
ARE SACATON AND YUMA CITRANGE THE SAME

? Albert Newcomb has an explanation.

According to the records, Dr. W.T. Swingle of the USDA, sent citrus plants from Washington, D.C. to their field station in Sacaton, Arizona, which was developing a citrus program in 1920. It is supposed the "Sacaton" was among this stock.

Dr. Glen Wright of the Yuma Mesa Station sent the circulars of the Sacaton Station covering 1922 to 1930* and I found no reference to "Sacaton" as a variety name. However, some of the plants were sent to the Indio Citrus and Date Station in California and there "Sacaton" was the variety name given. Perhaps it was named for the Station it came from? Dr. Walter Reuther remembers that the "Sacaton" was growing at the Indio station when he was in charge there in the 1940's.

In the 1950's Dr. John Carpenter was working on tolerance of various citrus rootstocks to Phytophthora. On a trip to the Yuma Mesa Station (the original station had burned down sometime before) he collected a sprout growing where a tree had been, and took it back to the Indio Station. John used buds from the sprout to grow trees which he named "Yuma Citrange". He found "Yuma Citrange" highly tolerant to Phytophthora. In 1970 John planted test plots in Coachella at the Willits and Newcomb Nursery and included both Sacaton and Yuma Citrange along with other rootstock varieties.

It turned out that the Sacaton and the Yuma were the best trees in the tests. Neither rootstock has been widely planted in California. However the South Africans use both and tell me they see no difference.

Dr. Roose of UCR reports that the tests of the two plants indicate they originate from the same seedling. Enzyme comparison at UCR is the scientific support.

I think the name Yuma Citrange should be dropped and the name Sacaton used henceforth

*The Sacaton Station was closed sometime in the 1930's.

DAN

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