

Traditional Japanese Horticultural Plants Producer Support System

Additional Details for Purchasing and Sales Supporters

(Jplants Network — Keizo Togami)

Executive Summary & Vision

By reviving the numerous superior cultivars of traditional Japanese horticultural plants hidden within Japan and introducing them to the world, we create international demand that does not currently exist in Japan. The support generated abroad is then funneled back to Japan, directly benefiting exceptional local producers and helping cultivate their successors. Furthermore, this broadens the plant selection available to landscape architects and garden designers worldwide, ultimately revitalizing the global horticulture market.

1. System Workflow Overview

Process Flow:

Discovery of Cultivars → Selection → Registration → Public Announcement → Request for Support → Implementation of Support → Collection of Support Funds → Payment of Support Funds → Disclosure of Support Status.

2. Searching and Discovering Plant Cultivar Producers

Led primarily by Jplants Network.

- **Target Plants:** Primarily traditional Japanese horticultural plants or species included within this classification.
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- **Producer Outreach:** We speak with various Japanese organizations (associations, cooperatives, etc.) and individuals to select candidates. We visit their nurseries to explain the entire framework in detail—from selling and exporting saplings to collecting and remitting support funds generated by growing and selling these plants overseas. Upon gaining their full understanding of our objective, we confirm their agreement to sell.
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- **Cultivar Verification:** Select cultivars from regional associations and cooperatives. Identify and clarify regional naming discrepancies (e.g., identical names for different cultivars, or different names for the same cultivar).
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3. Selecting Cultivars from Selected Individuals or Organizations

- **Scope & Patent Support:** Plants must be traditional Japanese horticultural cultivars. In the future, we will also support obtaining overseas patents for new cultivars.
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- **Catalog Breadth & Naming Protection:** To fulfill our support objectives, it is necessary to list as many cultivars as possible. To prevent unauthorized cultivar

outflow, announcing plants on our website first helps avoid the issue of unauthorized alternative names being assigned overseas.

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- **Sustaining Sales & Managing Production:** Presenting a vast lineup while restricting the specific cultivars offered for sale each year ensures sustainable sales and allows producers in Japan to streamline their production quantities.
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- **Selection Criteria:**
- - **Unregistered / Expired Cultivars (Existing):** Plant cultivars already present in the Japanese market (regardless of age) that cannot be plant-variety registered, have not been registered, or whose registrations have expired.
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 - **Unreleased New Cultivars (Unregistered):** New cultivars not yet sold in the market and not registered in Japan. Because overseas patent acquisition remains possible for these, access is restricted exclusively to locked/restricted areas of the website.
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 - **Registered Cultivars Seeking Overseas Patents:** Cultivars registered in Japan whose owners wish to obtain overseas patents. Viewing is restricted to locked areas of the website while actively recruiting buyers interested in international sales.
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 - **One-of-a-Kind Specimen Plants:** Unique, single-specimen items offered for sale (e.g., specific Bonsai trees).
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- **Handling Naming Discrepancies:** Cultivars with different regional names or identical names representing different plants require extra caution and expert consultation. We consult with respective organizations to let them determine how the plant should be listed.
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- **Public/Private Botanical Collections:** For cultivars that exist solely in public/private botanical gardens or parks, we seek permission to propagate them after gaining their understanding of our mission. Proceeds from plant sales will directly support those organizations.
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4. Disclosed Cultivar Information & Catalog Operations

- **Information Disclosed:** Genus, species, cultivar name, photographs (flowers, foliage with flowers, fruit, seeds, full plant, mature canopy structure, etc., as comprehensively as possible), presence of naming rights in the target region, affiliated association, characteristics, hardiness zones, propagation methods, vendor's propagation supply capacity, delivery methods, and contract terms.
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- **Disclosure Method:** Catalogs of support-recipient registered entities are sold via our online shop to recruit prospective buyers. If a recipient does not have a pre-existing catalog, Jplants Network creates and sells a catalog using their photos and plant information. Because existing catalogs are entirely in Japanese, our company assists

with translation and inquiry support up to a certain threshold, though our capacity is limited. Resolving this remains a future operational priority.

