

Paul Ecke, world's No. 1 poinsettia grower, shows plants he brought back from Hamburg, West Germany, for tests at his Fallbrook experimental station. Plant at right is starting to get root growth, was broken off another larger poinsettia.

AGRICULTURE NEWS

Poinsettia Imports Undergoing Tests

By PETER EIDEN

Sixteen varieties of poinsettia plants are undergoing tests and observation to determine their potential to the Southern California flower industry at the Fallbrook experimental station of the Paul Ecke Ranch.

Ecke, whose headquarters are at the Encinitas Ranch on Saxony road, brought the plants back under federal sanction to this country after an 11-day-side tour of Europe to spend three months this summer combining business and pleasure at nine European nations.

The rooted cutting imports are of two single red varieties Cardinals and No. 25. They may be grown at lower temperatures than most U.S. types.

Ecke said he believes he already is growing these types on the Encinitas ranch, but will conduct tests to determine this.

TO GO EAST

Two of the plants will be shipped to the Beltsville, Md., the U.S. Agriculture Department experiments next spring. The remainder of the poinsettias will be brought to Encinitas after a two-year waiting period required by a county ordinance regulating importation.

Ecke also brought back four ornamentals, one blue and three reds from Hamburg and turned these over to USDA's Washington laboratories.

WAS 6TH TOUR

The trip proved his most successful sales tour of Europe. While still abroad, he ordered about 10,000 cuttings and containers, Ecke added.

plants shipped over from Encinitas.

Ecke has been exporting poinsettias since 1938 and this was his fourth tour.

His reaction to European flower growers:

"They needed education on growing poinsettias, but they sure are interesting me on the other flowers."

European growers have an edge on their American counterparts principally because of the extensive four-year training program for apprentices, he believes. Ironically, Ecke plays host to a steady stream of European apprentices who come to his ranch as part of their training.

Ecke's start in the poinsettia industry came in 1901 at age 8 when he began helping his father, Albert, take flowers to market from the family's Eagle Rock Valley ranch on Colorado boulevard, Los Angeles.

MOVED RANCH

He assumed charge of the business on his father's death in 1919, when the ranch had been moved to a point on the Sunset Strip now occupied by the Villanova restaurant.

Ecke poinsettia operations in Los Angeles ceased in 1924 when Ecke bought a 45-acre plot. The original ranch house has been converted to his headquarters for operations also conducted at San Onofre and Carlsbad.

His poinsettia production is the largest in the world. The Christmas crop alone is about half a million potted plants.

A Los Angeles florist shop where he made his first delivery in 1902 is still a regular customer, Ecke added.

Poster Award Given

Frederick F. Crane 18, a San Diego State College art student, is the winner of a Teenage Food Poster Contest sponsored by the women of the San Diego County Farm Bureau.

Mrs. Homer Roth of Escondido, contest chairman, said the theme of the contest was "Food Comes First — For Health Fitness." It was to stress the importance of good food for good health, Mrs. Roth added.

Second and third place finishers were Barbara Snelling 17, and Janet Snelling, 14 Escondido sisters. Barbara is a senior at Escondido Union High School and Janet is an eighth grade pupil at Grant Junior High. There were five other contestants.

The three winners received cash awards of $7.50, $5 and $2.50 respectively.

Posters of all eight contestants will be entered in the state contest with posters to be judged after Sept. 30.

Flood Control Plans

ESCONDIDO — Work plans for a proposed multi-million dollar flood control project for this area will be delayed temporarily until it is decided whether Lake Wohlford will be part of the plan, spokesmen for the Escondido Mutual Water Co., which will determine whether the lake can be included in this project without jeopardizing it as a water supply reservoir for the company.

Representatives of the city of Escondido, the Escondido Soil Conservation District, and the state Division of Forestry met here yesterday with representatives of the state Soil Conservation Commission and the federal Soil Conservation Service to discuss the project.

The estimated cost is between six and seven million dollars. Federal and state funds will finance about 95 per cent of the project, which will provide protection for the 47-square-mile Escondido Creek water shed.

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Sweet Potato Tour Planned

Bernard J. Kelly, a county farm adviser, will accompany five grower-potato varieties with the standard wheat variety Klondyk at San Luis Rey.

The tour, at 2 p.m. at the Sloan and Wittman Ranch, also will visit plant-spacing trials of sweet potatoes at maturity. Plant spacing ranges from 6 to 18-inch rows.

Kelly's talk will summarize results of early sweet potato plant-spacing with planting dates.

Dr. A. J. Pratt and Dr. Sam Little, both University of California farm advisers, will outline the selection of disease-free seed stock and methods of producing plants from seed beds.





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