

REPORT OF THE FOREIGN EXPLORATION COMMITTEE

The emphasis on foreign exploration in the avocado field has shifted in recent years from the search for new edible varieties to the search for rootstocks resistant to Phytophthora root rot. To date, research on the root rot project, centered on the Riverside campus of the University of California, has revealed that there is high resistance in several small fruited species of **Persea** native to Latin America. Unfortunately the resistant small-fruited species tested to date are not compatible with the edible avocado, so cannot be used directly as root stocks.

Assuming his new obligations seriously, soon after his appointment the new chairman of this committee left for a 3-months trip to Central and South America and the West Indies to search for additional sources of resistance to root rot. During most of the South American portion of the trip the chairman was accompanied by committee member H. W. Montgomery. This trip, under the auspices of the University of California, resulted in some 66 collections, details of which are reported elsewhere in this Yearbook, as well as much additional information on occurrence of the avocado root rot fungus and of other avocado diseases in Latin America. Several of these new collections have high resistance to root rot; data are not yet available on compatibility, but valuable new sources of resistance have been discovered.

The cooperative root rot resistance project in Guatemala, financed by the California Avocado Society, has continued again this year, though at a somewhat slower pace than in previous years because of lack of personnel to direct the work in Guatemala. This is a cooperative project between the University of California at Riverside and the Institute Agropecuario Nacional in Guatemala City. Additional work to be carried out under this project was planned by Dr. G. A. Zentmyer when in Guatemala in 1956.

At the time this report was written, Dr. Schroeder was on sabbatical leave in Turrialba, Costa Rica, studying the anatomy of cacao flowers; Dr. Schroeder also planned some avocado exploration.

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