

Flower Farm First Aid + Cultivate Notes + More!



Crop culture and commentary for fresh-cut flower growers

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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

July Farm Update
First Aid—Farm Edition
John Kennedy on Leadership
Books on My Reading List



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July Farm Update





Waiting for the field blooms to start this year is like watching paint dry. But the greenhouse lisianthus have been bridging the gap between peonies and field dahlias.

July has a way of reminding us that flower farming is equal parts perseverance and optimism. July can sometimes feel like the season of delayed gratification. We have invested countless hours into planting, weeding and nurturing our crops, yet many of the rewards from those efforts are still waiting just over the horizon.

Here at Forget Me Not Farms, we find ourselves endlessly hoeing rows of dahlias, managing weeds that seem to grow overnight, and navigating yet another season of erratic rainfall. It seems that when rain finally arrives, it all comes down in buckets. I often find myself reminiscing about the soft, gentle all-day rains of my childhood. Whatever happened to those?

These downpours leave us with a lot of work to divert water away from our rows of plastic rather than wishing for more of it. We're digging trenches, troubleshooting broken field tiles and doing our best to keep up with Mother Nature's latest curveballs. This weather pattern continues to keep us on our toes.

July also gets tiring. Our season at Forget Me Not Farms is a long one—we grow flowers nearly year-round and harvest from February through December. It is truly a marathon, and summer is undoubtedly the busiest and craziest season of all. Some days, it feels like we are operating more of a mud farm than a flower farm. Perhaps many of you are feeling the same way in July—equal parts exhausted, hopeful and eager to finally see the fields begin to reward all the labor that has gone into them.

Yet despite the mud and occasional frustrations, there is plenty of excitement on the horizon. Our outdoor dahlia fields are beginning to set buds, and it is a refreshing change of pace. Honestly, these small wins are what keep me going. The first dahlia buds, a healthy field after weeks of challenges, or seeing a crop finally come into its own after months of care—those moments are why we do this.

Tater and I have high hopes for the abundance that awaits later this summer. Perhaps that is one of the greatest lessons farming teaches us—that optimism is not ignoring the challenges before us, but choosing to find joy in the first dahlia bud despite the challenges.



In spite of all the rain we've been able to plant our successions (somewhat) on time.
This is our last succession of outdoor field annuals for 2026 we planted last week.

In addition to our field production tasks, Tater and I are also turning our attention to some of the less glamorous, but equally important, responsibilities of running a farm. July marks the time of year when we review our liability, auto and asset insurance policies, as well as complete our annual workers' compensation audit.

While these paper-pushing tasks can easily be overshadowed by harvest and field work, they provide an important opportunity to reflect on the health and safety of our operation. Over the years, I've learned that these administrative responsibilities are every bit as important as harvesting and planting flowers, and they are tasks that only Tater and I can do as owners of the farm.

As we review policies that protect our land, equipment and infrastructure, it serves as a reminder that our most valuable asset is ultimately the people who make our farms possible. These annual evaluations prompt us to revisit our safety standards, emergency procedures and communication protocols. Believe me, there is much more to farm safety than simply having a first aid kit!

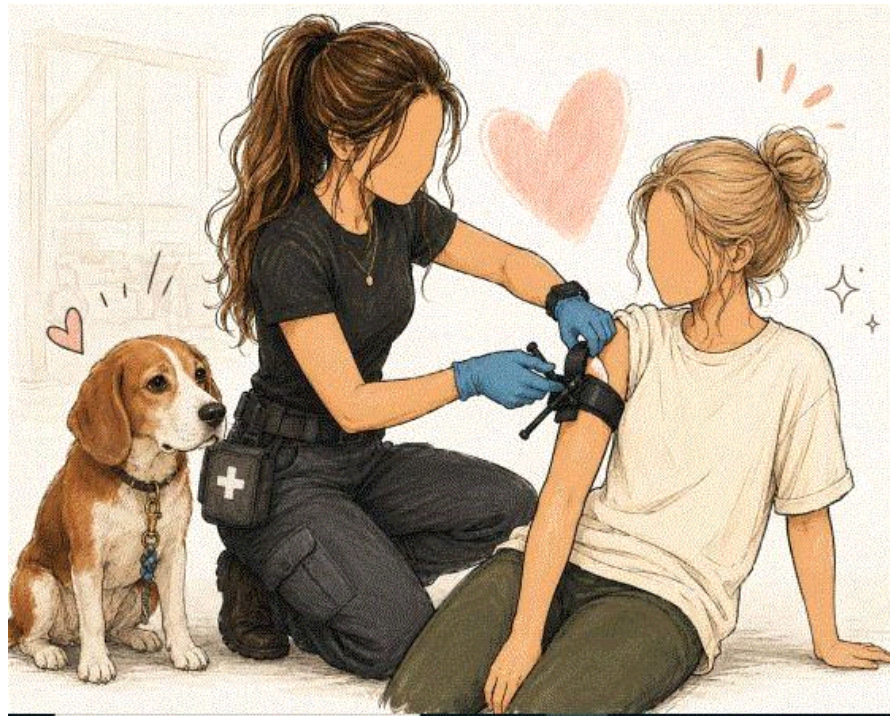
As Tater and I look ahead, there is much to be excited about. By the time this issue reaches your inbox, I will be at Cultivate—my favorite industry event of the year! I feel incredibly fortunate to live in the Midwest, with Columbus, Ohio, being only a short drive from the farm.

