

# The Carnation Grower in a Rapidly Changing World

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The carnation grower in this rapidly changing world has to face up to inflation, automation, special-

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<sup>1</sup>Gordon Koon is a successful, larger grower under several types of structures. Talk presented at Colorado Carnation Conference, 1966.

ization, and unionization. He can expect increased competition in this country and from Europe. Increasing minimum wages and labor shortages will make it necessary to fight for higher prices for our flowers while realizing that we must not price ourselves out of the market. In the face of all these things, now is the time to be optimistic and daring.

Colorado growers must recognize that their success and progress to date has been due largely to the efforts of their wholesale houses. Progressive policies and management, an efficiently organized sales force, and the many grower services have enabled a group consisting of relatively small growers to sell as a united front. Pooling of grades and varieties has allowed growers to sell unbalanced grades and quality and to grow a limited selection of varieties that could never succeed if each grower sold his own production. This should be a lesson to our large competitors to the west.

It is now time for the individual grower to carry the ball. We must supply our sales machine with the needed volume of flowers, properly graded, in the desired grades, at the times when they are in demand. They say that there is no hope for the satisfied man. There is little hope in the future for the satisfied carnation grower. The present rate of inflation with rising labor costs is eating away at the net return per flower. The only answer is more flowers. Lay your plans according to your personal and financial abilities and get the show on the road.

For many years we have been telling customers that Colorado is the place to grow carnations. Our high winter light intensity was our earlier asset. Now, our dry summer atmosphere with air conditioning completes the picture. California growers are recognizing this, and the immigration has begun.

Colorado appears to be destined to be the center of carnation production. The producers will be those of us with foresight, initiative, daring, and determination. The carnation grower of tomorrow will employ all the progressive and profitable methods available. He will be a student of economics adjusting planting schedules, cutting procedures, timing, and quality to fit changing market conditions.

He will study fiscal management, developing methods of projecting costs, production, and income. He will make budgets and set goals.

He will develop standards of performance for his employees. Incentive plans to encourage maximum labor efficiency will be worked out for the various jobs in the greenhouse.

He will establish a plan for expansion and determine the costs and expected income.

He will be proud of his sales organization and work actively to further the industry.

He will not confuse perspiration with progress.

The carnation is the number two flower in sales today, and Colorado is number two in production of the carnation. There is no good reason why the carnation can't be number one flower, and Colorado number one producer of carnations.