

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

LEO H. WILSON
Bradenton

It is with keen pleasure I welcome the members and friends of this, the sixty third session of the Florida State Horticultural Society. We have experienced many startling events since our meeting one year ago in Tampa. Increased returns have been received for horticultural and agricultural products. We have been saddened by the loss of friends and the ravages of war. We look to the future with hopes for peace and security.

The 1949 proceedings of the sixty second session of the Florida State Horticultural Society, relates the passing of the late Frank Stirling of Davie, Florida, immediate past President of the Society. Every member I am sure joins me in paying tribute to one of Florida's leading Horticulturists. Frank was a loyal member, and his going has been a great loss to the horticultural interests of Florida.

The Korean war, now coming to a close, has taken the lives of thousands of our American men. May we pay homage to the gallant fighting of our soldiers who paid the supreme sacrifice, and those wounded and missing in action. The United States, together with other U.N. forces have about won this war. My humble prayer is we will win a lasting peace.

The so-called "Florida Hurricanes" have been a dime a dozen this season. We have experienced ten hurricanes with two hits on Florida. The Gulf of Mexico blow that struck Cedar Key, did a tremendous damage to this West Coast town. The second hurricane struck in the Miami, Hollywood, Okeechobee, Indian River Section. An estimate of \$15,000,000 dollar damage has been reported. Florida's East Coast Agricultural interest suffered heavy losses. The damage to the citrus crop from the lower

East Coast, extending North through Eastern Polk County, Orange and Lake Counties, estimate around 3,000,000 boxes of fruit, with grapefruit running 2,500,000 boxes and all other citrus fruits 500,000 boxes. These figures are subject to change as more damage shows up, especially the heavy drop that occurs from bruises and thorn injury.

Florida's agricultural interest is continually being subjected to the introduction and attack by foreign insect pest and diseases. The dreaded South American disease known as Tristeza that has killed thousands of citrus trees in that country, may be present in the State of Louisiana. Two hundred trees in a planting on the Mississippi River Delta near New Orleans, have died recently from Tristeza, or some other form of tree decline. If not Tristeza, it could be Quick Decline. This form is taking a heavy toll of citrus in California. Quick Decline might be termed a twin brother to Tristeza. The Florida Experiment Station, the United States Department of Agriculture and the Florida State Plant Board have visited this area. They are making a careful study on the type of decline in the New Orleans area. What can we do to safeguard Florida's citrus industry?

It has often been pointed out that the State of Florida is in a vulnerable position for the introduction of insects and diseases that could result in the destruction of many of Florida's important agricultural crops. I can't urge the members of this group too strongly the necessity of cooperating with the State Plant Board and the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, in their rigid enforcement to the letter of all existing laws and regulations. I am indeed glad to report how fortunate we are to have as a speaker at the General Session on Thursday morning, the Chief of the

Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine from the United States Department of Agriculture, the Honorable Avery S. Hoyt. Mr. Hoyt has proved a valuable friend to Florida. I am sure the Horticultural Society membership joins me in expressing our sincere appreciation for his presence in the State and appearing on the program.

The five sections that comprise the membership of the Florida Horticultural Society, namely: the Citrus section, the Vegetable section, the Processing section, the Ornamental section, and Krome Memorial section, have as a whole experienced a very fine year. The interest of these groups have been well cared for in many lines of research. The Florida Experiment Station, which includes the Sub Experiment Stations, and the United States Department of Agriculture are conducting much needed research work. Florida appreciates this work and growers realize how much they have benefited in the past from completed experiments. May I throw out a challenge to the Society to lend every effort to keep this research and experiments now being conducted, driving ahead at full speed. We can keep these Institutions of service operating if we see the needed appropriations are provided.

Florida Citrus Mutual swung into operation last season. This grower organization is to be congratulated for tying ninety percent of all citrus produced in the State, under one control. This may be considered the mammoth Co-op of growers for all times. The fact that so many Florida Citrus Growers, Shippers and Processors have come together on common grounds, to pool their interest for the betterment of the industry, has benefited the Florida Citrus Industry many millions of dollars. Its successful operation has gained recognition from other fruit producing areas of the world.