I always leave Cultivate feeling inspired by the people, ideas and innovations that continue to move our industry forward. If you'll be attending this year, please don't hesitate to stop and say hello. I would love the opportunity to catch up and hear how your season is unfolding. Here's hoping for a little less rain, a few more sunny days, and plenty of flowers in the weeks ahead.

In this edition of *Bloom Beat*, we're talking about farm first aid, leadership development and more. With all that being said, let's talk shop!



Farm First Aid Essentials- Flower Farm Edition



A little practice for your first aid skills can make all the difference in an emergency!
Brush up before you need them.

Every July, Tater and I complete our workman's comp audit. We are lucky that we didn't have any accidents last year. But whenever we do this, I think about what possible things could happen on the farm and how we can better protect the people who make our businesses possible. Farm safety and proactive protocols are paramount and should always be our first priority. However, farming is inherently unpredictable, and despite our best efforts, accidents can still happen. In those moments, preparedness matters. A few basic first aid skills, emergency contacts posted in visible locations, and a clear action plan can turn a frightening situation into one that is manageable until help arrives. Below are some skills that I think every flower farmer should brush up on. This isn't an exhaustive list but it's a great starting point to brush up on some of your first aid knowledge.

How to Control Severe Bleeding

Remember the **ABC's of bleeding control**.

Alert 911. After ensuring you aren't in immediate danger, the first step is to call 911 for help.

Bleeding Assessment. While you are waiting for the ambulance, identify where the bleed is.

Control the Bleed. After finding the bleed, apply pressure. It's a simple but effective solution. Use your hand to apply direct and firm pressure to the wound with any available cloth or towel. Push hard and maintain pressure for a minimum of 20 minutes or until help arrives. If the wound

is severe and/or large you may need to pack the wound with cloth to decrease bleeding. If the bleeding is severe and on an extremity a tourniquet might be needed. If you need a refresher on tourniquets, check out this [VIDEO](#) from Mayo Clinic.

Make sure your first aid kit includes a commercial tourniquet and trauma dressings.

Recognizing Heat Illness (before it becomes an emergency)

We're in the thick of summer and that means we are working through high heat and humidity. Below are some early symptoms of heat exhaustion. Heat illness can be fatal if not treated immediately. According to [OSHA](#), here are the protocols and strategies to identify and treat heat related illness and emergencies:

Symptoms of Heat Illness

- Headache or nausea
- Weakness or dizziness
- Elevated body temperature
- Thirst
- Decreased urine output

Symptoms of Heat-Related Emergencies

- Abnormal thinking or behavior
- Slurred speech
- Seizures
- Fainting
- Heavy sweating or hot dry skin

Heat exhaustion can progress into heat stroke, which is a life-threatening emergency. According to the [Center for Disease Control](#), when heat stroke occurs the body temperature can rise to 106 F within 10 to 15 minutes. Make sure you and your employees are drinking water consistently and taking breaks in the shade. Providing continuous access to drinking water and encouraging workers to drink at least 8 ounces every 15 minutes when conditions are above 90F. It is also important to ensure that water intake does not exceed 6 cups per hour. Plan strenuous work for the earliest part of the day. If excessive heat is expected for extended periods allow workers to gradually acclimate to the heat over a course of days. OSHA recommends 50% of a normal work load the first day of excessive heat, increasing to 60% the second day, 80% on the third day and 100% the fourth day.

