

Short Prunings

How many of our readers are familiar with the hybrid nut varieties called hicans? These are natural crosses of pecan with some of the other 32-chromosome hickory species, the shellbark (*Carya laciniata*) probably being the other parent of most varieties which have been named. One cross of pecan x bitternut, the Pleas, is a "papershell" nut, promising somewhat farther north than any of the pure pecans. A third type of hican, supposedly pecan x shagbark (*C. ovata*), seems to be represented almost solely by the Burton variety. The Burton was first propagated at Owensboro, Kentucky, around 1880, but only in the past twenty years has it been tested at a few other locations. Dr. R. T. Dunstan, enthusiastic nut and grape variety tester at Greensboro, N. C., has had it bearing for several years, top-worked on pecan, and gives us the following notes on it and some other promising nut varieties for his location:

"You should have seen Burton hican! Loaded again, even heavier than last year and perfect nuts, very nearly. That is, its one fault it seems to me is that some kernels cling too tightly to outer shell. But its plump, rich and delicious quality offsets such a small fault, to my mind. How such a splendid variety has been known so many years and ignored so generally I just can't see." Editor's note: It probably suffered by being compared externally with such large shelled varieties as McCallister, which seldom bear heavily or fill well,

and it is still generally unknown. One nursery was offering trees of it in 1951.

"Have you seen Henke hican?" (We haven't.) "This bore its first nuts here this fall. Very early, rather small, long nut, more pecan-like than other hicans I've seen (possibly an F₂ pollenized by pecan?)—leaves also strongly resemble pecan. It has a very thin shell, cracks better than Burton and quality is high. It promises to be even more productive than Burton.

"Some Western (Texas) pecans, including Squirrel's Delight, came through with a nice crop, clean as a pin, where several others in the same tree (unsprayed) were riddled with scab. Western Schley and Burkett are *clean* and have a good crop. Seminole (from Florida) looks like the candidate for top honors, however. It begins opening first week in October (about with the "northern" Major and Giles varieties.) Seminole has everything! 'Forkistan' (possibly same as Brake—Ed.) is not quite as impressive as a bearer thus far, but of course the nut (70% kernel) is still without a peer, to my mind. 'J. Wright' looks like a competitor this year, with a very heavy crop.

"In Chinese chestnuts, two year grafts of several from Mr. G. S. Jones, Phenix City, Alabama, bore a few nuts this time. His No. 2 and No. 17 both look very nice. Mr. Etter's No. 12 (Fayette Etter, Lemasters, Pa.) is also a beauty. Abundance was splendid again, also."

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