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The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.

Aibonito, Puerto Rico 00609
November 26, 1969

Reparto Robles
C-38

Dr. Wilson Popenoe
c/o Escuela Agrícola Panamericana
Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Dear Dr. Popenoe:

Over a year ago I began a search for seeds of Crataegus stipulosa ("Ecuador Hawthorn") which was said to have been used as a rootstock for apples in northern South American highland areas.

In response to an earlier inquiry, a few months ago Harold Winters informed me that both you and Mr. Claud Horn of the American Embassy in El Salvador would attempt to obtain the seeds for me. Since Mr. Horn has probably been tied up by the recent "soccer war" I am writing you to see whether anything has come out of your much appreciated efforts.

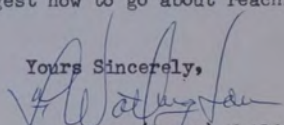
My interest in Crataegus is due to my interest in low chilling apples of which there is a growing number of selections from several countries worth trying here in Aibonito (600 - 700 meters altitude). There does not seem to be a local strain of crabapple that could be used as a rootstock and a French crab from Virginia that I have tried apparently wants more chilling and is much too sensitive to our long dry spells.

Winters sent me a Xerox (photocopy) of your April 9 letter to Claud Horn in which there were several interesting comments on Rubus, also of interest to me. I have long sought to obtain R. macrocarpus without success. USDA no longer has it and attempts to obtain it from Columbia have failed.

I have a nice stand of young R. shankii from seed sent me this summer by Winters, probably collected by your Antonio Molina.

R. glaucus has been more easily available to me so I have put off working with it until I have more ample facilities. However, if possible I would certainly like to obtain the clone you mentioned in your letter as "Chico's variety". Perhaps you could help, or suggest how to go about reaching Chico?

Yours Sincerely,


Francisco (Frank) Watlington
C-38 Reparto Robles
Aibonito, Puerto Rico 00609

Antigua, Guatemala 4 January 1970

Dr Francisco Watlington
C-38 Reparto Robles
Aibonito, Puerto Rico 00609.

Dear "Francisco":

Your request of 26 November has had to await appearance of mature fruits of our Crataegus which comes into market in a big way at Christmas time; the fruits are strung together for decorative purposes.

You speak of Crataegus stipulosa. We are now calling ours C. mexicana. There seems to be some variation among these tropical hawthorns but I think the one we have is what you are after. Perhaps it is a problem of nomenclature more than anything else. What I am sending you is the plant we use here extensively as a rootstock for cultivated pears, both communis and the Oriental hybrids such as Kieffer and Hood. I have not heard of its being used as a rootstock for apples.

As a rootstock for pears the manzanilla, as it is called here, has advantages and disadvantages. It will grow on poor soils and is drought-resistant. And it does not have a high chilling requirement, it does well here from 5000 feet to the upper levels, 7500 or 8000 feet. I am beginning to feel that the chilling requirement of the rootstock may be important; Bartlett rootstocks seem to need about 8000 feet with us. We are much interested in Pyrus calleryana which is so much used in Florida and I hear from Oregon and California that it is of much interest there.

As for apples with low chilling requirements, Winter Banana is so far our best bet. I have been growing the Key West apple from Florida here at 5000 feet for some years; it doesn't do really well but has been more successful than any other I have tried. The only other which has done well at a slightly lower elevation is what we call the Guinope crab from Honduras, which I think may be a pure baccata. The fruits are not over 2 ins. in diameter but almost non-astringent and make good apple sauce.

As for Rubus, I am glad you got R. shankii from our hilltop in Honduras. George Darrow calls it a good blackberry. R. glaucus is a really good berry; if you cannot get seeds of the strain which Francisco de Sola has at Los Andes, near Santa Ana, El Salvador, I can probably get you seeds here as we have it, but at 6500 feet and higher. De Sola's address is care of H. de Sola e hijos, Sucs., San Salvador.

