

Cut Flowers Session Q&A

What are the most popular flower varieties demanded?

Varieties and color info can be found at: <https://extension.usu.edu/diverseag/files/2025-usfc-files/Curtis-USUFC-FlowerConsumer.pdf>

Better to market by the stem or bouquet?

Depends on the channel, overall direct to consumer is bouquet.

Do you see many vegetable CSAs including flowers with weekly deliveries?

Yes, that is happening, to what degree I am unsure.

Is there a “fact sheet” that bears the USU clout or endorsement about the benefits of locally grown products?

The university doesn't endorse products, but there are publications that discuss the environmental and economic benefits of local products.

Does place of purchase factor in price? I've noticed my CSA customers are willing to pay premium, but not at a boutique market.

Yes, the market location and channel makes a difference.

Do you think if you compared a grocery store bouquet with one that is from a local farmer there would be differences in the responses?

From a picture I don't think so, but in person definitely.

I am a consumer. How much of what is available is driven by the store buyer's preference as opposed to the grower?

For grocery and florists, yes, they make decisions based on their market information revenue needs.

Do you recommend having business insurance if you're going to have upicks or other on farm events?

We recommend all flower farm business in Utah hold insurance. You can contact the Utah Farm bureau to get more information.

I have a farm in Virginia and am interested in attending Bloom sessions and access to library, and if in Utah attending events. Is membership applicable for me?

Yes! While we do cover some specific to Utah topics that might not apply directly to you, but many of our topics are applicable to all flower farmers. We'd love to have you!

How do you become a grower for Pickling?

Email us info@pickling.com and we will send you all the information you need.

Do you also set the price the collective pays to the individual farmers?

Yes, part of the MOU outlines what the grower will be paid. It is based on a percentage.

Did you have any problems with rodents in your fields or tunnels? How did you manage them?

Voles were the main rodent problem with our high tunnel systems. We utilized some of the recommendations in the fact sheet-

https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2652&context=extension_curall

I know neither flower is asparagus or rhubarb but wonder if you could speculate on the implications for these veggies which don't yield until the 2nd and 3rd year?

Great thought! Delphinium is sort of similar as those perennial vegetable crops, where the first year growth is not as great until subsequent years. We only get a few shorter stems the first season, whereas the more established 2nd year stems are greater.

Sources for cost effective wool mulch? All I have found are processed pellets.

It would cost less than the pellets, sometimes free because right now there is not much market for the wool

Do you think goat grazing pressure could prevent the bindweed challenge?

For annual crops it could be something that could be done to prevent weed pressure before planting, but with perennial crops, it may be a problem, as there is a risk that the crop may be eaten.

Did you do any manual weeding before placing the wool?

Yes, we removed weeds before application. We did not want weeds to interfere with it adhering to the soil after being applied.

Do you think wool would make a good insulator for perennial plants over the winter?

Yes, we observed that temperature was warmer under wool as we moved towards Fall and Winter. We will be looking at mortality rates for each of our treatments as we move into our upcoming season.

Will you be looking at tilling the wool into the soil?

We are not looking at tilling wool into the soil nor know what it may imply to the soil. The fibers may get entangled during tillage, so it may affect equipment.

So, if it persists, how do you apply soil amendments?

They can be applied through irrigation (ferdigation), or the wool itself could be removed since its fiborous and cohesive. May require some work, but its possible when compared to something like wood chips.

Would moths be a problem? They are known to deteriorate wool in clothing.

We did not see moths in our field. The lanolin and manure may deter their feeding. I've observed that insects get entangled in the wool too which would make it hard for them to establish or be a big pest.

The smell: wouldn't that help with soil fertility? the feces.

Yes, the manure would provide a slow release of nutrients on top of the wool fibers breaking down over time.

Can you think of any cut flower that wouldn't benefit from being watered like a dahlia?

Yes, I think most would not benefit from being watered like dahlia. Dahlia likely requires the most water of all (for several reasons). If other cut flowers get that level of water, there would not be a benefit economically or otherwise - it would just be a waste of water