5. Naming Rights and Trademark Management

- **Concept of Naming Rights:** Selling traditional Japanese plant names written solely in Romanized Japanese in Western markets is, in my experience, extremely difficult. To mitigate this, plants will be sold displaying both a newly assigned Western name and the original Japanese name.
- **Naming Fee & Allocation:** A naming fee of **CAD \$500.00** is paid by the entity naming the plant to the respective plant association, directly funding that association. In return, the association verifies and approves the name, granting the naming entity the right to sell the plant under that name within trademark boundaries. Jplants Network records this information in the master database and receives a database management fee from this transaction fee.
- **Fee Breakdown:**
 - **Cultivar Creator / Naming Entity:** 20%
 - **Plant Association:** 50%
 - **Jplants Network Management Fee:** 30%
 - *(Note: To avoid burdening associations with paperwork, Jplants Network prepares all necessary documentation. The association only needs to review, approve the name, and sign. The 30% fee covers this service. Allocation percentages are subject to change based on operational needs. If the creator or original naming entity is unknown or absent, their 20% share is reallocated to the association.)*
- **Trademarks:** Trademark registration is managed independently by the naming entity; Jplants Network does not directly intervene in whether they acquire it. Therefore, legal rights remain limited to the scope of trademark law.

6. Registration and Website Disclosure of Plants and Rights Holders

- **Registration Process:** Companies, organizations, and individuals, along with the plant cultivars they hold, are registered in our database. Registered plants are published on the website, accessible exclusively to registered members. Photo lists or catalog files edited by Jplants Network are uploaded as catalogs and sold to gather support.
- **Catalog Returns & Privacy:** **50% of catalog sales proceeds are refunded to the catalog registrant.** The identities of registered individuals or organizations are

displayed using a unique Registrant Code and will never be disclosed without permission. This minimizes direct, uncoordinated contact from buyers to supply farms; all inquiries and claims must be handled through Jplants Network.

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- **Detering Unauthorized Outflow:** Publishing cultivar information online helps prevent the unauthorized spread of old or new Japanese cultivars (unregistered in Japan). Old unmanaged cultivars circulating in Japan are particularly vulnerable to being taken overseas and sold under unauthorized names without permission. Public online logging acts as a deterrent.
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7. Bio-Information & Intellectual Property Policy

Historical Context & Intellectual Property

Many plant cultivars developed in Japan before intellectual property (IP) and plant patent concepts existed or matured in the horticulture industry lack formal IP protection. Anyone can legally utilize them. However, when these cultivars are modified abroad without authorization, none of the resulting profits are returned to the Japanese creators or associations.

In an era of advanced internet and AI technology, exporting biological data and cultivar traits without protection simply because formal IP is absent contradicts our core mission. Parent plants capable of creating new cultivars must be sold under a protective framework.

For cultivars or species biological data that cannot hold formal IP rights, Jplants Network executes binding membership agreements. By adhering to these rules, members help bring Japanese plants to global markets sustainably, generating revenue that returns to Japanese producers and supports the next generation of growers.

Protection of Bio-Information & Patent Revenue Sharing

- **Parent Stock & Breeding Approvals:** Crossbreeding for new patent cultivars or fixing natural mutations relies heavily on parent stock. If a member intends to apply for a patent on a new cultivar derived from a parent plant registered with Jplants Network, they **must notify Jplants Network in advance**. We will contact the relevant Japanese individuals, organizations, or institutions to secure permission. This notification remains strictly confidential and will not be published.
- **Royalty Distribution:** Using established Japanese cultivars as parent stock to obtain overseas patents requires permission from the original breeder, registrant, or association in Japan, along with a commitment to allocate a portion of the patent revenues as a parent-stock protection fund. Members are obligated to report this prior to filing.
- **Alternative Registration:** Alternatively, members may register new cultivars with Jplants Network using a Trademark alone (without a full patent) for sale to other companies. This serves as a future operational path. Managing and sharing these cultivars with overseas growers allows us to track the connection between Japanese origin plants and new cultivars or patents created abroad.

