

## AVOCADOS IN SICILY

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*The information given here was obtained while the author was on sabbatical leave and located at Stazione Sperimentale di Agrumicoltura e di Frutticoltura, Acireale, Sicily, Italy.*

Avocados are new in Sicily. They were first introduced in the spring of 1959 by Dr. Francesco Russo as an experimental planting at the Stazione Sperimentale di Agrumicoltura e di Frutticoltura at Acireale, Sicily. At that time budded trees of Hass, Fuerte, Zutano, Nowels and Duke, and seedling trees of Topa Topa, Clifton, Duke, Zutano, Emerald and Mexicola were planted. The five Hass trees in the plot were on Duke, Clifton, Topa Topa and Zutano seedlings. The nine Zutano trees on seedlings from Duke, Clifton and Topa Topa. The two Fuerte trees were on Topa Topa and Zutano seedlings. The six Nowels were on Duke, Clifton and Zutano seedlings. The two Duke trees were on Duke and Topa Topa seedlings.

When inspected in 1964, the trees had made good growth. The soil at the Stazione Sperimentale is of volcanic origin, which produced an open, well-drained soil, well suited to avocados. Symptoms of manganese deficiency are common on the citrus growing there, and symptoms believed to be manganese deficiency occur on many of the avocado trees. Additional information on this subject is given in another article in this yearbook by E. F. Wallihan and the author.



**FUERTE AVOCADO TREES** growing in Experiment Station planting, Acireale, Sicily.

While accurate yield information has not been obtained, observations by Dr. Russo when the trees were five years old indicate that the Hass is the best producer. Next in productivity is the Fuerte (Newman strain), followed by Nowels and then Zutano. He reports that the Zutano has been rather alternate, which accounts for its lower production rating.

The avocado fruit is not desired by most of the people at the Station. Only the Dr. Russo family, who learned to like the fruit when they were in California, are interested in eating the fruit. This confirms previous observations that people may not like avocados the first time they taste them, but later consider them delicious.