If cut flowers last longer and are more abundant than they were 50 years ago, plant diseases and insects are managed more effectively and heartier varieties are making their way to market, you can thank the painstaking research that's funded in part through the American Floral Endowment (AFE).

"AFE-funded scientific research helps growers produce higher quality products more efficiently and, ultimately, to deliver them to consumers through industry channels." said Rod Kennicott, AAF, endowment chairman and CEO of Kennicott Brothers Company in Chicago.

AFE will honor the thousands of florists, wholesalers, growers, suppliers and scientists who have worked to make the endowment the industry's premier research support organization at its 50th anniversary fundraising dinner this September in Orlando. You can show your support and help AFE continue its essential work by joining the celebration. To register for the Sept. 22 dinner, become a sponsor or make a contribution, contact Debi Aker at daker@endowment.org, (703) 838-5211. Dinner registrations can be made online while registering for SAF Orlando 2010 at www.safannualconvention.com.