First aid for heat-related illness:

- Call 911 immediately
- Cool worker with water or ice
- Remove unnecessary clothing and give cool water to drink
- Stay with worker until help arrives. Do NOT leave them alone.

Eye Injuries

When a foreign object enters the eye it's incredibly irritating. In our area of work we're at risk for this. Dust, fertilizer and even a rogue sunflower stem can cause serious eye injury. Make sure saline eye wash is in your first aid kit. Better yet, an eye washing station is a great safety investment. The best prevention is investing in protective eye wear that fits appropriately and is clean. Another important note: store eyeglasses in dust-free containers.

Below are some tips for basic eye injury first aid from The University of Maine:

Let natural tears wash out specks and particles in the eye. Do not rub the eyes. For injuries around the eye, apply a cold compress for 15 minutes and every hour as needed to reduce pain and swelling. If there is discoloration to the tissue around the eye, contact a

physician.

For chemicals, flush the eye continuously for at least 15 minutes. See a physician and bring along the label and container of the contaminant.

For eye punctures and cuts, lightly bandage the eye to keep additional contaminants at bay. See a physician immediately! Do not remove the foreign body on your own!

Knowing When NOT to Move Someone

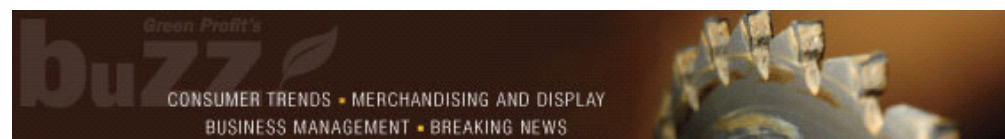
The natural instinct is to help immediately, but when it comes to falls, head and spinal injuries, moving a person can cause more injury, especially if you do not have the proper tools and training to stabilize the head and neck and move them safely. But there are exceptions:

Only move an injured person if leaving them poses a greater threat to life than moving them. Examples include fire, chemical spill, an actively collapsing structure or risk of explosion. If there is electricity involved, turn power off at the source before approaching the victim.

If you have to move someone, support the head, neck and spine. Never lift a person off the ground—drag them head-first to safety.

Another important note: if an accident happened on your farm today, how long would it take for someone to find a first aid kit? And would that kit have everything needed for someone to respond to an emergency effectively? Ironically, accidents don't usually happen in convenient locations. One of my homework assignments next week is to make sure every John Deere Gator and pole barn has a first aid kit. Remember, a first aid kit is only as effective as the people using it. Looking over the resources above every quarter is time well spent. Also when a kit is used the contents need to be replaced and expiration dates need to be checked.

While I hope we never have to use these skills, knowing what to do in those first few critical moments may be one of the most important investments we can make in the health and safety of our staff. We invest a lot of resources into protecting the crops and farm infrastructure, but we need to do the same for our people who make our farms possible.



Leadership Development—John Kennedy's Take



Strong teams are at the heart of every resilient operation. But it takes impeccable leadership skills to build them and maintain them.

One of my favorite parts about Cultivate is the top-notch speaker lineup. I've had the pleasure of listening to John Kennedy speak a few times and it's always a novel and insightful experience. John has a unique take on improving businesses. He believes that successful and enduring businesses rely on strong leadership. The management team "sets the table" for the entire organization. The challenge is that some executive teams are managers, not leaders.

What's the difference, you ask?

According to John, leaders lean towards people—they start with *why?* and inspire people in the organization to be a part of the why. Managers are more tactical in nature and focus on deliverables and day-to-day operations. Managers are more focused on process while leaders are more focused on vision and leading people to the goal. Leaders need to have management skills as well, but it's also important to have a grasp on the bigger picture. Below are some key points from John's talk this year that stopped me in my tracks. I think they are helpful when evaluating your own leadership skills and the skills of your farm management team:

Begin with the end in mind (love the Stephen Covey reference here!). Everyone on your team needs to know what excellence looks like. Unity in leadership is critical because everyone on staff needs to be singing from the same hymnal. When everyone knows and follows the core values and mission of the organization, your business can achieve excellence.

