

## **Rooftop Planting, Its Present and Future — What I Learn While in New Zealand<sup>©</sup>**

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Currently, a large business opportunity exists not only in the building industry but also the rooftop planting industry. This occurred when rooftop planting was virtually required as a heat island countermeasure by Tokyo Metropolis assembly in April 2000. Currently, there is keen competition between enterprises to meet this demand, and therefore, the aspects of rooftop planting are changing rapidly.

The first general step in the heat island countermeasure is in the search for the function and the cost. However, people will not be satisfied unless the view of the planting scene is attractive; therefore, the garden type selected must be cost effective or it isn't realistic.

The time will soon come when rooftop plantings will need to have not only the potential to reduce the heat island phenomenon but also provide a view that is attractive. When attractiveness becomes important the selection of plants will be taken more seriously. Plants suitable for the environment of the roof will not only have to be durable but will need to have attractive color, flower, and smell, or small fruit plants with a good volume of fruit production.

It can be taken for granted that maintenance will be comparatively easier and lower in cost than in a traditional garden. Rooftop planting should not be limited to any one segment of the plant industry such as the greening, the landscaping, the horticulture, or the fruit tree industries but instead to the entire plant industry.

When I participated in the I.P.P.S. New Zealand conference this past May, I saw many potentially useful plants for future rooftop plantings. Many cordylines, rosemaries, phormiums, and various kinds of sedges and grasses were observed, and they combined well with the trees and the flowers. Though the plant combinations were simple, the color was rich, and there was a three dimensional effect. I plan to use these ideas by all means.

It is the mission of the producers to grow the plants which are the most important part of the rooftop planting and to provide them to the building industry. Shall we undertake this new challenge that leads to possibilities for growth through rooftop planting?