

Mango Trials

Capt. L. L. Bucklew

Encinitas

In 1936 I planted my first mangoes. I now have 150 trees ranging from three years old to young plants. After checking individual plantings, of which there are few in San Diego County, investigating several varieties, as well as requirements of soil, climate, etc., I concluded it was worth while to make a commercial planting. No one has given any real encouragement and many have discouraged me. I will admit I do not know of another location in California where I would make such a planting though there may be other areas meeting the requirements. No orchard heating is contemplated, as adjoining avocado and lime orchards did not need it in 1937. The orchard is on a 10% west slope. Good air and water drainage, deep sandy soil; one and a half miles from ocean; 350 foot elevation. Partial wind protection by orchards on west and south.

Original crop on this acreage was corn 15 feet tall, after which has been grown two cover crops a year, melolotus in winter and yellow mustard in spring. A subsoiler was used and crop disked in.

Holes for trees were prepared, three feet deep, four feet in diameter. Used six shovels of well rotted barnyard manure in bottom of each hole. Three wash tubs of peat moss well mixed with soil as it was replaced in the hole. Square basins with bean straw surface mulch.

Irrigation has been the same as with young avocado trees. Pests one year were aphids. Following year Fuller's rose weevil. As a precaution against mango blight I have used Bordeaux in spring. A few trees blossomed, but the bloom was removed.

Varieties planted are Haden, Cambodiana, Sandersha, "Bombay" from Kingston, "Gordon" from Trinidad, Florida Apple, "Johnson" of India, Brooks Late, Caraboa, Seedling No. 11, "Filipino" from Florida, "Manila" from East Coast Mexico, "Manila" from West Coast Mexico. Some are grafted varieties, while many are seedlings from seeds planted in the basins. Polyembryonic seedlings were separated and transplanted singly.

The leaves on four trees, instead of being smooth, are slightly crinkled, which indicate those trees are having some trouble. Some trees have grown six feet in two years, a few as little as two feet.

Only fertilizer used so far to each tree has been a handful of ammonium sulphate one year and a handful 6-9-6 the next year.

The plants are spaced sixteen feet on the square, which will be satisfactory for the inarched or grafted, but too close for seedlings.

Dr. Coit asked me why I planted the mangoes. The answer aside from the question of making money on them, goes back to a study of what were the best things to grow in

this district, and that covered a multitude of flowers, vegetables and trees. Then having a given location and conditions for best production of certain products, the other side of the problem, marketing, was considered. My conclusion was, since mangoes would fit into both situations, they were first choice. Quien sabe?