

**44856. PERSEA AMERICANA Mill. Lauraceæ. Avocado.**  
*(P. gratissima Gaertn. f.)*

From Guatemala. Budwood collected by Mr. Wilson Popenoe, agricultural explorer. Received June 12, 1917.

"(Nos. 146, 193, 221. Avocado No. 30.) *Tertoh*. A famous variety from Mixco, near the city of Guatemala, noted for its large size and excellent quality.

"The parent tree is growing in the sitio of Leandro Castillo, just above the plaza of Mixco, at an altitude of approximately 5,700 feet. The tree is said by the owner to have been grown by his grandfather from a seed brought from Moran, a small village about 10 miles distant. While its age is not definitely known, it is estimated at about 60 years. It is about 25 feet high, broad and spreading in habit, with a trunk 15 inches thick at the base, branching 7 feet from the ground to form a dense crown fully 30 feet broad. A peculiarity of the tree is its very brittle wood. This may be against the variety in California and Florida, where strong winds occasionally do much damage. The growth seems to be vigorous, and the budwood is very satisfactory, the twigs being stout, well formed, and supplied with vigorous buds.

"The climate of Mixco is cool, but not cold enough to test the hardiness of the variety. This can only be determined by a trial in the United States.

"The tree flowers in March. According to the owner, it has not borne as well in recent years as formerly. He attributes this to the fact that the tree is getting old, but it seems in addition to have been weakened by the attacks of insects. No fruits were produced from the 1916 blooms. The 1917 blooms resulted in a good crop, but many of the fruits dropped to the ground when nearly full grown. Upon examination they appeared to have been attacked by some insect, whose burrows could be seen toward the base of the fruit. The season of ripening is said to be from February to April, the fruits being at their best in March. They can, however, be picked as early as January. Toward the end of the season they become very rich in flavor.

"The fruit is long and slender, tending toward pyriform. It weighs as much as 3 pounds in some instances. It is deep purple in color when fully ripe and has a rather thin skin (for this race) and deep cream-colored flesh of very rich flavor. The seed is very small in comparison to the size of the fruit.

"An American relates that he once brought a fruit from the tree to his home in the city of Guatemala, where it sufficed to make salads for two meals for a household of 10 people.

"The variety may be formally described as follows: Form oblong to slender pyriform; size extremely large, weight 28 to 36 ounces, and occasionally up to 48 ounces, length 7 to 8½ inches, greatest breadth 3¾ to 4¼ inches; base broad to narrow, sometimes pointed, the slender stem about 5 inches long inserted slightly obliquely without depression; apex rounded; surface nearly smooth, deep dull purple in color with numerous russet dots and patches; skin moderately thick, about one-sixteenth of an inch or slightly more, coarse, granular and woody; flesh cream yellow in color, free from fiber or discoloration and of fine texture; flavor rich and pleasant; quality excellent; seed very small, slender conical in form, about 1½ ounces in weight, tight in the seed cavity, with both seed coats adhering closely to the cotyledons." (*Popenoe*.)

See also Exploring Guatemala for Desirable New Avocados, Annual Report of the California Avocado Association, 1917, p. 135, fig. 32; reprint, 1918, p. 26, fig. 32; and The Avocado in Guatemala, U. S. Department of Agriculture Bulletin No. 743, p. 64, pl. 22.

For an illustration of the parent tree of the *Tertoh* avocado, see Plate IX.