

# PERSON OF THE YEAR

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**DONALD TRUMP**  
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## Holding the Key to a Better, Sustainable World

What began with a passion for growing healthier, more beautiful flowers resulted in a new concept of water, changing how it affects everything in the environment and beyond.

**Koichi Akatsuka**  
President  
Akatsuka Group



Horticulture business Akatsuka Group hopes to revolutionize the way the world looks at hydration with an original water technology that can boost health and sustainability. Forty years ago, this Japanese firm developed FFC Water technology through extensive research on iron's vital role in plant growth combined with the company's extensive botanical experience. Based in Mie Prefecture, Akatsuka Group was the first in Japan to mass-produce orchids through tissue culture in 1967. The firm has been working with leading universities when conducting its research. More recently, researchers at Harvard University reported that FFC Water can enable farmers to achieve the same crop yield using up to 50% less water. Beyond agriculture, FFC Water shows potential in other areas. Harvard experts and others in biology and microbiology, public health and environmental health have uncovered broader potential uses in fields ranging from plant and animal growth to environmental conservation.

Company President Koichi Akatsuka firmly believes that FFC technology is an ecological game-changer with wide-ranging applications. "Our company has been helping people improve the health of all living things since 1984," said Akatsuka. "FFC technology is being incorporated into more and more companies' products and services such as agriculture, aquaculture, food manufacturing and so on. They report improved product quality while also making them more environmentally friendly," he said. Akatsuka's first successful product outside of horticulture was a health drink named FFC Pairogen, consisting of FFC Water mixed with natural ingredients such as vinegar. Other successes followed,

including FFC ceramics, which improves and activates water, and FFC soil conditioner and compost. "University research even pointed to FFC Water stimulating the proliferation and differentiation of skin cells. That discovery led us to develop a skincare cosmetics line. The more interest in FFC grows, the more uses we discover!" added Akatsuka. The firm's work also supports the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a key policy and strategy issue for all businesses in the face of climate change concerns. Akatsuka says that his firm was a proponent of green action long before the announcement of government initiatives. "The FFC approach is from a totally new direction. Instead of simply slowing human damage to ecosystems, FFC is actually capable of adding positive effects to ecosystems, such as rejuvenating vegetation," he said. Businesses using large volumes of water have reported that FFC ceramics boost growth and profitability, while the natural effects of FFC Water restore ecosystems. "We believe that spreading this technology will lead to a society in which health, the environment and the economy are in a virtuous cycle. We have many partners who share the same philosophy. It can be used to help address all the SDGs. Fundamentally, every industry requires water, which is essential for living things," he said.

The company's connection to the environment has deep roots in its horticultural expertise. Akatsuka showcases this at its Suzuka Forest Garden, featuring 200 weeping plum trees, where it aims to pass on traditional Japanese pruning techniques. Attracting 70,000 visitors in early spring, the plum garden is a living example of the strength of FFC Water and Akatsuka's gardening techniques. This forward-thinking company, which has operated farms in Brazil, Hawaii and Thailand, can maximize FFC's benefits for growing healthier plants. The next step for the business will involve spreading awareness and sales of FFC technology far beyond the borders of Japan. "We hope that actively increasing the efficiency of water by utilizing FFC technology can have a huge benefit in a variety of nations, particularly for irrigation with declining aquifers," said Akatsuka. He added, "To truly improve environmental conditions and pass on a bountiful planet to future generations, we must go beyond minimizing human destruction or simply being 'eco-friendly.' We must develop solutions that can actually rejuvenate the environment and reverse damage. That's exactly what FFC does, by helping all living things on Earth thrive."

