

Field Tours in Aichi Prefecture, Aichi Agricultural Research Center Course[®]

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On the second day of the 17th Annual Conference of IPPS Japan Region, 57 participants enjoyed the field tours.

Toyoake flower auction market trades only pot plants and the volume of trade is the largest in Asia. On this day there were about 880,000 pots traded. The market uses the reverse Dutch flower auction system. Many buyers bid silently, looking at the images of the plant on five separate screens (Fig. 1). In addition, the market has worked on not only trading of plants but also to recycle the plastic trays used in transporting the pot plants. The plants traded in the market are sold all over Japan.

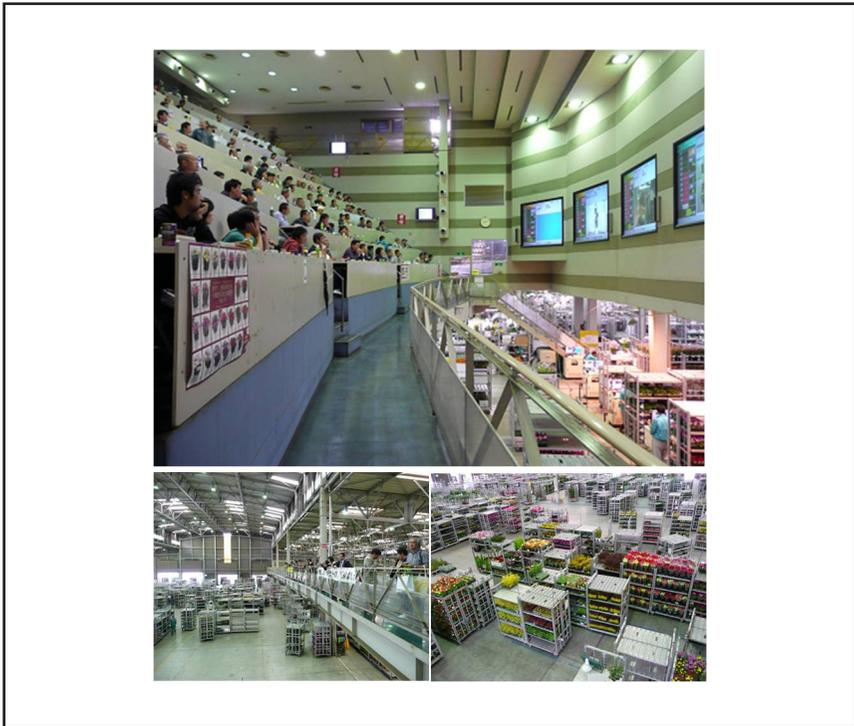


Figure1. We were able to tour auctions in the observation deck called the Skywalk.

Twenty-eight participants visited Aichi Agricultural Research Center. Aichi prefecture is one of the major agricultural regions and a leading producer of many crops in Japan such as, flowers (chrysanthemum, commercial orchid, rose, and cyclamen), foliage plants, cabbage, green beefsteak plants, Japanese butterbur, and fig. The center conducts research on many topics, such as field crop, horticulture, and livestock, and has a 152-ha field. We visited the horticulture section, which conducts research on rose, carnation, and fig topics. In the rose and carnation greenhouse crop area, research is being conducted on the breeding and selection for flower size, production, and powdery mildew resistance (Fig. 2).



Figure 2. The selection greenhouse of rose in Aichi Agricultural Research Center.

In the research in the fig section, they have been studying not only breeding for production but also resistant rootstock for ceratocystis canker (*Ceratocysts* sp.) and labor saving cultivation. I was interested in the container culture research. I think that the main advantage of this culture system is isolation of the plant from soil contaminated with *Ceratocysts* sp. Moreover, it was very important technically for labor saving cultivation of other plants.

The next visit was a commercial grower of figs in Anjo city. The Anjo and Hekinan regions are well known as one of the largest production centers for figs in Japan. Fig trees fruit in the season following planting; this does not occur with many other fruit crops. A number of labor saving technologies are effectively used at many fig farms, especially, straight-line training and wide alleyway for efficient working. The visited farm used the same methods and rain protected culture by a simple greenhouse (Fig. 3). The farmer noted that no serious problems occur during production of figs except from thrips from nearby home gardens. The participants went back to the Nagoya station, said good-bye, and promised to meet again next year in Ehime.



Figure 3. The fig trees were controlled straight-line training and wide alleyway.