Scope of Horticultural Protection vs. Broader Biological Data

- **Scope Limits:** Jplants Network handles plant protection within the scope of ornamental horticulture. Internal biological data (e.g., genetic modifications) is outside our primary operational domain. However, selling plant species or cultivars globally requires basic ground rules regarding latent IP.
- **Non-Horticultural Uses:** If registered plants are utilized for non-horticultural purposes—such as medicinal uses, DNA editing, or extraction of active pharmaceutical compounds—members must notify Jplants Network in advance. Jplants Network will forward this information to the appropriate individuals, organizations, or institutions to address directly. Jplants Network will not be party to proceedings beyond that initial notification.

Personal Reflection & Philosophical Alignment

Having worked in a Canadian nursery for over 30 years, I occasionally met people who expressed a desire to go "plant hunting" in Japan. While that was possible in an era of slower communication, information now spreads globally instantly. Given bio-information IP considerations, plants should not be removed from a country without permission. Because my project bridges these markets, Jplants Network must be managed with these ethical and legal considerations at its core.

8. Membership Structure & Framework

All buyers and sellers must complete a membership registration. Purchasing a membership constitutes a formal contract with Jplants Network to comply fully with all terms and conditions. Members are notified whenever terms are updated.

- **Public Site (www.jplants.net):** Accessible to anyone for general browsing.
- **Restricted Member Site:** Requires membership registration.

[Free Membership]

Members access the shop and purchase catalogs simply by signing in on the **Wholesale** page. Members can submit inquiries regarding catalog plants. A member forum will be introduced in the future to facilitate direct Q&A and knowledge sharing.

Membership Categories

1. Seller Membership (Japan / Overseas) — Currently Free

- **Eligibility:** Individuals or organizations holding, producing, or developing traditional, rare, or superior plant cultivars currently in the market (including those that cannot be patented or registered).
- **Vetting:** Applicants are vetted by existing members based on production cultivars, quantity, facility management, and development status.
- **Restriction:** Must be actual producers growing plants in-house. **Brokers or resellers are strictly ineligible.**

2. Paid Buyer Membership Plans

Offers two pricing plans to purchase registered plants:

- **Initial Registration Plan: CAD \$200.00** *(includes CAD \$100.00 administrative fee for the first purchase).*
 - Lifetime membership (one-time fee).
 - Grants access to both Buyer Groups 1 and 2.
 - Creates a personalized portal page displaying the list of plants supported by the buyer.
- **Order & Shipment Management Plan: CAD \$100.00 / year.**
 - Covers administrative management for sapling orders and purchases (waived in the initial registration year). Purchased on an annual basis at the time of order.
 - If an order requires more than one year from order placement to shipment, this fee applies annually for each year required.

Buyer Membership Group Classifications

Group	Target Audience & Purpose	Sales & Propagation Rules
Group 1A	Collection purposes (Botanical gardens, non-propagating entities) or Small-Scale Nurseries.	Small-scale propagation (≤100 plants/cultivar) for resale purposes.
Group 1B	Commercial Large-Scale Producers.	Large-scale propagation (>100 plants/cultivar). No restrictions on selling grown stock/reselling to landscape contractors or retail garden centers. Requests from other member nurseries for registered plants may be fulfilled by selling cuttings or saplings with an added support fee. Sales to non-member wholesale nurseries are strictly prohibited.

Group 2	Breeders & Hybridizers.	Small-quantity purchases intended strictly for crossbreeding or discovering mutations to create new cultivars (no direct propagation/resale of the purchased plant). If a patent is sought for a new cultivar derived from a Jplants Network parent, a 5% royalty fee for bio-information usage is payable (exact percentage subject to negotiation).
Group 3 (In Planning)	Prospective Patent Holders & Developers.	Includes Group 1 access plus permission to view information on new cultivars/patent-seeking candidates and negotiate directly with developers. Paid separately from Groups 1 and 2. Details to be announced.