The planting of citrus in Florida continues at a very rapid rate. Good prices

for fresh fruit, canned and frozen concentrate has given impetus to the wholesale planting of thousands of acres in the last eight to ten years. At this point, may I throw out a word of warning to growers who contemplate new plantings. There will come a time when you may wish you had continued to pasture that marginal land you are now preparing to plant. With a high acre return on the investment, coupled with open winters, growers seem to forget the early precautions given on the importance of "grove site selection." Are we ignoring the value of a good fertile soil, a soil well supplied with humus that maintains moisture? A well drained soil, and one adaptable to root stock and variety. Good elevation and air drainage is essential. In 1895, "Old Man Winter" struck hard, and drove the Citrus Industry South. If we exercise good judgment, and are cautious in selecting sites for grove plantings, we will by the law of averages, develop a profitable orchard.

I believe the Florida State Horticultural Society is the leading one of its kind in the world. We members should feel proud to be associated with such a wonderful organization. The program for this session consists of seventy three subjects, with as many or more speakers. A very fine program has been arranged, and I appreciate the efforts made by the Vice Presidents of each Section in developing the programs we are to receive.

When I say we have the finest Horticultural Society in the world, there is a reason to back this statement. The existence of this Society just doesn't happen so. Hard work over these many years by its Officers have borne fruit. This particular year, it has been my privilege as your President, to observe the Officers in action. Nineteen members of the Executive Committee, (which includes all Officers) have held eight meetings during the year in Winter Haven. Please bear in mind not a single person receives a

penny for services rendered, and no expenses allowed for travel. It required long trips from Miami in the South, Gainesville in the North, and from the East and West Coasts in attending these meetings. I have been greatly impressed with the fine spirit, loyalty to duty, and the untiring efforts of the officers and Executive Committee. Every member has performed his duties well. I have a very warm place in my heart for their splendid services.

We have four officers that do the greater part of the work in an organization of this kind. I especially wish to commend them for their fine accomplishments this year. The Secretary, Dr. Ernest L. Spencer—Bradenton; the Treasurer, Mr. Lem P. Woods—Tampa; the Assistant Secretary, Mr. Ralph P. Thompson—Winter Haven; and the Editing Secretary, Mr. W. Lacy Tait—Winter Haven. We owe these men a great deal of credit. I wish I had the space to enumerate every detail these Officers executed in bringing the Society

up to its high standard. I am sure their reports will in part tell the story.

I would like very much to see the membership of the Florida Horticultural Society increased. We should have several thousand members. Florida is blessed by having a large number of intellectual growers. They would benefit the Society, and I am sure the Society would be of much value to them. We naturally trust everyone in attendance who are not members, will become members during this session. Dues from the members pay for the proceedings. If dues come in early, the proceedings can be published on time. Every member can have a part in the successful operation of the Society.

On behalf of the membership, may I express sincere appreciation to the city of Winter Haven for being host to the Florida State Horticultural Society. Our stay in your fair city will be a pleasant one. A very interesting and profitable meeting is assured.

PARTIAL MOBILIZATION AND THE FLORIDA FRUIT AND VEGETABLE INDUSTRY

J. WAYNE REITZ, Provost
University of Florida
College of Agriculture
Gainesville

The Korean conflict has had and will have far-reaching effects on our national economy. It has resulted in much speculation in recent months on what effects our increasing tempo of military preparation will have on our whole economy, including agriculture. Tonight I have chosen to join the speculators in order that we may consider some of the implications of the defense program on the economic position of Florida farmers, and on fruit and vegetable producers in particular.

Any attempt to assess the possible effect of an enlargement of our defense effort, and the resultant expansion of our national budget on the economic position of the Florida fruit and vegetable industry, requires assumptions on the probable magnitude of the defense program and of prospects for peace. Let us consider two major assumptions. One assumption is that we are facing a period of at least a few years in which defense activity will continue at a much higher level than in previous post-war years. Present plans call for a military force of 3 million men, or approximately twice as many as are now under arms. To maintain this force and provide the accompanying armaments, expenditures for defense will