

Orange County Avocado Notes 1936

Harold E. Wahlberg

Avocado culture has made a comparatively rapid growth during the past decade. In a recent review of Orange County development in agriculture, the Agricultural Extension Service points out that in 1925, 450 acres of avocados returning \$26,000 to the growers was reported in the agricultural census; the 1935 report shows 2000 acres planted to avocados with a farm return of \$170,000. About one-half of the acreage was under five years of age in 1935. The production of 3,270,000 pounds that year represented about one-fourth of the state's production.

The major problem of production as we see it in Orange County is that of maintaining uniform good yields each year, instead of the present tendency towards erratic yields—high one year and low or medium for two or more years.

The avocado cost studies carried on by the Agricultural Extension Service in Orange County for the past seven years indicates clearly that the orchards producing good yields every year make satisfactory returns to the growers.

VARIETY SURVEY

Realizing this major production problem as an economic one as well, the Extension Service, in cooperation with the Farm Bureau Avocado Department and the Variety Committee of the California Avocado Association, has made and is still continuing a survey of Orange County for promising seedlings or improved variety strains that may give more uniform annual yields than now experienced by present plantings. Several days were devoted in 1936 by the Orange County Avocado Committee and A. D. Shamel and C. S. Fomeroy of the Bureau of Plant Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture, to this variety survey. Many plantings were visited and the most promising leads so far include the Burgess Fuerte at Brea; the Isabella at the Thompson place, Villa Park; the Hass tree at La Habra; the McPherson place, El Modena; Weisel orchard, La Habra, and others.

785 avocado growers attended six demonstration and general meetings on avocado culture during the year. The annual institute was held at La Habra with an interesting program.

MOTTLE-LEAF CONTROL

Several tree plots were sprayed at the Sharpless orchard, La Habra, to demonstrate the

effect of zinc oxide in the control of Mottle-Leaf. The trees were sprayed in April. A remarkable recovery has taken place during the summer and fall.