Note: Buyer application forms require details regarding business location, propagation scale, resale intentions, and purchasing objectives.

9. Sales Contract Mechanism & Export Operations

- **Brand Unified Management:** All registered, published plants (including photos, names, and catalogs) are managed under the **Jplants Network brand**. Transaction processing will eventually take place entirely on the website (currently under development).
- **Ordering Process:**
 - Buyers register for a Paid Buyer Membership.
 - Orders are submitted via email to info@jplants.net detailing cultivar names, item numbers, quantities, import permit availability, and required field inspection timelines.
 - Buyers select plants from specific producer catalogs, referencing the catalog file name, plant catalog number, or page/row/column numbers.
- **Order Types:**
 - **Immediate Stock (Current Year Autumn/Winter Shipment):** Most orders fall here due to field quarantine requirements.
 - **Custom Production Orders:** Requires 1–2 years for propagation and growing, offering a longer timeline.

- **Quarantine & Permits:** North America requires Import Permits (Europe does not), but **field inspection requirements must always be verified with Plant Protection Stations in Japan prior to order confirmation.**
- **Order Timeline & Payment:**
 - Upon order receipt, Jplants Network verifies supplier inventory, production status, and required field inspection durations with Japanese quarantine authorities.
 - Approximate unit prices and expenses are calculated (final costs billed at actual cost upon shipment).
 - **Order Confirmation:** Requires a **50% non-refundable advance deposit** of the plant purchase price.
- **Excluded Expenses (Billed Separately at Cost):** Japanese domestic transport, root-washing, packing, plant inspection fees, phytosanitary certificate issuance, 2-year maintenance fees (for custom orders), and Japanese freight forwarder fees.
 - **Terms of Delivery: FOB Japan Shipping Facility.**
- **Support Fee Inclusion:** Plant purchase prices include a support fee of **CAD \$1.00 per plant**, 100% of which is remitted to the producer.
- **Cancellations & Guarantees:**
 - Orders requiring ≥ 6 months of field inspection or custom propagation require the 50% deposit to lock in production.
 - Orders may be canceled *before* propagation (cuttings/grafting) begins. **Once propagation has started, orders cannot be canceled, and the 50% deposit is strictly non-refundable.**
 - *Important Notice on Bare-Root Stock:* Due to root-washing stress, 2-year cuttings or 1-year grafted plants establish better upon arrival. **There is no post-arrival survival guarantee or replacement policy once plants are received.**

Shipment & Logistics

- **Air Freight vs. Air Mail:** Live plants are best shipped via Air Freight. Although air freight costs are higher than sea freight, the significant weight and volume reduction from bare-rooting keeps the per-plant shipping cost reasonable. Air Mail is cheaper for small orders, but customs clearance delays vary by country; **Jplants Network**

provides no compensation or guarantees for plant damage caused by customs delays.

- **Liability Boundary:** Jplants Network manages root-washing, export quarantine, packing, and dispatch. Jplants Network assumes no liability for issues arising after handoff to the post office or air freight carrier (**FOB at Jplants shipping facility**).

10. Rules on Reselling Saplings

When reselling saplings imported from Japan to wholesale growers, sales are **strictly limited to Jplants Network membership holders**, who remain bound by our terms. No sales restrictions apply when selling directly to retail garden centers or landscape contractors.

11. Labeling & Brand Verification

- **QR Code Labels:** All products sold must bear a Jplants Network QR code label designed for purchasing/propagating wholesale sellers. This ensures end-consumers understand the support system and verifies the plant was sourced from a Jplants Network member.
- **Support Payment via Labels:** Purchasing QR label sheets from us fulfills the support fee requirement (label printing costs are billed separately from the support fee).
- **Custom Labels:** Members creating custom labels will be provided with official Jplants Network logo and QR code data files.
- **Consumer Transparency:** QR codes link directly to the producer's dedicated page on the Jplants Network website, listing current and past cultivars produced. This prevents unauthorized non-member companies from copying labels, as scanned codes will always resolve to the verified producer's official page.