I understand that our great and good friend Claud Horn has retired and gone to live in Arlington, Va. He did a great work in Latin America and we are going to miss him. In fact we do already.

Faithfully yours,

P.R. I have dug into the literature a bit regarding the Crataegus business. Paul Standley, "Flora of Guatemala" vol. IV is the best source. He says our plant is C. pubescens, probably the same as C. stipulosa of Ecuador, where he believes it is not native but introduced from Mexico. He says "the plant is sometimes used in Guatemala as a stock on which to graft pears and apples. In my letter I have mentioned that no apples on Crataegus rootstock have been called to my attention in Guatemala.

As I have mentioned in my letter, this Crataegus has the advantage of being resistant to drought and growing on poor, sometimes heavy, sometimes stony soils. When pears are grafted upon it, the scion greatly overgrows the stock, but there are many old pear trees here on Crataegus which are healthy and produce well. Nurserymen who have grown it do not try to graft it in the nursery; they plant one or two year old seedlings in orchard form and when they have attained a trunk diameter of two inches, more or less, they cleft or grown graft them. They say that grafting small plants in the nursery does not succeed. The principal objection to this tree as a rootstock is its slow growth, and the way pears overgrow the rootstock - which of course may not be of such importance as appearances would indicate. As a rootstock for pears I have not seen it used here at elevations below 6000 feet, which is about as low as communis pears are successful here.

Antigua, Guatemala 19 Jan 1970

Dr Francisco Watlington
C-38 Reparto Robles
Aibonito, Puerto Rico.

Dear Panché:

Herewith some seeds of what I will call the De Sola strain of Rubus glaucus. These are from Magdalena, Milpas Altas, Sacatepequez Guatemala, elevation ~~6~~800 feet plus minusque. I was up there the other day and found quite a few fruits. At that altitude they are not so large as at 4500-5500 feet but are very firm. I believe the latter elevations here in Guatemala are ideal, and I have seen many wild plants in the Alta Verapaz at 4500 feet; indeed it was that I first became acquainted with this berry.

There ought to be somebody in Colombia who could get Rubus macrocarpus for you. It can be found on the road between Bogotá and Fusugasugá - that is where I first saw it. The last time I went down that way, however, the region had been cut over and not much was left. You probably know that George Darrow was much interested in material I sent to Washington about 1920 and tried to do something with it in the Pacific northwest but had no luck with it, if I recall correctly.

Give R. glaucus all the elevation you can. We are missing a good bet by not giving this berry more attention in tropical America, the for some reason Chico de Sola has curtailed his production in El Salvador. He handled it as a dessert berry, also for jelly and juice.

Faithfully yours,

C-38 Reparto Robles

Aibonito, Puerto Rico
January 22, 1970

Dr. Wilson Popenoe
Antigua, Guatemala

Dear Dr. Popenoe:

Many thanks for your friendly response to ~~xxx~~ my letter and the generous supply of Crataegus and R. glaucus (just received) seeds. I have high hopes for both these species altho my location here (600 - 700 m.) may be less than ideal.

About half of Puerto Rico is over 400 meters in elevation, with about a third between around 600 and a little over 1,000 m. Altho the island has been rather thickly settled for a long time, a distinctive highland horticulture has not evolved here to any significant degree as it has in neighboring Hispaniola, Jamaica, Cuba or, of course, Centro America. Our relatively small size and isolation may have something to do with the fact that the prevailing pattern of subsistence farming is more or less uniform all over the island and tends to be of "lowland" tropical character.

Consequently, in "tropical" Puerto Rico you will find that a ^{sizable} ~~great~~ portion of the island is marginal for growing many of the limited variety of crops, fruits in particular. Mangoes for example will ~~grow~~ vegetate well in this area but bear virtually no crop. People are forever planting avocados of the native West Indian race only to have the trees die in a few years after two or three meager crops. Only recently have a very few trees of the Guatemalan race and it's hybrids begun to appear.

