

Successful Enterprise Sprouts in Basement for Liu

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One of the most peculiar "farms" in America is not to be found under God's blue sky but in a rather dark and humid basement in Chinatown. And the man responsible for the harvest, along with a crew of eight, is a smiling, well-tailored, well-manicured and obviously prosperous gentleman named C. P. Liu, AM '50.

If you've ever eaten in Chinatown, you've probably sampled his crop, for Liu is the largest grower and supplier of bean sprouts in the New York area. He supplies the Chinese restaurants in all the boroughs of Manhattan and in Long Island with the four or five thousand pounds of fresh bean sprouts grown in his cellar each day.

The name of Liu's enterprise is Sun-Mee, which means "new beauty." It is situated in an old building with an unprepossessing exterior at 32 Division Street and there is nothing on the ground floor but a few sacks of mung beans to indicate the activity below.

But down a rickety flight of stairs is an extraordinary sight. There in the artificial light of exposed electric bulbs are row after row of deep, 40-gallon cylindrical cans with the bean sprouts in six stages of growth.

"It takes six days," Liu explained, "from the time the mung beans are started until the sprouts are ready to package."

The beans are watered every six hours, and on the second day a tiny white sprout emerges from the green bean. Gradually the sprouts become larger and larger. . . .

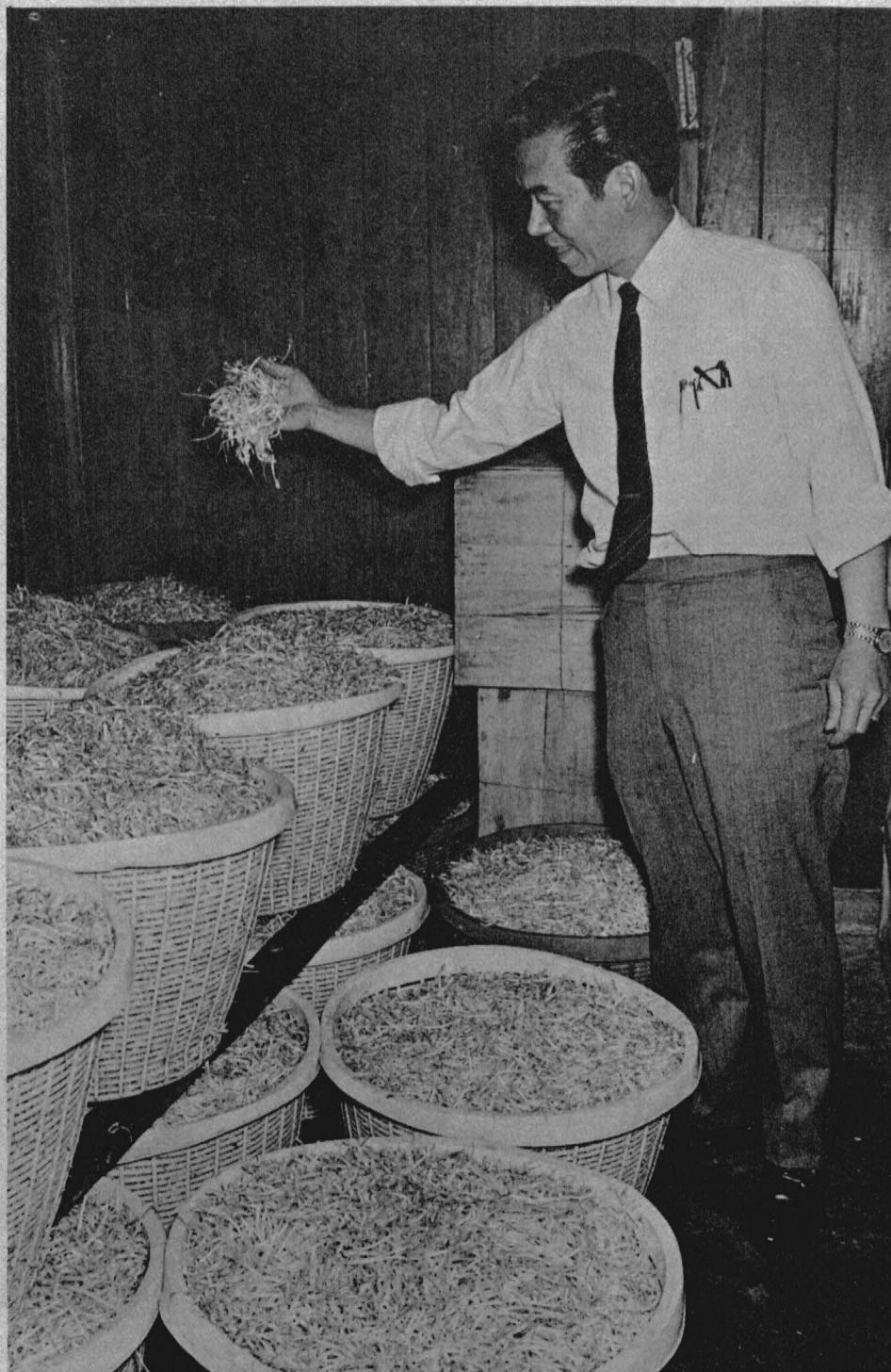
According to Liu, who is married to the former Diana Dahwen Kung, Grad '49, and has three children, he was selling insurance in California when "a friend told me he'd invented a machine for growing bean sprouts. He asked me to

sell it on the East Coast and I did. I sold a couple and then it occurred to me there's a future in this somewhere what with all the Chinese restaurants in New York. I started this business in 1953 and it's been sprouting ever since." He is the largest grower of bean sprouts in the area.

He has two new projects in mind. He is about to expand to new

and modern premises to be built on a nearby parking lot and he also expects to become his own customer. Within a few months he plans to open a restaurant in a building on the Bowery that has been declared a landmark by the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

The restaurant will be named the 1876 after the year the building was built.



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