

***The Kee Kitayama Research Foundation
and
the California Ornamental Research Federation***

Welcome you to



***The Domoto Brothers (l to r, Kanetaro, Takanoshin, Motonoshin)
photo courtesy of the Domoto Family Collection and
the California Flower Market circa 1920's***

***the California Floriculture
Hall of Fame***

as they induct

The Domoto Family

**Awards Presentation
December 3, 1997
Radisson Hotel, San Jose**

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Schedule of Events

Welcome

Invocation

Family History

Personal Glimpses of the Domoto Family

Presentation of Award

Domoto Family History

Few families in California have made such an impact on an industry as the Domoto Family. Starting their nursery business in 1885, the four brothers essentially created the floriculture industry as we know it today.

Takanoshin, Kanetaro, Motonoshin and Mitsunoshin Domoto immigrated from Japan to the United States in the 1880's. Takanoshin being the first, arrived on November 18, 1884. Kanetaro followed the next year. The brothers worked their way through school doing menial labor; Takanoshin as a janitor, Kanetaro first as a "schoolboy," then later as an assistant gardener.

It was as a gardener that Kanetaro developed his nursery skills. Using Kanetaro's knowledge, the brothers pooled their savings and rented a parcel of land in Oakland. After several difficult years of both growing and selling flowers, they called for their younger brother, Motonoshin, to join them in 1887, and then Mitsunoshin in 1890.

The hard work paid off and in 1892, the brothers purchased two acres of land in Oakland. Two years later, they purchased the adjacent parcel, doubling their size.

The brothers were known for importing ornamental plants in addition to their excellent cut flower production. By 1900, the Domoto Nursery was known as one of California's major importers from Australia, Japan and Europe. Increased demand and lack of competition helped the brothers achieve their success. The Domotos also introduced several new Japanese flower varieties into the United States.

In their 1902 catalog, an enormous variety of flowers were available for sale, including 230 varieties of chrysanthemums. The Domoto Brothers also imported ever-blooming tea roses, and French Bourbon roses from France.

While Kanetaro supervised nursery operations, Motonoshin was in San Francisco managing the wholesale and marketing end of the business. In addition to their wholesale and walk-in customers, Takanoshin sold flowers from his dry goods store in San Francisco. This steady flow of florists and retail customers was instrumental in helping the brothers secure a major loan from an Oakland bank.

While visiting Japan in 1892, Takanoshin began a tradition by bringing back a neighbor to work at the nursery. Every year after that, a resident of their village would come to the United States to gain valuable experience working for the Domoto brothers. After training, many of the new residents started their own business. Those names now read like a "Who's Who" in California floriculture. This new knowledge was especially useful for those wanting to experiment with hybridizing or growing roses. During this time, the Caucasian growers began calling the Domoto Nursery the "Domoto College."

Though not a single pane of glass was broken on greenhouses in the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906, the Domoto Brothers realized that an open-air market was no longer feasible. The municipal government was also trying to clear downtown arteries and made street sales illegal.

The Domoto brothers were instrumental in pushing for an indoor market and loosely formed an organization known as the California Flower Growers Association. The purpose of the organization was to find a suitable market site. With property costs artificially inflated due to the fire and earthquake, and increasing violence against Japanese descendants, finding a location was not an easy task. In 1909, the Domoto Brothers located a storefront on Lick Place that, although small, was the only place available.

With the help of Italian and Chinese growers, the Japanese growers opened the first grower-operated wholesale flower market on the West Coast. Amongst distrust and language barriers, there was a mutual need for the market.

Motonoshin Domoto became the first president of the California Flower Market when it incorporated in 1912 with 54 Japanese growers as shareholders.

Over the years, in many locations, the California Flower Market has continued to expand. Our collective thanks go to all those who made this possible.

Kee Kitayama Research Foundation

The Kee Kitayama Research Foundation is a 501 c 3 corporation formed in 1992 to conduct research for California's floriculture industry.

Created to honor the memory of Kee Kitayama, the Foundation will begin funding needed research in 1998.

The California Ornamental Research Federation, a committee of the Foundation, conducts grower tours and needed educational programs for California floriculture.

Mission Statement:

To enhance the market position of the California floricultural industry by conducting and promoting research and to provide education to the floriculture industry.

Goals:

1. Enhance the market position of California floriculture growers.
2. Develop and execute grower-directed research and education programs.
3. Support grower relations efforts to achieve grower involvement on behalf of California floriculture.
4. Provide data supporting public relations efforts on behalf of the California floriculture industry.

Special Thanks

*Bob Otsuka
Angelo Stagnaro, Jr.
California Flower Market
San Francisco Flower Growers Association
Kee Kitayama Research Foundation
California Ornamental Research Federation
Hall of Fame Awards Selection Committee
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Kee Klayama Research Foundation

Special Interest

The Kee Klayama Research Foundation is a 501 c 3 corporation formed in 1992 to conduct research on California's floriculture industry.

Created to honor the memory of Kee Klayama, the Foundation will begin funding research on the California flower industry.

The California
Foundation
for California

Mission:

To enhance
by conducting
floriculture

Goals:

1. Enhance the research and development of the flower growers.
2. Develop and enhance grower related research and education programs.
3. Support grower education and research on behalf of California floriculture.
4. Provide data supporting public policy on behalf of the California floriculture industry.



*The Domoto Brothers and their families
photo courtesy of the Domoto Family Collection and
the California Flower Market circa 1920's*