

Report of Subtropical Fruit Committee

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As I sat down to write this report I was reminded of the predicament of the young Swede and the pretty Irish girl. They were riding in the buggy which Hans had obtained at the local livery stable, the moon was full, the weather—it was a balmy June night. Mary said, "Hans, do you love me?" Hans replied, "Ja." After an interval of silent riding, Mary said, "Hans, shall we get married?" Hans, looking at the beautiful moon, said, "Ja." They rode in silence for several minutes. Finally Mary could stand it no longer. "Hans, why don't you say something?" "Mary, I already ban talked too dammed much."

You see, Dean Palmer stopped in at the Trask ranch a few weeks ago, and in the course of the conversation said he was at a loss for something to say for the report of the Subtropical Variety Committee. I said, "Oh, don't let that bother you. It's easy. Just get up and tell them there is nothing to report as the committee cannot operate without some help from the members of this Society." So? Here I am, making the report for the Subtropical Variety Committee.

The Subtropical Variety Committee of the California Avocado Society was practically a war baby, being set up in 1941, and like most war babies has had to struggle along without much help from anyone. The war years were difficult for any committee of this type to operate, let alone attempt to become established. Travel was restricted and everyone's interest was more or less tied up with the war effort. At the close of the war, with soaring farm land and commodity prices, a rapid turnover in subtropical properties was inevitable, and with the accelerated interest in the great American sport of chasing the Golden Calf, the interest in investigating the commercial or other possibilities of subtropical fruits dropped to a low point.

During the six years of its existence the committee has registered only eighteen varieties of subtropicals; 7 cherimoyas, 5 white sapotes, 3 guavas, 1 feijoa, 1 carissa, and 1 mango. The work of registering and checking on these fruits has been done almost single handed by Dean Palmer. Dean has worked practically alone in preparing forms for reporting promising seedlings, and forms for recording the essential information about the fruits offered for registration. He has checked the original plants in most cases, and has made up a book giving the essential data to date as well as a picture of each variety registered. He has made colored slides of each fruit registered. These slides have been shown at previous Society meetings and other gatherings of people interested in subtropical horticulture.

The committee feels that established varieties as well as seedlings should be registered so that information concerning these fruits can be placed of record where it will be available to all concerned. As the list of registrations is enlarged, the files will contain much useful information such as the locations in which varieties can be most

successfully grown, and lists of varieties best adapted for home use as well as those with commercial possibilities.

There are literally hundreds of subtropical fruits growing in Southern California that should be studied with respect to latent possibilities as commercial or home fruits. There are guavas, cattleys, carissas, macadamias, cherimoyas, feijoas, sapotes, mangoes and many others grown from seed, cuttings, or otherwise propagated, which are outstanding and superior to those generally sold in the nurseries. This committee would like to serve as the clearing house for information on these varieties of subtropical fruits. To obtain the information on these fruits and to get them registered, we need your help.

Anyone having a superior seedling of any of the tropical or subtropical fruits or nuts should submit samples to the Committee for its consideration. Mature fruit specimens should be sent to the committee with the necessary information on the registration blanks furnished by the Society, and the registration fee of \$1.00. Blanks may be obtained from the office of the California Avocado Society, 4833 Everett Ave., Los Angeles 11, California. The registration fee is used to make the photographs of the fruit specimens. If the fruit is not registered the money will be returned.

It is the sincere hope of this committee that during the coming year there will be a revival of interest in the subtropicals, and that a year from now we will have sufficient data of interest to present an instructive and entertaining report.