

## The Avocado Pear

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In response to Brother Hart's request, will say that about seventeen years ago, when I first went to the Pinellas peninsula I found the avocado pear tree in almost every doorway, and remember at least two trees that were eighteen inches in diameter of trunk. Like Adam of old I sampled the fruit and now think that the Garden of Eden tree must have been an avocado pear tree instead of an apple, for two reasons: first, because of man's probable inability to resist the temptation to eat the fruit; and second, was not the (pair) found under the tree? Therefore was not the tree overhead a pear rather than an apple tree?

This tree with us is without an insect enemy; possibly a fungus may at times affect the bloom some, but its great weakness is its inability to endure cold; however, it is rather more hardy than the mango, but in the '94 of unpleasant memory our trees were killed to the ground, but sprang from the roots and were fruiting again in three years. I can not agree with Mr. Blackman to the effect that this tree must have stable manure, for they do well on any complete commercial fertilizer, but do need a large percentage of nitrogen, and will accept thankfully even stable manure and similar organic ammoniates, without contracting dieback.

Upon the sub-peninsula the trees are larger for their age and have more and larger leaves, than either here at Miami or in Cuba, but from what I hear they may be more fruitful here possibly because of premature maturity on a rock diet.

As to the trees coming true to the type from which the seed came, I can not answer for Cuba, but in Florida this tree "draws the color line;" the trees from the seed of the purple fruit remaining true to its maternal, at least in color, and the same may be said of the green and yellow varieties. Extreme types of form also show strong prepotency, but in minor details they vary from their parents, as seedling fruits usually do; in quality, however, they never vary enough to fail to be good, to an educated palate. In fact, of all the good fruits of North or South, with the-exception of a really good mango, I call the avocado pear the peer of them all; for although lacking in juice and sweetness, it outranks all in richness, being seventeen per cent, oil, while its delicate pecan-like flavor lingers upon a natural palate as the odor of flowers upon the morning air.

As a rule, their appreciation is a matter of education. It is a case of, first, "you may have my part;" second, "I will try again;" third, "good;" fourth, "better;" fifth, "best." And this is the common experience. With us all old residents are very fond of them, and I have never known good fruit to sell for less than one dollar per dozen, and large ones retail for twenty-five cents each.

I have known a laboring man, even seventeen years ago, to work all day for one dollar

and invest the same in a dozen of these pears at night. A fair sized fruit will weigh a pound, and I have known them to reach a weight of two and three fourth pounds, but a two-pound fruit is a large one. In Cuba, I never saw a native eat an orange, but the "aguacate" was a common morning purchase for table use. The oil has been separated from the fruit for salad purposes, but is said not to be clear. The Cuban fruit is somewhat inferior in quality to that grown in Florida.

Question. How do you eat them?

Answer.—Sometimes the oily flesh is cut into small pieces and made into a salad by the use of salt, pepper, vinegar, and even olive oil and mayonnaise dressing; but aside from salt and pepper, the more you add to a good pear the more you spoil its finer virtues. I simply cut them lengthwise through the center, take out the large seed and its night-gown, use salt and sometimes pepper and with a spoon eat the butter-like fruit from its half-shell.

As to wholesomeness, upon a diet of mangos, avocado pears and whole wheat products I gained six pounds, and it was the only one of many diets that caused me to gain even a pound.