. He does not believe that this was the case, however. A late frost at the time these trees were in bloom prevented them setting a regular crop this season. I have one Mayapan tree which has set an enormous crop of fruit this year. We do not yet know what the quality of this fruit will be.

The budwood for my Taft trees came from one heavy-bearing parent tree and they are now five and seven years old. So far they have proven to be very shy bearers, and I am top-working many of them. A few trees of this variety, probably four or five, have borne quite well. Were it possible to get Taft trees which would bear heavy crops regularly, they would be a fine tree for this section as they make a splendid vegetative growth. I have about 1400 trees at the present time, about 800 of them being in bearing. I expect to plant several hundred more this year. Up to the present time it looks as though our Taylor, Lulu and Collinson will be my most profitable varieties. The Taylor grows exceedingly well in the Ridge Section, bears heavily, giving a heavy crop one year and a medium crop the following year, and appears to be very resistant to scab. It sells well on the market. I believe it will be a superior variety for the Ridge Section, as it seems to do better there than it does on the East Coast. The Lulu is a good bearer, grows very vigorously, but is very susceptible to scab. It requires constant spraying with bordeaux to keep the fruit clean. So far the Fuerte has proven to be almost worthless in our section. I am trying out a variety called the Villa, It comes from a tree which was bought

for a Fuerte and looks like a true Fuerte except that it bears very heavily on flat/woods soil about ninety miles northeast of Avon Park. I have top-worked some trees with graft-wood and will know in a few years whether it will do well in the sand hills of the Ridge Section.

Knowing of the work you have been doing for several years in California, I thought you might be interested in this report of avocado varieties in the Ridge Section of Florida.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) W. F. WARD.