

Message from
 President
 Singapore Flower Exporters'
 Association



Today, horticultural science is facing a diminishing number of specialists owing to fewer people choosing horticulture as an attractive career. It is often hard to differentiate it as science or technology. It has its limitations competing for research grants. Often terms that relate horticulture to many minds are pollution, dirty hands, long hours, low wages, unscientific, a hobby, not glamorous, and a non-lucrative career path. These have been felt by the Singapore orchid industry though it is small in size. The fact that the industry has been doing well despite the world financial crisis and deep recession is due to the relentless effort of the people in the industry who have adopted continuous changes to improve productivity to cope with the changing situation affecting the industry – such as fuel levy and high costs for fertilisers and chemicals. The industry adjusts and keeps the market interested by having new and stronger orchid varieties with arrays of colours for the market to pick and choose from. The total volume of orchids exported in 2009 was S\$33.568 million, up from S\$30.135 million in 2008.

This would not have been possible without the many contributions from the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) bringing together the growers, the exporters, and the supporting industries – the airlines, logistics companies – and also the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) working together, understanding the changing needs of the industry to increase productivity.

We also like to thank the many big and small buyers of our orchids who have contributed to the increasing appreciation of our quality orchids – both at home and abroad. Many a time, visitors at Changi Airport, the botanical garden and hotels had commented of the uniqueness of our orchids displayed – the vibrant colourful tropical orchids which symbolise the uniqueness of tropical Singapore.

This collective effort has helped put Singapore in the world floriculture and contributed to the increasing appreciation of quality orchids in both Singapore and abroad.

We assure all our customers and supporters that our relentless improvement on productivity has enabled us to grow as we stay competitive. The industry's productivity lead to more varieties, new colours, better yield, longer vase life, quick delivery, competitive prices, prompt services, and correct information for care and usage.

Now, orchid appreciation can be introduced early to make students familiar with it and make a positive contribution to lifestyles as healthy food alone is not enough. It can be an attractive career and interest can be developed for the young and the old.

Come 2011, we are looking forward to welcome the world orchid conference to Singapore with a very wide range of new and old orchids. The commercial varieties and those for hobbyists will come together under one roof, and be displayed in a natural setting of landscape – the best way to appreciate them.

Again, we like to thank the AVA, all the other government agencies, and the supporting industries – all the florists, designers, horticulturists, commercial growers and exporters, researchers, and agriculture chemicals suppliers – for the contributions.

Together we look forward to provide more new varieties and colours for all to appreciate.

Too Peng San
 President
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