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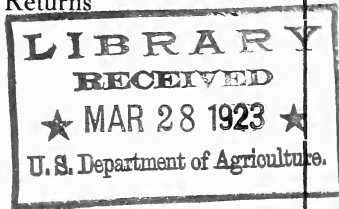


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THE KADOTA FIG

PART II

History, Characteristics, Requirements,
Habits of Growth, Crop Yields
Probable Returns



—Published by—

THE BECKWITH COMPANY

Growers, Preservers, Shippers of Kadota Figs

Reedley, California

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HISTORY

About 1895 the late Stephen H. Taft propagated the fig to which he gave the name Kadota. George Reynolds was first to introduce it into the San Joaquin Valley in 1905. W. Sam Clark made the first orchard planting of eight acres in 1913. The Beckwith orchard of 40 acres near Reedley was planted in 1915 with trees from the nurseries of both Taft and Clark.

From these orchards nursery stock has been developed and approximately 2500 acres have been planted to Kadota Figs during the last three years. This acreage will have to be vastly increased since the market for the canned and preserved product is now well established. After six years experience in developing this market from coast to coast, we believe we are safe in saying that at least 40,000 to 50,000 acres are needed to adequately support the industry.

CHARACTERISTICS

So much has been said about the Kadota, that it would scarcely be necessary to dwell upon its characteristics, but for the sake of the newcomer and the uninformed, we will repeat briefly the principal reasons that enable the Kadota Fig to hold its unique position:

It is light golden in color, rich in sugar, delicate in flavor.

The skin is so thin that when preserved the fruit is considered "skinless" by the trade and the flesh is so firm as to enable it to stand up under processing and fresh shipping.

It does not sour, split, or smut. Every fig is a good fig.

Nature has made its seeds so small as to be practically invisible after preserving.

These are the main characteristics that make this fig unexcelled for shipping fresh, for canning, and preserving, and for specialties in figs; spiced, candied, glazed, etc.

NO CAPRIFICATION NECESSARY

The Kadota does not need any Caprification in order to mature as do the Smyrna varieties which will not develop without pollinization from the male Capri Fig. It is easily Caprifid, however, a fact which we mention on account of the question often being raised. The effect of Caprification is to increase its size, fill the inside with fertile seeds, turn the skin a light green and the inside from amber color to pink. The increased size enhances its value as a dried fig, and adds another asset to this "all purpose" fig, as the Kadota has been justly called. It should be noted, however, that caprification could only be taken advantage of during the first part of the crop since at least 50% of the figs come after the caprifying period has passed.

CLIMATIC REQUIREMENTS

The Kadota is adaptable to a great range of territory. Although it develops best in the San Joaquin Valley, it will thrive from San Diego to Shasta and from the Sierras to the Coast. But a change in the location of any fig tree is invariably accompanied by a change in the character of the fig. The interior section of the State with its long ripening season and warm atmosphere produces the greatest tonnage and the best quality figs.

The ordinary rains which are so disastrous to the Calimyrna and Adriatic do not hurt the Kadota. In fact, the fall rains seem to inspire the fig with a new vigor and some of the best pickings come just after these rains.

So far, there is no reason to believe the Kadota to be any more susceptible to frost than any other variety. All young fig trees are tender and liable to be hurt by severe frosts until the trees get well up from the ground and hardened. The Kadota, however, recovers from a freeze quicker than any other variety of fig tree.

WATER REQUIREMENTS

A generous supply of water is necessary. It is impossible to split or sour Kadota Figs, and the finest figs often come from trees which have received such flooding as would be apt to kill any other fig trees. We irrigate almost continually during the spring and summer. Without sufficient water an extremely hot spell of 105 degrees or more lasting over a period of several days is likely to burn the sides of the figs exposed to the sun, and cause a dropping of many of the green figs. The ground should be kept thoroughly soaked, under a good thick mulch and there will be no sunburn or dropping of immature figs.

SOIL REQUIREMENTS

The Kadota will thrive in almost any kind of soil if given water and plenty of it. Perhaps no tree responds more quickly to good soil conditions. We know of several good trees growing on sandy soil but the most vigorous growth has been obtained in the heavy soils which lie along the eastern side of the San Joaquin valley. This does not mean that they may not grow as well in other heavy soils but so far there have been no such plantings from which to judge.