Highland and subtropical fruits are virtually unknown, and ornamentals such as Azaleas and Camellias are just beginning to appear (and are doing very well).

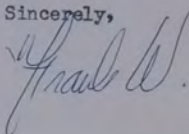
My personal interest centers on fruits rather than ornamentals. Altho I have only been in the area less than three years, I have found that such plants as grapes, strawberries, ~~kak~~ kakis, Red Ceylon peaches, etc. produce quite satisfactorily.

What I am trying to do now is set up an experimental nursery that can ~~test~~ ~~many~~ test ~~new~~ new fruit varieties and ~~then~~ make them available to the public. Some people tell me our official government experiment stations should be doing this. The fact is, they are not. Nor as the record shows do they seem to have any interest in promoting any type of agriculture but the traditional, export oriented crops: sugar, coffee and tobacco, in spite of the gradual, inexorable and inevitable disappearance of these as dominant economic activities.

So much for now. Your reports on the Guinope Crabapple and on P. calleryana are very interesting. Perhaps later on (as soon as I have the space available) I may pester you for seeds. If you can think of some way to get R. macrocarpus do let me in on it.

By the way, one of my closest friends calls me Pancho altho no one else ever tought of calling me by that "apodo" -so you are quite welcome.

Sincerely,



September 1, 1971

Dr. Wilson Popenoe
Antigua, Guatemala

Dear Dr. Popenoe:

You may have wondered whatever happened to the seeds you so kindly sent me in January of last year.

Well, the Crataegus pubescens (or mexicana or stipulosa, take your pick) were treated with a weak solution of sulfuric acid (tinner's fluid) and eventually (about three months if I remember correctly) three seedlings ~~survived, or rather,~~ germinated and are still with me as healthy yearlings in five gallon containers. All have been bud grafted this summer with low chilling apples which have "taken" quite well.

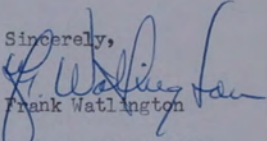
Naturally I would like to obtain more seed this winter to continue this work. However, due to my inexperience with Crataegus, I also need a better technique for accelerating and getting a better percentage of germination. By the way, I did precondition the seed with a month of stratified storage in the refrigerator. Possibly not long enough. Do you have any suggestions?

I was finally left with four or five plants of Rubus glaucus which are now doing well tho a bit slow. It does not seem quite as healthy here as R. shankii but it is still too early to say.

The past year since last I wrote you has been a rather unhappy one for me due to the break up of my ten year marriage. But I am finally beginning to get my feet on the ground again.

Hope to hear from you.

Sincerely,


Frank Watlington

C-38 Reparto Robles
Aibonito, Puerto Rico
00609

Aibonito, Puerto Rico
March 12, 1972

Dear Dr. Popenoe:

The generous supply of Crataegus seeds arrived duly and have since been planted in my best semillero, and nature is now in process.

In the course of our modest correspondence on other deciduous fruits I have probably neglected mentioning to you that my major interest over a number of years has been grapes. Have done a modest ~~xxxxx~~ amount of breeding, starting from our native V. caribaea. In a sense picking up where Fennell left off.

I'm afraid we are only partially in agreement concerning Latin taste in grapes. While the muscat flavor is certainly preferred over the more typically "neutral" V. vinifera tastes, other more characteristic or "fruity" flavors are also appreciated once people become familiar with them. In Brazil, for example, the strongly labrusca flavored Niagara is the most popular local table variety. What does seem to be true in these parts of the world is that grapes must compete with a number of highly flavored fruits.

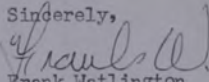
My own work with grapes is just beginning to produce encouraging results. Not yet as far as flavor is concerned, but with adaptation. My personal bias in flavor is towards a combination of attenuated labrusca and muscat, such as in the variety Golden Muscat. Adding muscadine to the mixture is an intriguing possibility.

