



ESCUELA AGRICOLA PANAMERICANA
TEGUCIGALPA HONDURAS

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

AUGUST 1954. It is standard practice for agricultural colleges to function as, or in conjunction with, experiment stations. We do not for a moment claim that Escuela Agrícola Panamericana is an agricultural college, since our three-year vocational course cannot lead to the granting of an academic degree; but we do claim that since the beginning we have carried on a considerable amount of experimentation with new crops, with cultural practices, and with animals. We are working in a part of the world where there are endless opportunities.

Our experiments with temperate zone fruits at our little orchard on Uyuca (6000 feet elevation) have this year brought forth interesting results. Peaches from Florida produced good crops. We still prefer Angel for quality, but Dorothy N. is the strongest grower and bears abundantly. Of the plums, Santa Rosa continues to be our favorite, with Duarte in second place; but Satsuma is more productive. The so-called Reina Claudia from Ecuador (where it is the leading variety) came into bearing and looks promising. Except for the crabs, apples do not look very hopeful. Pears with Japanese blood are coming along well but most of them are not yet in bearing.

The fruiting season of mangos here at the school (elevation 2600 feet) is now coming to an end. Haden is still the favorite variety in these parts, but we have not yet tested some of the newer mangos from Florida. Amini, which is much smaller than Haden and, to our way of thinking, much better in quality, produced a fine crop but probably will not meet with favor in local markets.

As for avocados, the preference is still for the large-fruited varieties such as Pollock and Simmonds, but there is much hope for the west Indian x Guatemalan hybrids from Florida, the fruits of which mature late, when avocados of the west Indian race are out of the market.

As regards animal husbandry, we have been working for ten years to up-grade our dairy herd of "criolla" or native cows through the use of registered bulls - Guernsey, Jersey, Holstein, and more recently Brown Swiss. We have recognized from the start that good feeding and management constitute at least half the battle. Recently we announced the acquisition of a half-blood Red Sindhi bull, which we obtained through the courtesy of the Ministry of Agriculture of the government of Honduras. This announcement brought forth some comments. One distinguished friend of the school, who has lived for years in the Far East, wrote: "I am pained to know that you do not have some full-blooded Sindhi....I have long been convinced that the Sindhi are the coming thing for low latitudes and rough conditions."

On the other hand, another distinguished friend, who is an outstanding authority in the field of tropical Animal Husbandry, writes: "It distresses me a little to read in your last report that a new blood line has been introduced into your herd in the form of a Sindhi-Jersey bull. I do hope it will still be possible to continue your old program and not completely tie everything to the new bull containing the Indian blood. I say this because there is absolutely nothing wrong with your present production of 19 to 25 lbs. of milk per day, especially during some of the hard parts of the year....I hope I can be pardoned for boasting throughout the Americas about the Escuela herd and the production you are obtaining under climatic conditions which at times are quite severe. You should be proud of your records."

We are, and the use of Red Sindhi blood in our herd will be kept on an experimental basis. We like to experiment, but experiments should be experiments; and we do not intend to lose the ground we have gained.