12. Support Fund Structure & Financial Allocation

- **Collection Mechanism:** Wholesale producers recover support funds by adding the support fee to their propagation sales prices. Any modification to the fee amount requires prior consultation and approval from Jplants Network.
 - **Small-Scale Production (≤ 100 plants/cultivar):** Minimum fee of **CAD \$1.00 / plant**.
 - **Large-Scale Production (> 100 plants/cultivar):** Fee agreed upon mutually between the producer and Jplants Network based on volume.
- **Allocation Breakdown:**
 - **Plant Protection / Management Seller (Original Holder):** **50%**
 - **Purchasing / Propagating Wholesale Buyer :** **30%**
 - **Jplants Network Management Fee:** **20%**

(Percentages are subject to adjustments based on cultivar circumstances, but all changes require prior approval from Jplants Network.)

- **Remittance & Reporting:** Support funds are collected annually (or periodically as required) alongside cultivar sales reports. Total annual support funds collected (net of administrative fees) are published transparently on the website.

13. Remittance to Individuals and Organizations

- Collected support funds are distributed to registered beneficiaries or organizations according to the established allocation ratios.
- Support is tailored to the specific requests of registered individuals or organizations.
- **Inheritance & Transfer:** We are developing mechanisms to allow support receipt rights to be transferred or reassigned, ensuring ongoing support for registered cultivars across generations.
- Individualized payment reports are generated for each beneficiary.

14. Support Activity Reporting (Website Disclosures)

The website publicly discloses:

1. Overall financial income and expenditure reports.
2. Activity and progress updates on support recipients/organizations.
3. Activity updates on purchasing, propagating, and selling supporters.

15. Closing Remarks

In establishing this support system, I consulted extensively with plant professionals across Japan and Canada. It became clear that the issues we face—aging demographics among growers, loss of rare cultivars, and lack of successor pipelines—are shared worldwide among plant collectors, botanical gardens, universities, research institutions, and private nurseries.

Our goal is to forge public-private partnerships that manage, develop, and pass down horticultural plant diversity, ensuring these living treasures reach plant lovers for generations to come.

Current Operational Status & Infrastructure Setup

All operational systems are transitioning toward unified web-based management

(<https://www.jplants.net/>)(<https://www.jplants.net/>)).

- **Plant Inventory:** Plants listed in the website **Gallery** are currently in stock at our farm undergoing cutting propagation. Items sourced directly from Japan have not yet been offered for sale.
- **Upcoming Japan Visit:** During my upcoming trip to Japan this autumn, I aim to collect photo data and cultivar information to populate our member-only wholesale platform.

Resource & Facility Requirements

Software

Development, maintenance, and security management are underway for the website, master plant database, and integrated E-Commerce system (*catalog purchasing functionality became operational as of September 21*).

Hardware & Facilities

- **Current Leased Greenhouses:** We currently lease 2 greenhouse bays from Setsuko Piroche. Both are fully occupied with plants, making space for potting up propagated stock a critical bottleneck. Other greenhouses on site are fully occupied by Ms. Piroche's inventory (managed and sold by Botanical Odyssey).
- **Propagation Expansion:** We have access to lease 1 dedicated propagation greenhouse (30ft × 94ft, capacity for 80,000 plugs in 5cm trays, equipped with bottom heating). Plants shown in the website Gallery can be propagated immediately using this facility. Although 4 identical propagation houses exist on site, the aging equipment requires upgrades that are currently beyond our scope.
- **Facility Relocation Risk:** The court-appointed administrator (bank) handling Setsuko's estate has listed the entire land and facility property for sale. If sold, we must vacate the current greenhouses. Due to present economic conditions in Canada and declining real estate values, investors are cautious, so an immediate eviction is unlikely. However, active preparations are underway, and negotiations are in progress for an alternative relocation site.

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