

INVENTORY OF SEEDS AND PLANTS IMPORTED BY THE OFFICE OF FOREIGN SEED AND PLANT IN- TRODUCTION DURING THE PERIOD FROM JULY 1 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 1918 (NO. 56; NOS. 46303 TO 46587).

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT.

Although this inventory is a small one and falls within the period affected by the war, it describes an unusual number of interesting plant immigrants, which, if they succeed, can scarcely fail to make a lasting impression on our horticulture.

No. 46310 (*Amaranthus paniculatus*) is the "huauhtli" of the Aztecs, an amaranth whose seeds are used in the making of a delicate sweetmeat resembling pop-corn balls. This "huauhtli" was cultivated by the Aztecs before the discovery of America. It figured in their religious ceremonies and their commerce. Quantities of this "grain" were exacted by them as tribute from conquered tribes. Dr. Safford has found that Montezuma had 18 granaries, each with a capacity of 9,000 bushels, filled with its seeds. The flour, made into small cakes called alegría by the Spaniards, was eaten in large quantities by the lower classes. The ability of this plant to grow and bear in regions too dry for corn makes it worthy of close study.

Some one in the Southwest should experiment with the "huauhtzontli" (*Chenopodium nuttalliae*; No. 46311) and determine whether its delicate inflorescences when cooked as the Mexicans cook them are not worth putting on our menu. A new vegetable such as this should be most interesting for experiment.

Canna edulis (No. 46313), the edible canna or Queensland arrow-root, has been grown for years for arrowroot production in Queensland, because there it yields heavily and is easier to cultivate than the Bermuda arrowroot (*Maranta arundinacea*). Few root vegetables are more brilliantly colored than the tubers of this canna, and its behavior in Florida makes it worthy of special study as a possible crop in the Everglades.