

# Farmer-Stockman



**On This Oregon Farm—**

**300 New Daff**



## COVER STORY

# Canby Grower Has Introduced Over 300 New Daffodil Varieties

OVER 300 new daffodil varieties have been introduced to the world by Clackamas County grower Grant E. Mitsch of 22695 South Haines Road, Canby.

The award-winning daffodil hybridizer, now 70, and his wife, Amy, are semi-retired today. Their daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Richard (Elise) Havens are assuming command of the family daffodil business. The bulk of the bulbs for their mail-order markets around the world are grown on five to six acres near Hubbard by the Havens. Mr. and Mrs. Mitsch continue to develop and test new selections at their Canby farm. (A second daughter, Mrs. Jerry (Eileen) Frey of Canby raises miniature daffodils).

"We have been out here for 32 years. But, I have been growing daffodil bulbs 50 years," Mitsch said.

A Presbyterian minister with a keen interest in bulbs got Mitsch started by asking him to help harvest his crop one year. Mitsch was paid in bulbs.

Young Mitsch first grew gladiolus bulbs commercially. Daffodils, which began as a hobby, captured his interest and replaced the glads as a full-time commercial enterprise in 1945.

Mitsch was one of the few Oregon retail-daffodil survivors after World War II. Northwest growers were unable to compete with imports from the Dutch growers, who produced the daffodil bulbs cheaper, he indicated.

"I would have been forced out of business too, if I had not developed new varieties through hybridization," Mitsch noted.

"We have introduced over 300 varieties," he said.

Developing a new daffodil variety by hybridization is a painstakingly slow process. In the early spring, pollen from promising flowers is collected and deposited in other flowers. Ripe seed is collected about June 1. In

August, the seed is planted. It takes five years before any bulbs are produced from the seed, Mitsch said. The most promising of these bulbs are planted and tested. The best are increased.

"From seed to marketable variety," takes 12 to 15 years, Mitsch said.

The family has specialized in creating pink-cupped and reverse-bicolored varieties. They have also crossed smaller wild types, collected from Spain and Portugal, with larger garden varieties to produce distinctive

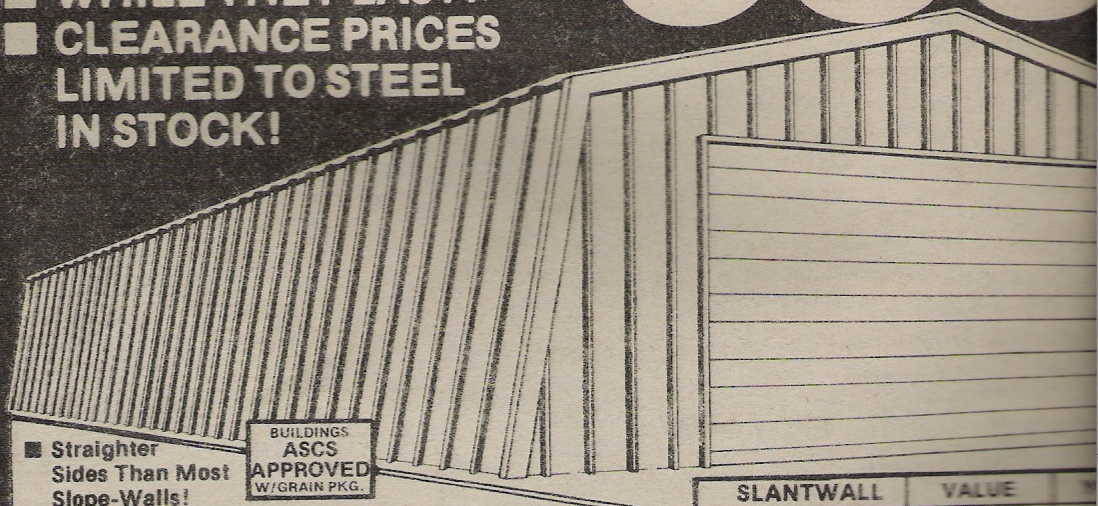
intermediate varieties. "We like the best of all," Mitsch said, "because we always have something new in the world each year."

The family has won a number of awards for their daffodils, including: Gold medal American Daffodil Society; Men's Garden Club of America; gold medal of the Garden Club of America; Peter Barr Memorial the Royal Horticultural Society.

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50 Years Ago  
in ...

THE OREGON FARMER

April 19, 1928

Steady growth of the North Pacific Cooperative Prune exchange, which now has handled four crops of Oregon prunes, has put it in position to expand, and this it proposes to do along lines already shown to be successful.



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intermediate varieties.

"We like the flowering season best of all," Mitsch said. This is "because we always have something new in the way of surprises each year."

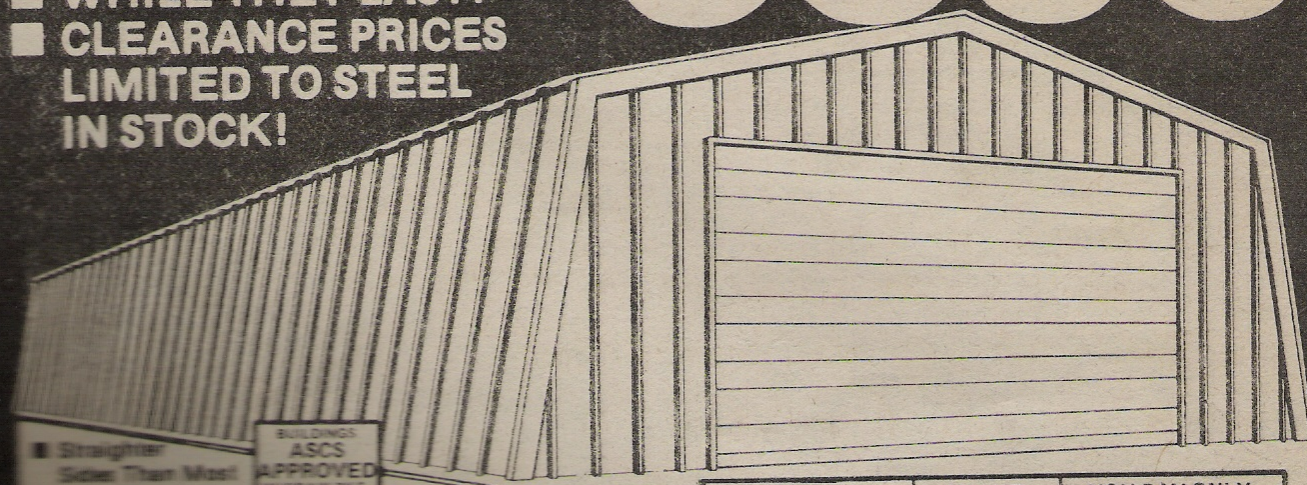
The family has won a number of awards for their work with daffodils, including, among others: Gold medals from the American Daffodil Society and Men's Garden Club of America; gold medal of honor from the Garden Club of America and the Peter Barr Memorial Cup from the Royal Horticultural Society.

— Mike Wohld.

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50'x96'x16'	\$12,329	<b>\$8428</b>
60'x120'x16'	\$17,498	<b>\$12,599</b>

BIG  
40'

RETAIL VALUE \$4733

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