



FIG CULTIVAR DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION

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Keywords: breeding, persistent, Calimyrna, caprification, pollination

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Abstract:

The principal objective of this project is the development of a high quality, large size, light colored dried fig, as similar as possible to the Calimyrna fig variety. In contrast to the Calimyrna, this new fig would not need to be caprifried (pollinated) and would have a small closed ostiole (eye), restricting insect access to the interior of the fig fruit.

Hybridizations directed at the project goals began in 1991 and continued in 1992. By the end of 1993, about 2400 hybrid fig seedlings had been planted in seedling rows at the UC Kearney Agricultural Center (KAC), Parlier, California, USA. From 1994 through 1996, 45 seedlings were initially selected as having some promise of development into the desired type of cultivar. From 1997 through 2000, evaluation of the 45 selections has continued, primarily from fruit produced in the original seedling block. In addition to the oldest seedling block, additional plantings of the advanced selections have been made in a consolidated selection block at KAC and in three grower test plots in Madera County, CA.

The primary characteristics under evaluation are fruit size, skin color, skin quality, ostiole size, fruit flesh quality and density, fungal decay potential and tree productivity. During the 2000 season, fruit was observed at KAC and in grower trials. Although production was light to very light in some of the grower locations, the 45 selections were reduced to 12 primary candidates by the end of the year 2000, using the seven criterion listed above.

Evaluation of fungal decay potential was carried out during 1999 and 2000. A field test planting of a row of 50 trees of the most advanced fig selection 6-38W was established in spring of 1999. Although too young yet to produce much fruit, the growth and production characteristics of this selection will be observed over the next several years. An additional test planting of three advanced fig selections will be established in grower trials in spring of 2001.

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