Consistency in service. Everyone on your team that interacts with customers should have the same standard for customer service. Examples: if the farm has a goal to email and respond to wedding quotes in less than 24 hours, all customer service personnel should be held to this standard. Another example for production standards is all 1 gal. weigela are the same size and

quality no matter what field they were grown in. When standards are communicated effectively to all personnel, all employees know what “winning” looks like.

Mindset of a leader—speed limit. Nobody goes past the leader. If the leader is moving at 45 mph then usually other personnel are moving at 35 mph or less. If the leader is having a slow day, then usually everyone has a slow day. You set the pace—and tone—for the day.

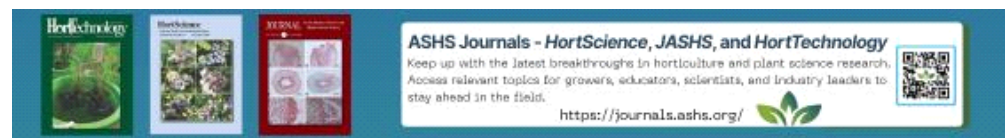
Finally, as leaders, we have a choice in the attitude we will embrace for the day. To emphasize the importance of attitude, John concluded the session with this quote by pastor Chuck Swindoll:

The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failure, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company ... a church ... a home.

The remarkable thing is we have a choice everyday regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past ... we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% of how I react to it. And so it is with you ... we are in charge of our attitudes.

Trust me, I want to keep my one string in harmony with the farm and the crew, even on the days when weeds grow faster than flowers, equipment breaks down at the worst possible moment, or Mother Nature decides to rewrite the plan entirely. Farming has a way of humbling me and reminding me that while I can't control every circumstance, I can choose the lens through which I view them. My goal this season is to approach more of these everyday challenges with a broader lens of grace, patience and perspective.

What "one string" are you playing this season, and is it creating harmony or discord in your greenhouse, farm or home? Tater and I would love to hear from you. Drop us a line [HERE](#).



Notes From Cultivate: Books on My Reading List



Here's a throwback photo from Cultivate'17 with one of my favorite people in the entire world, Dr. Bridget Behe.
Every time I come to this event I leave inspired, informed and recharged for the rest of the season.

Day one of Cultivate'26 is officially under my belt, and as always, my notebook is overflowing with ideas. One of my favorite things about attending Cultivate is the incredible brain trust of information gathered in one place. There is something energizing about spending a few days surrounded by growers, industry professionals and business leaders who are all passionate about helping our industry move forward.

Beyond the educational sessions and the trade show floor, one of my favorite takeaways from this year's conference has been the number of book recommendations shared by speakers. I always enjoy learning what has influenced other leaders and what resources have helped shape their perspectives on communication, leadership, business and personal growth. I've added several new titles to my reading list and thought I would share them in hopes that they may inspire you as well. As growers, we often spend so much time investing in our crops and businesses that we forget to invest in ourselves. Sometimes the best ideas come from stepping away from the field for an evening and opening a good book. Remember, you're not growing just flowers, you're expanding your horizons, too.

From Strength to Strength

Arthur C. Brooks

A thoughtful exploration of how success, purpose and happiness evolve throughout life and how individuals can transition from achievement to deeper fulfillment. I was told this book can be especially helpful if you are navigating the succession planning process for your farm.

The 6 Types of Working Genius

Patrick Lencioni

Introduces a framework for understanding the types of work that energize and frustrate individuals, helping leaders build stronger and more effective teams.

Strong Ground

Brené Brown

A guide to grounded leadership that explores courage, vulnerability and the importance of remaining centered amid uncertainty and change.

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

Stephen R. Covey

A timeless classic outlining seven principles that help individuals become more effective leaders, communicators, and decision-makers. I've read this book a few times. And I always get something new from it every time.

Riding the Blue Train: A Leadership Plan for Explosive Growth

Jeffrey Kuhn

Challenges readers to adopt a "blue train" mindset by focusing on possibilities, innovation and solutions rather than becoming consumed by problems and limitations.

Have you read any of the books listed? Are there any that you absolutely loved? Is there a title that has changed the way you lead your business, communicate with your team, or approach life? Tater and I would **love to hear from you** and are always looking for recommendations to add to our ever-growing reading list.

Until next time!



Lindsay Daschner (and Tater)
Editor-at-Large—*Bloom Beat*
Owner—Forget-Me-Not Farms

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