

ture. In coming from an area where the only water problem is to get enough of it for irrigation, the grower in the new environment of the River finds it hard to conceive that every practice in production that is carried out on the River is influenced by water. Trees are planted high, they are mowed rather than disked, water furrows, tile and ditches must be kept clean, pumps must be kept in good shape, the grove must be laid out for optimum drainage. Everything that is done must be oriented toward keeping the water table below three feet. One hard rain if not properly removed can seriously damage groves representing many years of effort and thousands of dollars of investment.

As we look to the future the question arises as to how much land is suitable for this type planting? The answer to this question would be an easy one if all of the owners were citrus men or if all the land suitable was offered for sale to citrus interests. In the four counties, Brevard, Indian River, Saint Lucie and Martin

there are about 400,000 acres of land technically suitable for growing citrus. However, much of this land is owned by cattlemen who have been in the cattle business for years and intend to be in it for years to come. So to predict that this amount of land is potential citrus land in the immediate future would be misleading. It is possible that land prices and taxes will favor the use of this land for citrus in years to come.

To summarize these comments I think we can safely say that the Indian River Area has truly come of age with respect to the production of citrus. Problems in this area are certainly unique and must be dealt with as we gain experience and as research points the way. Proper utilization of our water resource and the continued production of quality fruit must be ever present in the minds of the men who accept the challenge of developing citrus on the River. As these, and other problems, are met and overcome we can expect the Indian River Area to become one of the leading citrus producing areas of our State.

## PAGE ORANGE — A PROMISING VARIETY

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The Page orange (Orlando No. 421-17-8) named and introduced by the U. S. Department of Agriculture seems worthy of trial plantings. It was released in October 1963, and because the fruit resemble a round orange (figure 1), Page was introduced as such. However, it is a hybrid of Minneola tangelo X Clementine mandarin ((*Citrus paradisi* Macf. X *C. reticulata* Blanco) X *C. reticulata*). The fruit, which have an excellent flavor, ripen in October, are at their prime in November and can be peeled easily.

The technical description follows: Fruit color Orange Chrome to Flame Scarlet (Ridgway (2)); surface roughened by prominent oil glands but smooth when grown on some rootstocks; shape nearly round; medium-sized; average diameter 2¾ inches, average height 2½ inches; calyx small and inconspicuous; apex evenly rounded; areole variable, a circular furrow, incomplete or absent, average diameter 1 inch; rind ¼ to 3/16 inch thick, leathery, easily removed; central

axis solid to slightly open; 8 to 11, usually 10, segments; flesh dark orange, tender, rag little, flavor rich and sweet; in mixed plantings seeds 10 to 25; cotyledons very pale Viridine Yellow (2) to almost white. Season, October to December. Tree nearly thornless, with upright branches spreading under weight of fruit; leaves broadly lanceolate with marked variation in size, length 3 to 4½ inches, width 1¼ to 2½ inches, margin crenate, particularly toward the tip, apex rather blunt and frequently slightly notched; petioles ½ to ¾ inch long, very slightly winged or not winged.

Like Robinson, Osceola, and Lee, Page is only recommended for small plantings. Page has been tested in central Florida near Orlando, in the east coast area, and in the southern portion of the ridge district. In these areas it had good characteristics, but as Frost (1) pointed out "species and varieties of *Citrus* differ so greatly in climatic adaptation that new varieties, even though promising in a given locality, require trial in each of the distinct climatic regions of commercial production before their real value can be determined." Preliminary tests in Texas and California indicate that the Page orange is not adapted to those areas because it produces small fruit there.

