



ESCUELA AGRICOLA PANAMERICANA
TEGUCIGALPA HONDURAS

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

APRIL 1955. Just about the hardest dry season we have experienced in our 13 years here. Forest fires everywhere; our pastures of little use for the time being, but thanks to the hay which was made last autumn, we have kept the steers going, and thanks to our three silos and the irrigated Guatemala grass (Tripsacum latifolium), milk production has not fallen off seriously. The vegetable garden, also under irrigation, of course, has never been as good.

Event of the month was the meeting of the American Society for Horticultural Science (Caribbean Region) which brought together at the school, during the first week of April, about 15 horticulturists from Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Costa Rica, as well as five from Florida, two from Cuba, and one from California. The discussions were particularly valuable to those of us who live in Central America because we got at first hand the story of recent developments in regions where many branches of horticultural science are more advanced than here. As examples: Professor John Lynch described in detail the remarkably successful techniques which have been developed in southern Florida for the propagation of such tropical fruits as the mango and the guava; Dr. C. A. Schroeder, of the University of California at Los Angeles, discussed the search for avocado rootstocks resistant to Phytophthora cinnamomi; Dr. Ernest Casseres, of the Instituto Interamericano de Ciencias Agrícolas (Turrialba, Costa Rica), talked about potato growing in the American tropics; Mrs. W. J. Krome, of Florida, discussed mango production in that State, while her son, William H. Krome, sent an excellent paper on avocados; Dr. Richard Hamilton, who has worked in Hawaii for seven years and is now stationed in El Salvador, talked of lychees and madacamia nuts; Dr. H. S. Wolfe, of the University of Florida, gave us information of great value regarding rootstocks for citrus fruits; Dr. R. W. Richardson, of the Rockefeller Foundation, talked of vegetable improvement in Mexico; Dr. Bruce Ledin, of the Subtropical Experiment Station, Homestead, Florida, discussed tropical fruit improvement; Francisco de Sola, of El Salvador, described the remarkable development of Simaruba glauca as the source of edible fat; Owen Smith, of Guatemala, talked about commercial possibilities of bamboo cultivation in tropical America; and so on.

All in all, we believe this meeting did a great deal for Escuela Agrícola Panamericana through bringing to the attention of our students and other people in this part of the world new techniques in propagation and cultivation, and new horticultural crops of potential value. Through the courtesy of the Tela Railroad Company, it was possible to arrange a trip by airplane to Lancetilla Experiment Station, a day of particular interest to those delegates who had not before had opportunity to see such tropical fruits as the mangosteen growing under favorable conditions. In its 30 years of existence, Lancetilla has become one of the most important (and some think, one of the most beautiful) collections of tropical economic plants in the Americas.

Just as the meetings were about to end, in came Dr. W. H. Cowgill, of we don't know exactly what lettered agency at the moment, but who was long with the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations of the USDA and who, while he was working in Guatemala, founded the Caribbean Region (or section) of the American Society for Horticultural Science; and Dr. Frank Venning, now in Cuba; and C. H. Lankester of Costa Rica, the acknowledged Dean of tropical American plantmen.