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## FLORIDA MANGOS

Isabelle B. Krome

TWENTY YEARS ago I attempted to learn how important mangos were to Florida horticulture and found them to be of less consequence than turnip greens. Dr. Bruce Ledin's recent census shows that now there are over 300,000 trees in the state, or about 7,000 acres. Still not a very big industry compared with our five hundred thousand acres of citrus. Dade County has three-fifths of the total or 194,000 trees, while Palm Beach and Broward rank second and third with 53,000 and 17,000 respectively. A rather narrow belt along the lower East Coast has climatic conditions favorable for mango production. There is a larger area on the West Coast suitable for mangos but not many commercial groves are found there. It seems that the West Coasters do not take their mangos seriously and they may be smart at that. Ledin found that more than half the trees are in commercial plantings, but of these less than half are of bearing age. When the young ones grow up, what will we have in the way of a money-making industry?

In order to make it worth while to raise mangos we must select varieties that have good quality and will produce freely. Colonel Grove's succinct phrase, they "must

bear well, eat well, look well and ship well" covers every requirement, but he did not suggest any variety that comes up to these simple specifications. All agree that Haden put mangos on the map, but Hadens constitute only a small part of the commercial plantings made during the past six or eight years. There is nothing wrong with this fruit from the selling standpoint, but it seems impossible to improve production behavior when planted in grove form. As a dooryard tree Haden is still a prime favorite but commercial growers generally agree that they cannot afford to raise the variety. There is, to be sure, the chilling thought that varieties now popular may follow Haden's example and produce less as they grow older.

As shown by Ledin's investigations the mangos that have been planted most abundantly since Haden fell from grace are Kent, Zill and Irwin, followed by fifteen other more or less well-known varieties. Listed according to their popularity, these are:

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|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Kent        | 10. Fascell    |
| 2. Zill        | 11. Lippens    |
| 3. Irwin       | 12. Brooks     |
| 4. Keitt       | 13. Sensation  |
| 5. Palmer      | 14. Haden      |
| 6. Davis-Haden | 15. Jacquelin  |
| 7. Eldon       | 16. Springfels |
| 8. Edward      | 17. Carrie     |
| 9. Smith       | 18. Dixon      |

Haden, a seedling of Mulgoba, and Brooks, a seedling of Sandersha, are the two that we know to be first generation seedlings of the original Indian mangos. Kent is a seedling of Brooks, and a lot better fruit than its parent. Zill is said to be a Haden seedling. Irwin came from a Lippens seed and is therefore a grandchild of Haden. Seven others are descended from Haden or Brooks, and the parentage of five more is unknown. These five are all called second or third generation seedlings. In my opinion, even among the best of the Florida mangos there is not one that compares in flavor with Mulgoba, Borsha or Paheri. Since the cost of raising first grade mangos is very high and the way to make it worth while to raise them is to produce such fine fruits they are in demand regardless of price, we are doing