PESTS

The fact that the Kadota thrives best in heavy soils is a most fortunate characteristic as there is practically no molestation from the nematode, the root parasite which is an enemy of all trees, especially of the fig. During the last two years there has been a noticeable amount of red spider among the fig trees in several sections of the country. This is effectually eradicated through the use of an atomic sulphur spray made of "Rex Sul Powder" or some equally good brand of atomic sulphur in solution. This is used during February or March, before the new growth appears, and again after the foliage has developed, if any red spider then appears. We warn against spraying any free sulphur on the foliage or fruit. This is objectionable since the sulphur sticks to the surface of the ripening figs and is difficult to remove before canning.

We might mention here also the importance of preventing a certain form of "die back." At the end of the season, there will usually be found a few figs still clinging to the tree which, by reason of the cold weather, have failed to mature. If these are not stripped off, they will decay and the exuding juice which spreads on the limb furnishes a home for certain injurious bacteria causing the so-called "die back." Along in December the figs can be jarred off quite readily with a lath.

HABITS OF GROWTH

The Kadota tree is an exceedingly fast grower, easily outstripping all other varieties. If left unpruned, it will adopt an open symmetrical, upward growth resembling more the Black Mission in its early stages. The two oldest trees that we know of in this section have been grown without pruning. They are now about seventeen years old and about 25 feet in height and the trunks are about 15 inches in diameter at the ground.

The Beckwith method of pruning starts with crowning the tree almost at the surface of the ground, and then producing a low branching form, with a hollow center but

closed over the top. Such a tree is easily picked, from both the inside and outside. When planted close together these trees give the maximum returns in the shortest possible time.

RIPENING PERIODS

Not only is this tree the most rapid grower but it is the earliest to come into bearing and exceeds all other varieties in crop yields. It bears two crops during the season, the first one on the old wood during the first part of July; the second, on the new wood from the first of August on until November or until cold weather prevents further maturing.

The first crop of figs are of minor importance. Ordinarily we do not count on these figs representing more than 5 per cent of the total crop. The second crop comes on the new growth during late spring and summer and is therefore practically immune from frosts. These figs ripen in periods, and the entire crop in the Reedley section is spread over several months, approximately as follows:

First Crop—July 1-July 12.....	5%
Second Crop—Aug. 5-Sept. 1.....	35%
Sept. 1-Oct. 1.....	40%
Oct. 1-Oct. 15.....	10%
Oct. 15-Nov. 25.....	10%
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	100%

CROP YIELDS

There are no mature plantings by which to judge possible Kadota production. Our forty acre orchard, in its eighth year this season, has produced 90 tons. But there are only 37 trees per acre and there should be twice that many, which would mean 180 tons, or over 4 tons per acre.

Our neighbor, R. S. Thompson, has done better than this. He has about 4 acres of Kadotas in their 5th year, planted about 65 to the acre, and states that he has taken 12 tons from these trees this season, or 3 tons per acre.

This may be better than the average result but we think we are safe in saying, that if planted at distances 20 or 25 feet apart at the start, and cared for intelligently and under good conditions, we may reasonably expect from one quarter of a ton the third year to three tons the sixth year, six tons the ninth year, and eight tons when mature. This is equivalent to about three tons dry.

PROBABLE RETURNS

We see no prospect of the price of Kadota Figs going below 6 or 7 cents per pound delivered to the factory, or a straight 4 or 5 cents per pound for everything on the tree, the buyer doing the picking. At 5 cents on the tree this would net \$800 per acre for a mature orchard producing eight tons to the acre. This was the price paid growers by THE BECKWITH COMPANY last season. Here and there packers have paid higher prices in order to secure small quantities of figs. Some packers, too, prefer to pay by first and second grades, and rejecting culls, but we quote the above as being average reliable figures that the grower can count on. The only items of expense to be deducted from the above estimated returns are costs of care and cultivation. These will vary from \$20 to \$40 an acre, or about half the cost of grapes and considerably less than on most other fruits.