

Hailed as the, “grandfather of the American pomegranate industry,” George Stiebs’ story is one of dedication, perseverance and hard work. Born in 1930 in Sterling, Colorado, Stieb was raised on his family’s corn, alfalfa and sugar beet farm where he gained an early and formative understanding of the agriculture industry. At the age of 20, after attending the National Railroad School of America, Stieb moved to Bakersfield, California, to take a position with the Southern Pacific Railroad as a station agent and telegraph operator.

Despite working two jobs, Stieb constantly sought out new opportunities. In 1962, eager to return to his farming roots, he purchased a pomegranate and olive farm in Porterville, California. The following year, using two two-by-fours and a hinge, he began juicing pomegranates for jelly. In 1963, he founded Stiebs Citrus, Pomegranate and Kiwi. Seeing the untapped potential of the pomegranate market, he worked to refine his methods and improve quality. To achieve this, he designed and built his own stainless steel automatic juicer to meet the growing needs of his clients.

By 1966, despite still working as both a contractor and a telegraph operator, he had established Stiebs Citrus, Pomegranate and Kiwi as a thriving business. To meet the growing needs of the company, he purchased a warehouse facility in Porterville equipped with refrigeration and cold storage units. By 1975, motivated by the success of the company, Stieb left Southern Pacific to focus on his pomegranate operation. In addition to his pioneering work building Stiebs Citrus, Pomegranate and Kiwi into the leading industrial producer of pomegranate products in North America, George Stieb also supported the local agriculture community by founding a successful pallet manufacturing company and a feed store.

In early 2005, embracing the new paradigm of the modern pomegranate industry, George Stieb entered into a partnership with Brad Miller and Jerry Pantaleo to modernize, streamline and expand the operations, which was renamed Stiebs Pomegranate Products. He and his sons, Larry and Fritz, are active in the day-to-day operations of the company.