It has been my impression that no one in your area is at present interested in tropical grapes, and that Fennell's beginnings at Turrialba have not been continued anywhere in Central America. If I am wrong please correct me. At any rate, I do have material which I believe is as good or better than anything they have come up with in Florida. It is yours for the asking, tho it is now too late to fill requests for this year.

I have also been working with muscadines, but not with very good results so far. Aibonito is a wee bit too dry for them, I believe. The so called "Totoloche" hybrid (munsoniana-rotundifolia x popenoei) does farely well, but few promising selections have come of it. Straight " " may do better as a progenitor. So if you know of someone who ~~is~~ does any collecting down around the isthmus of Tehuantepec, or wherever, keep me in mind for Totoloche seeds.

Many thanks for the Crataegus. Let me know if there is any material that I can provide you with from this area.

Sincerely,


Frank Watlington

P.S. Dont believe I answered your September question concerning types of berry grown here. None commercially. Rubus rosaefolius is a widespread naturalized species which you might be familiar with. Strawberries have been successful commercially, but no one has kept at it for long. My elevation is aprox. 600 m. at 18 degrees lat. equivalent to a somewhat higher elevation at your lower latitude?

What in the world is a Youngberry?

Aibonito, Puerto Rico
April 1, 1972

Dear Dr. Popenoe:

I was pleasantly surprised by your prompt and enthusiastic reply to my last letter. It was waiting here on my arrival after a week away in San Juan. I have been teaching at the University in Rio Piedras since January, and so I spend a few days here, then a few there eager to get back up here.

I'm happy to hear I hit a soft spot when I talked grapes. Yes, I have a modest grape breeding venture with a few trial selections of my own and also a few selections obtained from Dr. Santos Neto's program at Cambinas. Besides these Euvitis types I have a few seedlings of Muscadinia x Euvitis selections from breeders in the Southeast U.S.

I recently tried a few of Olmo's Euvitis x Muscadinia selections but none of them were resistant to mildew and were therefore removed. Mildew (Peronospora) resistance is the first condition any selection must meet to survive in the highlands here. My selections all have acceptable foliage resistance, in varying degrees. No selection I have tested has proved resistant in the blooming and fruiting parts. This is a major obstacle for developing large scale cultivation here. The blooming (most critical because of the inconvenience of spraying) normally occurs in March, which is supposed to be the driest month of the year, our unpredictable insular climate can surprise us with showers at almost any time. This season, for example, the results have been disastrous.

At F₁ at least, the transmission of mildew resistance by the V. caribaea parent very rarely seems to reach the fruiting parts. Even V. Shuttleworthi, which I am ~~xxx~~ introgressing with my basic line, is resistant up to ~~flower~~ fruit set, then the immature fruit is sensitive until about halfway thru its development, ~~xxx~~ finally is highly resistant till maturity. I mean to check on wild vines of V. caribaea to see whether the bloom is attacked in unusually ~~wet~~ wet seasons. It would explain the restricted geographical range of the species here in Puerto Rico.

In fact, only the muscadines are apparently immune to mildew at every stage of development. That might help to explain my longtime (and until recently, practically dormant) interest in obtaining V. popenoei. In the light of Olmo's recent findings concerning Euvitis x Muscadinia hybrids, it should not be too difficult to incorporate popenoei genes into my caribaea line.

I would appreciate the reference to Olmo's Venezuela study. ~~xx~~ Late last year he offered me selections for trial based on Florida species and caribaea also, I believe. He mentioned work being done in California with the latter, in selecting clones for Venezuela. ~~x~~ He never answered my ~~inquiry~~ question as to how he ~~xxxxxxx~~ could manage to select clones in California for Venezuelan conditions!

