

The Fukuba Strawberry in Japan

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When I was in Japan in 1956, and again in 1962, I had occasion to observe strawberry growing and to see some remarkable strawberry fruits in the markets.

The plants were grown on terraces, on "walls." Each plant was meticulously groomed, and individual fruits were often bagged.

As seen in the markets, the berries were spectacular—displayed on cotton in shallow flats about five inches by seven inches, with six to nine fruits to the flat. The fruits were long, cylindrical, or wedge-conic, $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, and 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter. They were bright red, with inconspicuous seeds (achenes), very tender in flesh, easily bruised, highly aromatic, and agreeably refreshing.

Upon returning to the United States, I reported this variety in the press, but was informed that it was none other than a virus-free Fairfax. This I was loath to accept. It seemed un-

believable that Fairfax could grow so differently in Japan; and so I approached my friend and colleague, Dr. M. Kajiura, Director of the Horticultural Research Station, Hiratsuka, Kanagawa, Japan. His reply follows. It is quite evident that Fukuba is a distinct variety.

Dear Dr. Tukey: March 29, 1963

I am very glad to receive your letter asking me the information about strawberry variety, Fukuba.

As you know, Fukuba is very different from Fairfax. Fukuba variety was bred by Dr. I. Fukuba in 1900-1901. Dr. Fukuba, who was the chief horticulturist of imperial household, selected this variety from seedlings of General Changy (French variety) in Shinjyuku Garden, where you have been with me. At first, this strawberry had been cultured in greenhouse in Shinjyuku Garden; thereafter, this variety spread over forcing crop regions, being cultured with simple frost protection.

Fairfax is, as you know, hybrid of Royal Sovereign x Premier (Howard 17), bred by U.S.D.A. in 1923.

Berries of Fukuba are very large (15-22 gr.), thin and long, wedge-conic, and bright red, whereas the berries of Fairfax are rather round type, and deep red.

This winter, it was very cold in Japan too. It snowed on orange regions heavily. And in some areas, oranges were seriously damaged by frost.

*Sincerely yours,
M. Kajiura*

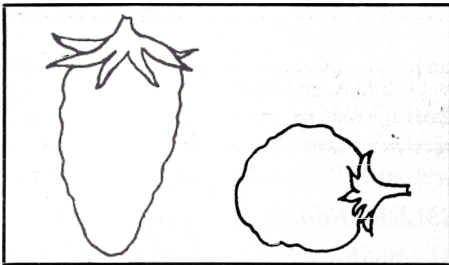


Fig. 1. Fruits of Fukuba (left) and Fairfax (right), as grown in Japan. Drawings furnished by Dr. M. Kajiura.

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