

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Flower Fare

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If you've read our Bloom Beat newsletter, then you know editor Lindsay Daschner is a passionate and knowledgeable cut flower grower who runs Forget Me Not Farms in Ottawa Lake, Michigan, with her husband, Rich. And that she's always got her right-hand-beagle, Tater, keeping her company.

We got a chance to pay a visit to Forget Me Not Farms in early April to chat with Lindsay in person (and give Tater lots of head pats).

Donning our most reliable mud boots, we walked the half-acre of under-cover cut flowers she grows for local florist and grocery store customers. Lindsay and Rich started developing the business in 2016 while she was working at a cut lily farm, transitioning to their own farm full-time in 2018.



If you're looking for the "typical" cut flower carnation, alstroemeria or roses, Forget Me Not Farms is not the place to find them. Lindsay grows specialty cuts that would be considered on the more niche-y side. She does grow snapdragons and matthiola (stock), but she also offers unique colors of anemones and ranunculus, which includes butterfly ranunculus (inset)—a type we've never heard of or seen before. She also grows pansies to use as cuts, as well as hanging baskets of scented geraniums, which her florists like to use as a foliage component.

"Florists get bored with what's on the market," Lindsay said. "Anything that has aromatic value, people love."

One of her major pain points is supply, which is why she can only get the butterfly ranunculus from tissue culture. Lindsay and her small team have also been building up their own stock of heirloom cut flower mums for the past two years because liners of these unusual and often-forgotten varieties can go for as much as \$7 a piece! Her goal is to bridge the gap between the fall and spring season (she wants to offer her cut mums late in the season, during Thanksgiving).

I think I earned her admiration when I walked by a bed of ranunculus and reached out to squeeze one of the heads. "You're a flower petter, too?!" she exclaimed. The next thing I knew, I had a pair of pruners in my hand and was helping her harvest armloads of Butterfly Artemis ranunculus.

It was fun cutting, bunching and banding bouquets of beautiful flowers while listening to Lindsay talk about her production regimes and how the season was faring. I'm definitely not as quick on the draw with the pruners as she is, but I got a brief sense of how it is working with Lindsay and Tater at the farm. Bending over beds of flowers with a

pocketful of rubber bands at the ready is her daily routine.

“You’re a real flower farer when you find rubber bands in your dryer,” she said with a laugh. **GT**

