



**Crops That Pay: Avocados, Kumquats, What They
Are; Where and How They Grow; What Profit
They Give; History, Commercial Value and Trade
Statistics; ... That Their Culture Affords a Safe,
Permanent**

H. Arthur Dygert

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Excerpt from Crops That Pay: Avocados, Kumquats, What They Are; Where and How They Grow; What Profit They Give; History, Commercial Value and Trade Statistics; Methods of Cultivation and Preparation for Market; And Evidence That Their Culture Affords a Safe, Permanent and Very Profit

When followers of Bienville, in 1740, explored the lower valley of the Father of Waters, they found the Natchez Indians using a meal which their squaws prepared by grinding the dried meats of a nut This was "the pecan," which, according to Bancroft, "with the mulberry and two kinds of wild plums, furnished the natives with articles of food." From the hickory-nut, close kin to the pecan, the Virginia Indians, by pounding the kernels, obtained an oily liquor which they called "powcohicora," whence came the generic name, Hicoria, including eight or ten species, among them the pecan. Hickory-nuts, and all nuts having hard shells requiring a stone or hammer to crack them, were called "pacan" by the Indians; and the French settlers of the Mississippi Basin appropriated this word for the name of one species, the pacane, or in English, pecan, which they found growing wild in abundance throughout Louisiana.

Hicoria pecan is a native of the United States and thrives best in the rich, deep, alluvial lands bordering rivers and creeks of the lower Mississippi Valley. A line drawn from Rock Island, Illinois, to the Tennessee River, near Chattanooga, marks, approximately, the northeastern boundary of the area in which it is found growing wild. Throughout the region southwest of this line in Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Indian Territory, Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas, it is generally distributed, finding there the most favorable conditions for perfect development in fertile river bottoms, and, in the last two States, exceeding all other trees in size and value.

Sargent's "Silva of North America" describes the pecan as "a tree 100 to 170 feet in height with a tall, massive trunk occasionally six feet in diameter above its enlarged, buttressed base, and stout, stately, spreading branches which form in the forest a narrow, symmetrical and inversely pyramidal, or, when they find room to spread, a broad, round-topped head. The bark of the trunk is an inch to an inch and a half in thickness, light-brown tinged with red and deeply and irregularly divided into narrow, forked ridges, broken on the surface into thick, appressed scales. The leaves are from 12 to 20 inches in length and are composed of from 9 to 17 leaflets."

As a shade tree the pecan has strong claims. With its tall, shapely trunk, and well-balanced, ample head, and bold, handsome, pinnated foliage, it has all the qualities necessary for a fine, graceful park tree, and by right deserves a place in every considerable plantation.

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