

Recent Developments in Florida Grape Culture

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In the early 1930's Florida had a small but growing grape industry of table varieties bred in Texas. When this enterprise failed from vine decline, it was generally thought that Florida grape culture could benefit by varieties better adapted to Florida conditions. This belief led to breeding on a considerable scale by both public and private agencies and also to research by the Florida Experiment Stations on the decline of bunch grapes.

At the Watermelon and Grape Laboratory at Leesburg, Florida, studies on Pierce's disease of grapes not only corroborated earlier findings on the occurrence of the virus in Florida, but indicated that Pierce's disease is the major factor responsible for the decline of bunch grapes in Florida. The leafhopper species *Oncometopia undata* F. and *Homalodisca triquetra* F. were found to be more effective carriers in the transmission of the disease than *Carneocephala flaviceps* Riley. Although *O. undata* and *H. triquetra* have been described as vectors of phony peach, they have not been described previously as vectors of Pierce's disease.

A few new, hardier bunch grape varieties have been developed over the past 20 years. Some of these are finding their way into public use. Testing has indicated that they are hardier and more productive than out-of-state introductions.

The Lake Emerald grape (See front cover) developed by the Florida Agricultural Experiment Stations at Leesburg, Florida, has been quite widely planted in Florida and other southern states as a home garden grape. Its short

shelf-life in retail markets limits the commercial value of this variety.

Mr. Joseph L. Fennell, a private breeder in Central Florida, has recently announced that Tamiami, an attractive dark-colored bunch grape, will be released in the near future. There has been considerable demand in Florida for a dark-colored table grape, and Mr. Fennell, the originator, considers this variety very promising.

Fresh table grapes clear the Florida markets before the harvest period of the newer Muscadine varieties, which are also being tested quite extensively at the present time.



Apples in New England

E. J. Rasmussen, of the University of New Hampshire tells us that back in 1927 a campaign was initiated in New England to reduce the number of commercially grown apple varieties from some 43 to 7 carefully selected ones. This campaign was rather successful and for many years the New England Seven were Baldwin, Delicious, Gravenstein, McIntosh, Northern Spy, Rhode Island Greening and Wealthy.

Today, according to Rasmussen, this list could be revised and called the New England Three, and would include McIntosh, Delicious and Cortland. The value of Cortland is mainly as a pollener for the other two.

There is also some interest in new early varieties, particularly for roadside market, namely, Puritan, Fenton, Mantet, Red Crimson Beauty and Red Melba.

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