

# GROWERTALKS

## GT in Brief

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### College Students Become Flower Farmers for Float Creation

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This past fall, students from Cal Poly Universities harvested marigolds, strawflower and statice grown from seeds that adorned Cal Poly's 2019 float entry in the Tournament of Roses Parade on New Year's Day.

The Cal Poly float is a consistent award-winner, having earned the Past President's Trophy for its 2018 entry with 97% of the flowers grown in California. The seed was donated by Ball Horticultural Company.

*Pictured: Cal Poly students Blake Juett, Luis Coreas, Madison Toney, Belen Castillo, Sydney Strong, Kate Worrell and Bruce Benjamin picking marigolds.*

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo students used Ball seeds to grow the needed marigolds, while Cal Poly Pomona students grew the strawflower and statice. In addition to the student's effort, Ball also donated kale plugs to Ocean Breeze Farms to help provide the kale needed for this year's float design.

"It takes teamwork to make all of this work," explained Kasey Cronquist, CEO & Ambassador of the California Cut Flower Commission. "We weren't producing the kale that the students were looking for, but Ball was willing to provide the plugs and Ocean Breeze is providing the space for production, and together we were able to get this all in the ground in time for the students to use for their Rose Parade float."

The Cal Poly Universities float was recognized as one of only a few parade entries certified as "California Grown." This certification recognizes those parade entries that can assure at least 85% of the flowers and greens on the float are from the Golden State. **GT**