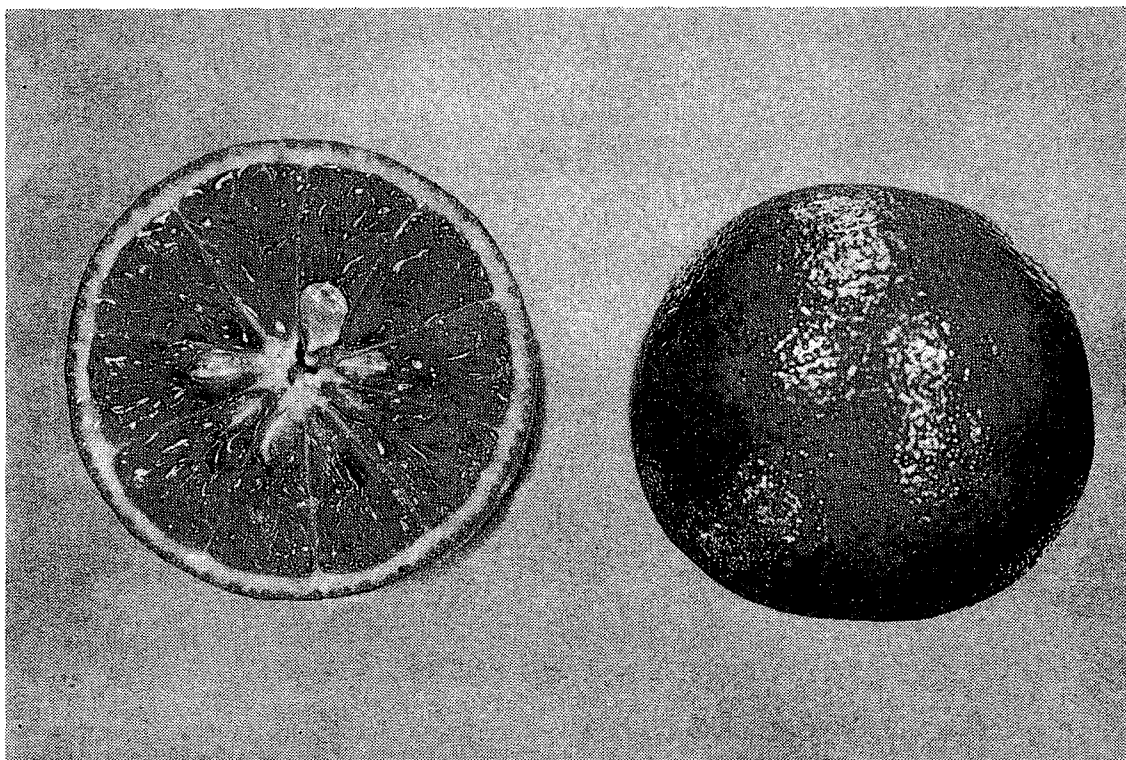


Figure 1.—Page orange, a medium-size hybrid fruit of excellent flavor and Orange Chrome to Flame Scarlet color, is mature in November.

Many questions about behavior, disease resistance, and insect susceptibility of Page remain unanswered. Rootstock requirements have not been determined. Limited observations indicate that fruit sizes and appearance should be good and the juice content and quality acceptable when Page is grown on Rough-lemon rootstock. It should do well on sour orange or Cleopatra mandarin.

Page produces fruit with a beautiful dark orange internal color and an excellent flavor; but if it is to receive popular acceptance and to be in demand, the fruit should be marketed in November, when they are mature and possess these qualities. If they are marketed in September or early October just because they pass the minimum maturity requirements they will not gain the

good market acceptance they deserve.

Limited quantities of virus-free budwood are being propagated for distribution. Growers interested in trying the Page variety are urged to use only officially released budwood, plants recently propagated from such budwood, or budwood from older trees that have been found by recent tests to be free from tristeza. Budwood of Page orange will be distributed under procedures to be announced later.

#### LITERATURE CITED

1. Frost, H. B. 1948. Genetics and Breeding. Vol. I, Chap. IX The Citrus Industry. Edited by H. J. Webber and L. D. Batchelor. University of California Press. pp. 817-913.
2. Ridgway, Robert. 1912. Color standards and color nomenclature. The Author, Washington, D. C. 43pp. 53col. pls.