I am enclosing a not very good shot of "Esperanza" ~~x~~ or Watlington 66E-4 ♂, my best selection thus far. It is: V. caribaea ♀ x N.Y. 15-305 ♂. The latter, or male parent is a seedless, early, white selection from the cross Ontario x Sultana (Thompson Seedless). I can send you a few cuttings next January, along with a few others. I'm sure you can manage to find a "puñado" of Totoloché seeds for me in exchange for so precious a gem? Better ~~xxxxx~~ still if you could locate a rooted ♀ clone growing in some native garden. Muscadines as you know layer well but root poorly from cuttings, hardly graft at all.

In closing, yes you sent me seed of the De Sola Rubus glaucus and a couple of clones survived. Just got P.I. 342676 labeled R. shankii from Glenn Dale, which is quite different from the R. shankii you sent me a couple of years ago. Intend to write and ask where they got ~~xxxxx~~ their's.

(over)

I am very much interested in both pears and peaches. Red Ceylon grows very well here and is productive. I am using it as a rootstock for testing selections such as Flordared. I have not yet managed to get into pears. P. calleryana seems like a good stock to start with, according to everyone I ask. Have not been able to get seeds of it yet. Would also like to obtain seeds of Pyrus javanicus, possibly the most tropical species of the genus, to use as rootstock for the new hybrids. Do you have any useful contact in Indonesia?

Concerning Stover, I tried it several years ago before I had an adequate rootstock to work with. It was very poor on it's own roots but otherwise was just about the best (healthiest) of the Florida hybrids and helped introduce me to V. shuttleworthi as a source of desirable genes. However, I don't feel any of the Florida selections are good breeding material because they are mostly derived from F1 foundlings rather than controlled crosses of the native species.

As always, looking forward to hearing from you.

G. Frank W.

Antigua, Guatemala, 8 May 1972

Dear Pancho:

That excellent color foto of the Esperanza grape with the sex symbol running in both directions fairly makes me mad. We have never had anything as good looking as this, here on the mainland. At least I have never seen any hybrid down here which looked as good. Is it as good in flavor as a vinifera, and is it going to "run out" on attaining four or five years - or less - like the latter do?

Your letter sure piques my curiosity and makes me realize how far behind the times I am, when it comes to knowledge of grapes for the tropics.

You ask about Prof. Olmo's paper on Venezuela. I think he might be able to send you a copy, if you asked him for it. In general, it didn't add much to my own experience; the only thing was his talk about some local hybrids, vinifera x what I suspect must have been *tiliaefolia* since I believe he said it was a native species. I didn't see any of these hybrids when I was last in Venezuela and he didn't seem to think there was anything promising amongst them. He thought the future of grape growing in Venezuela depends upon further hybridization and said he was training a man at Davis who would go back and do the job. I don't know what has become of that man. My own attempts to train Venezuelans at Zamorano (EAP) have not brought results, and I have become rather discouraged. Prof. Olmo told the old old story of seeing young and of course small plantings of viniferas, mostly owned by Italians, and mostly in the neighborhood of Maracaibo. I saw some at Valencia and at Cumana years ago. They were just like the plantings I have seen in Ecuador, beginning in 1920. They look well for two years; fair for three years for a year or two at four or five years. The only fruiting vines

of respectable age which I saw in Venezuela were Isabellas - the usual exceptions of an occasional vine in a patio. We have these everywhere in the dryer parts of Central America. I have a Muscat of Alexandria(?) in my big patio here in Antigua; I brought it from San Salvador more than 15 years ago. It has never produced a bunch, but in San Salvador in a small patio with concrete walls all around, and pruned by a Frenchman, this grape was going well and probably more than 10 years old.

