

Report of the Variety Committee

The most important event of the year was the initial planting in the Society's new variety plot at the South Coast Field Station in Orange County.

In the planting are the best selections of Dr. B. O. Bergh's breeding program, including the three patented varieties: Whitsell, T 225 or Gwen, and NB 67 or Esther. Also being planted are registered private selections that we believe show promise.

For comparison purposes, we have included all the current California commercial varieties. The rootstocks on all varieties are registered Duke 7 clonals. Being identical, the clonal rootstocks will provide a fair comparison of the scion tops. All selections were grown by California Avocado Society nurserymen in their own greenhouses at no charge to the Society. Additional trees will be planted in 1983 as new selections and promising varieties occur.

As this is being written, the California avocado industry is going through another trying period of marketing problems with the fall green thinskins. Aggravating this have been several severe windstorms. The resulting salvaged fruit being marketed all at the same time has really created problems. Unfortunately, a large portion of the salvage fruit was undersized Hass that had legal oil content but was not horticulturally mature. We hope the housewives and consumers will be understanding, and not lose confidence in the Hass variety.

The Variety Committee is well aware of the problems. New, superior varieties will be coming along in the future to supplant the current green thinskins, with their weaknesses. Included in this will be types that have the ability to hang well during windstorms. Several dwarfing types are under test. A space is being reserved at the upper end of the variety plot for future virus- and viroid-free selections.

I would like to thank the Variety Committee members for their help and comments during the year. Especially, many thanks to those who supplied fruit and assistance in putting on our variety display at the Society's annual meeting at the Bahia Hotel in San Diego.

Respectfully submitted, Oliver Atkins, Chairman