

AVOCADO BREEDING

Gray Martin and Bob Bergh

Field selections continue to be added to the breeding accession plot. Some 140 accessions have been made in the last three years with approximately 20 on-line to be added spring 1992. The most valuable genetic segregations have recently surfaced in the Bob Lamb plot in Camarillo. Last year, 37 selections were made from the Lamb ranch.

Our newest and currently most promising potential commercial selection is Lamb 122. The parent tree has born fruit continuously since 1987 with remarkable production volume. Two trees of 122 grafted May 1989 are averaging over 100 pounds per tree. Fifty 122 trees grafted August 1990 have bountiful buds for this spring's bloom and heavy cropping is expected.

Lamb 122 is one of two selections replicated in volume this past year. Two additional selections have now been made for this increase phase. In addition, the new Israeli patented variety, Iriet, will be increased to determine a comparative performance with our own commercial standards.

We anticipate that approximately two-thirds of our breeding plots will flower and crop this year. We hope by identifying the two flower types to begin selecting cultivars for their pollination value.

Root rot breeding plots produced approximately 1,400 seedlings this past year in spite of much cold damage experienced at UCR. The crop for next year should be significantly larger. Cold was also responsible for damage to new grafts and plantings made in 1991. Seedling rootstocks were used in the replanting due to the shortage of specific clonal material. Needed re-grafting will be complete this spring.