Now about the totoloché business: I am trying to find someone who lives on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and get seeds for you. So far, not much hope. Last year I tried to interest the Office of Plant Introduction in Washington but they don't seem to be as interested in such things as they were in David Fairchild's day (and mine). I am going to keep after this grape; the sea on is approaching when there should be ripe fruit. I bought it in the market in Tehuantepec and Coatzacoalcos. Neither Prof Olmo nor the boys in Florida were much interested in it at the time I got it; Mortensen in Florida is more so now, and as I wrote you, he thought there might be a plant at Chapman Field but I haven't learned anything about it.

It looks as though my Stover cuttings are rooting. I will get some *tilliaefolia* cuttings one of these days and see if I can graft Stover on them. George Darrow was strong for using *tilliaefolia* as a hybrid, here in the tropics. Based on his observations in Colombia I believe. If we could grow Stover here as successfully as they are growing it up to now at Leesburg it would pretty fine.

I bought three pounds of seed of *Pyrus calleryana* from Herbst Brothers about two months ago; Arturo Falla has one lb and is keeping the two pounds in his cold room for three months for the government. I am enclosing Herbst Bros catalog. I think you would do well to order a quarter of a pound (if they will sell it) and after stratifying it

about 45 F. for three months, plant it. We get fine germination here from Herbst seeds; I believe they are now getting seed from Oregon or Tennessee, they used to import it from Asia. Calleryana grows beautifully here at 48000 feet. As for Pyrus javanicus, I know nothing about it and no longer have any contacts in the East Indies. But I would bet on calleryana; I believe you have a few places in Puerto Rico where you could plant pears at 5000 feet or above dont you? Incidentally, we have found that pears will stand wet climates much better than apples. Or peaches. These get brown rot if they mature at a time when when the weather is constantly wet.

I have just spent a month at our school in Honduras (which everybody calls Zamorano, instead of Escuela Agricola Panamericana). At 6000 feet we are getting tremendous crops of Rubus glaucus and it is a darn good berry. Some of the clones are soft-fruited but fine flavored; the one we got from El Salvador is firm-fruited, ships quite well, and the flavor is good enough. If there weren't so many wild blackberries in this part of the world which make good jelly, R. glaucus could be sold for use as a fresh fruit, though it is something like the old story if we had some ham, we would have some ham and eggs if we had some eggs.

Always cordially yours,

Wilson Popenoe

Antigua, Guatemala 23 February 1973

Dear Panche:

The pkg of Esperanza grape cuttings arrived after being 21 days be been senturce and Antigua. The pkg had been opened -presumably in the aduana fer I dont think they bother much about plant quarantine unless plants come with soil on the roots, in which case they are destroyed - the nematode business. I took the cuttings down to Arture Falla who has a big greenhouse with Vinyl film over it and is better prepared to handle cuttings than I am here at the house.

There was not letter in the pkg but just the label, but I seem to recall that you wrote me about this grape a long time ago. We will be very glad to see that Esperanza will do here at 4800 feet. I have had STOVER from the Univ of Florida atation at Leesburg for 14 months now; transplanted the rooted cuttings to the garden last month, at which time I found the root systems were very weak in comparison with Isabella and Catawba. The latter is going very well with us, but does not bear heavy crops. I am afraid Stover is going to be a weak grower, but the vines I saw at Kes-burg were fine ones and bearing good crops of rather small but very tasty fruit, almost as good as a Muscat.

I hope a letter from you may show up, telling me how you are coming on with your breeding and experimental work. We are making fine progress here with pears from the southern US; the variety Pyres, 3/4 Anjou and 1/4 Garber is fine eating. The peaches from Florida are giving us trouble; they bear two or three crops and then quit bearing.

Many thanks for the cuttings and best regards always.

March 14, 1973

Dear Dr. Popenoe:

I must apologize for not having sent you at least a note with the cuttings.

I have been so hard pressed for writing time this year that the many friends with whom I correspond must think that something is wrong with me. Trouble is, perhaps, that I have too many irons in the fire at present.

Regret that the cuttings took so long to get there. If none makes it I will send you another start next season.

