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THE KADOTA FIG

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Fig Production As A New Industry For Southern Arizona; Costs And Expected Returns From The Kadota Fig

THE KADOTA FIG, also known as White Endrich and White Pacific, in this country, is the Deltatto variety of Southern Europe. It was introduced into the United States by the U. S. D. A., in the 80's, and was first grown in the Riverside, California, district. It was later planted extensively in the San Joaquin valley, California, and is now being planted more extensively in both regions.

The Kadota belongs to the common group of figs, setting and maturing two crops per year, without the necessity of caprification. The first or Brebas crop is adapted to fresh fruit shipment to eastern markets while the second, or main crop, is best suited for canning and preserving. The fruits of the main crop are relatively small and a creamy yellow at maturity. The skin is quite thin, but firm, and the pulp practically seedless, melting and sweet, lacking somewhat in character in the fresh state. The "eye" of the fruit is usually sealed with a drop of honey at maturity which serves to exclude insects from the interior of the fruit. The Kadota produces a heavier crop than other fig varieties and in California, it is considered the best all around commercial variety. Thousands of acres have been planted to the Kadota variety in California during the past few years, and the acreage is being extended rapidly each year. A few commercial plantings are being made in Arizona where somewhat earlier, heavier, and more economical production is expected than in most California districts.

The planting of Kadota figs on a large scale is not to be recommended in Arizona unless adequate canning facilities are available or are to be made available by the time the plantings attain two years' of age. It is expected that the markets can absorb thousands of tons of canned and preserved Kadota figs, as there is but little of this product on the market at the present time and it is an exceptionally choice commodity. Furthermore, a number of additional outlets are being developed for the fruit. On the other hand one should expect keen competition in this commodity within a few years, due to the large acreage now being planted and due also to the fact that Texas has more than 18,000 acres planted to the Brunswick fig, which is also a canning and preserving variety.

A Successful Fig Orchard in Southern Arizona

The Kadota fig trees are now being planted at the rate of approximately 200 trees per acre, the planting distance being 14x14 or 15x15. The scaffold branches are developed from a 6-inch trunk and the stub system of pruning is used. This produces a low, spreading tree which permits of the fruit being picked from the ground. The stub system of pruning eliminates the first crop of fruit but greatly increases the second crop which is used for canning and preserving.

Trees may be secured for from 40 cents to 50 cents each, and the cost of developing a planting to three years of age should not exceed $300 to $400 per acre. This includes cost of trees, planting and irrigation, tillage and fertilization costs for three seasons. Yields the second and third season should total two to three tons per acre and prices at the cannery should not be less than $100 per ton. California canneries are now paying $120 to $140 per ton. Picking costs should not exceed $20 to $30 per ton.

A maximum yield of from five to eight tons per acre may be expected, when the trees come into full bearing at six to eight years of age. Orchard management costs will increase as the trees come into full bearing. Pruning and fertilization requirements will bring the cost of these operations up to $65 to $75 per acre annually. This, with irrigation and tillage, should make the total annual management cost, not to exceed $100 to $125 per acre.

There is no doubt of the fact that the fig is well adapted to the lower valleys of Arizona and the trees thrive on a wide diversity of soil types.

One cannot expect, however, to secure a production of a large tonnage of first-class fruit unless the orchards are given the most intelligent care with respect to fertilization, irrigation, pruning and tillage.