

Parthenium argentatum (Asteraceae), 51700. **Guayule**. From Marfa, Texas. Plants presented by Mr. R. A. Epperson. The guayule is a spreading, much-branched shrub, rarely as much as 3 feet in height, with small, greenish, silvery gray leaves, and a profusion of small yellow flowers borne in loose clusters on slender stems. The shrub is native to a comparatively small area in southwestern Texas and northwestern Mexico. Unlike most other rubber-producing plants, the bark of the guayule contains no latex, the rubber being in the cellular tissue of the epidermis and to a certain extent in the branches and leaves. The dried plants are ground and the rubber is extracted by one of several chemical processes. Although guayule rubber is not of the highest grade, it has a possible future because the plant will grow in semi-arid regions, it does not suffer from light frosts after passing the seedling stage, and the plants may be gathered throughout the year. (Adapted from Commerce Reports No. 149, June 26, 1918.)

Polakowskia tacaco (Cucurbitaceae), 51606. From San Jose, Costa Rica. Fruits presented by Mr. Oton Jiménez, chief, Department of Botany, National Museum. "A cucurbitaceous plant, the fruit of which is used as a green vegetable. It is a near relative to the chayote, but the fruit is smaller, fusiform, beset with stiff spines at the base, and has a different flavor. It is one of the primitive foods of the natives of Costa Rica, where it grows wild in moist, shady places of the temperate region, and its use as a vegetable has been readily accepted by the Spanish Costa Ricans. The fruits, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches broad, hang from short stems and are picked while still green. After removal of the basal spines the fruits are boiled in water, or pickled, or made into preserves. They are also a favorite addition to the native soups." (Henry Pittier.)

"The kinds which are cultivated contain very little fiber. They are used in many ways, - pickled, as a dessert, as a vegetable, etc., - and are always very popular with us. The most common method of preparation consists in cooking the entire fruit with some of the leaves. When the fruit is cooked the skin peels off readily, and on pressing it with the thumb and finger the seed comes out easily. All that remains, with the exception of a little fiber, is eaten." (Jiménez.)