My work here has been slowed by lack of facilities. Good land is hard to find in Puerto Rico at the present time, and any land can cost upward of \$4,000. an acre. My commitments at the university are absorbing most of my attention, so my non paying horticultural interests have lagged. It is a temporary situation, I hope.

I think you will find that Esperanza is a strong growing vine in fertile, well drained soil. It should be allowed to extend itself, as on an "emparrado" or ~~trellis~~ overhead trellis. Even then, dont expect too much productivity. It is a moderate bearer. It starts growth so early here that it is usually hurt a little when late winter rains catch it in full bloom.

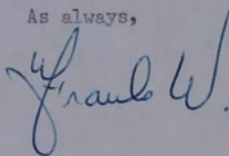
I take it you havent been able to obtain seeds of V. popenoi? I am still very much interested in obtaining either seeds or a female clone. If you have the chance give it another try. Maybe I could write to someone you know who is better located to find the Totoloché?

It has been a miserably "oceanic" winter here this year, with hardly any "dry" season to help subtropical plants get their rest.

I hope I can write you a more cheerful letter as the year wears on.

May your year be a full one.

As always,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Frank W.", written in a cursive style.

July 18, 1974

Dear Dr. Popenoe:

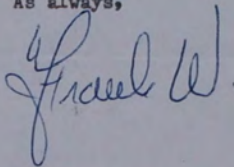
I'm very glad to have news from you again. Also elated that my Esperanza looks so good in Guatemala. Here it does better grafted on vigorous stocks than on it's own roots. On it's own it is rather weak and unproductive unless soil conditions are very much to it's liking. Cluster and berry size vary considerably with growing conditions.

According to my records, in my letter of April 1, 1972 to you I outlined Esperanza's parentage as follows. It is V. caribaea q x N.Y. 15-305 (now known as Lakemont). The male parent is a seedless early white selection of Ontario (a labrusca hybrid) by Sultanina, developed at Geneva, N.Y. Esperanza was selected from seven siblings surviving from a progeny developed from about 250 seeds.

I would very much like to have a good color shot of you with Esperanza when the grapes are more or less ripe. Can Don Arturo handle a camera as well as he does vines? Is Mr. Falla in the nursery business or in commercial fruit growing? If he is willing to correspond with me we might exchange clones to our mutual benefit. I have a growing number of interesting selections of grapes and other fruits which should do well at El Tempisque.

So much for now, since I am a bit rushed these days and I want you to get this soon. Happy to hear that your health is good. I will write a longer letter next time.

As always,



Antigua, Guatemala 5 September 1974

Dear Pancho:

Yesterday I went to Arturo Falla's place, El Tempisque, 14 kms from here, elevation 4800 feet, and found a few clusters of Esperanza practically ripe. The clusters run from 4 to 5 inches long, and the individual berries, the largest ones, just about one half inch in diameter. Very dark purple in color in color, very acid but possibly might be a little less so if left on the vine longer.

All in all, this fruit strikes one as a glorified version of Vitis tiliaefolia, syn. V. caribaea. You say that with you Esperanza is rather a weak grower, if on its own roots. Here just the contrary is true. It is a tremendous grower and as free from disease as our native tiliaefolia. In fact such a vigorous grower that it might be a good rootstock for one or two of the labrusca grapes which look rather promising here. For example, Niagara and Catawba and Delaware. As you know, Isabella is the only grape we have up to now, which is wholly successful over a long period of years; one is always reading and hearing accounts of viniferas which are doing beautifully in the tropics, but they are always two or three year old vines, never 10 years old unless they are growing in someone's patio.

Esperanza is on a barbacoa at Falla's place, and has a fine crop of bunches. You ask about Arturo; he is primarily a coffee grower, makes his money out of that cop and spend some of it on experimenting with cut flowers for shipment abroa, avocados, peaches pears and a few other fruits. He is a commercial nurseryman also and just about the best horticulturist in Guatemala.

Ever yours,