Following the freeze of 1886, several hundred acres of peach trees were planted in the immediate vicinity of Mt. Dora. The Peen-to was the principal variety. Some of the older settlers report that they received poor care; others report that the growers intended to take good care of them both in fertilizing and cultivation. At any rate, at the present writing we find but one party doing anything commercially. He was a practical peach and grape grower in central New York, and up to the time of the freeze of '95, claimed to have made considerable money in his peaches here. His oldest orchard is of the Peen-to variety. Younger orchards are of Bidwell’s Early and Waldo. The older trees of Bidwell’s Early were killed outright by the freeze. The younger trees survived and bore a fair crop of fruit this year. The Waldo’s that were fertilized in 1894 bore a fair crop of fruit this season. On the others that were not fertilized, very few matured. He ships his selected peaches to Northern cities. His seconds he ships to Jacksonville, Tampa and other near by cities. He uses the six basket carrier crates. His land is a good grade of high pine land. During the first year’s growth he uses nitrate of soda. I am not informed as to fertilizers he uses to make the fruit.

My own efforts began in February 1895. I planted two to three feet trees, well cut back with only the damaged roots pruned. Soon after planting I piled earth around the tree so as to nearly cover it. It was well I did so, for it saved the trees from destruction by the freeze of February 1895. The tips were then making growth but were not uncovered. Some trees received so severe a check that they never entirely recovered, but the majority made a good growth.

Soon after planting each tree received one pound of fish, bone and potash, hoed in around the tree. In July, furrows were opened about 40 inches from the tree and another pound was given them. The cultivator was run every three weeks up to October 1st. No attempt was made to summer prune or check any branches that came out above the bud. The best trees, at the close of the growing season, were from six to eight feet six inches high. They were pruned when about one-eighth of the bloom was out, shortening the smaller branches about one quarter. In most cases from ten to twenty-five peaches were left on the tree. One tree that was not pruned or thinned carried 284 peaches up to April 10th. I send herewith a photograph of this tree taken May 2nd. I also send two other photographs of one of my best trees, as it was before pruning, and again a few minutes later as it was after pruning. These photos were taken twelve and fifteen months after planting. The varieties are Bidwell’s Early and Waldo. All
grown on a very good grade of high pine land.

This spring I planted 600 more trees of 2-3 feet size and cut back tops and roots as shown in photo No. 1. The roots were cut quite close to tap root, and all were planted in opening made by spade thrust into the ground and worked back and forth once. As the spade was removed, the root was inserted and one heavy pressure with the foot completed the planting. They were not watered, and up to the middle of the extended drouth all were growing but four which were not put in deep enough. I believe in root pruning for very small peach trees, but I should not attempt it on six to eight feet trees.

I have leased a three year old peach orchard of the Bidwell's Early variety, that was neglected during 1895. It was almost destroyed by the frost. In January 1896 I plowed under a mat of crab grass and sand spurs, and when blossoms were showing I began cultivation. When the peaches were the size of acorns, I gave each tree three pounds of fish, bone and potash and Canada hardwood ashes. Although the dry weather was very severe, by means of constant cultivation they made a fair crop which netted me $1.48 per bushel.

From what knowledge I now have at command I would not hesitate to plant as many peaches of the Bidwell's Early as I could give good care. They come at a time when there is a dearth of fresh fruit in Northern markets. A few days later California sends train loads of fine cherries which affect the market in some degree for Waldo's, Angel's and other later varieties.

PEACH GROWING IN SOUTH FLORIDA.


Remarks by Mr. J. P Mace, of Lake Helen, Volusia county.

[SEE MINUTES PAGES 1 TO 6, ITEM 23.]

W. S. Hart: I would like to hear from Mr. Mace, in regard to peaches.

J. P. Mace: I came in a little late and did not hear the beginning of the discussion. I don't know that I have anything that would be new. The freeze last year killed our peach trees. We cut them off above the bud and they have made nice tops. My experience has been largely with a variety of local reputation called "Suber." We have a very nice crop this year. I shipped my first crate Tuesday morning (May 5th). As to fertilizing, I have practiced using high grade orange tree fertilizer, and apply sulphate of potash a month before the crop comes in, and after the crop is off, I give the trees a liberal dressing of tobacco stems.

(The Secretary takes the liberty of adding here the following notes received from Mr. Mace, under date of June 19th, 1896).

The "Suber" peach, is a seedling of the Peen-to, originated by a colored man here at Lake Helen. Out of about 1,300 peach