

First ever 'mini flower farm' to appear at Chelsea Flower Show

Trade association Flowers from the Farm makes the case for small UK growers



Flowers from the Farm's plan for Chelsea Flower Show's first mini flower farm. Sketch by Penny Dommett.

The RHS Chelsea Flower Show has been the highlight of the UK's horticultural calendar for over a century. This year's edition on 19–23 May will feature, for the first time, a miniature flower farm, built and planted by the campaigning trade association Flowers from the Farm.

"This is a huge opportunity for us as growers and business people to demonstrate the value of cut flowers to both the economy and to the ecology of the British Isles."

– Georgie Newbery, flower farmer and external chair of Flowers from the Farm

A grower's flower field

The Flowers from the Farm installation will occupy a 20 x 15ft plot in the Great Pavilion – the heart of Chelsea Flower Show. Brought to life by a team of volunteers from the Flowers from the Farm membership, the mini flower farm will be a living showcase of the varieties of crops that the UK's flower farmers can grow in May, and a demonstration of the spectacular floristry that can be created from them.

Taking advantage of the plot's generous size, the Flowers from the Farm team will employ block planting to create massed banks of British flowers, forming a loose swirl inspired by a Fibonacci spiral (the pattern in which all flowers open). There will be beds of individual cut flower varieties framed in foliage, as well as wild-flower corners, with all plants used in the design also featured on the floristry stand. The result will be a richly layered reconstruction of a British flower farm in miniature, vibrantly alive with colour.

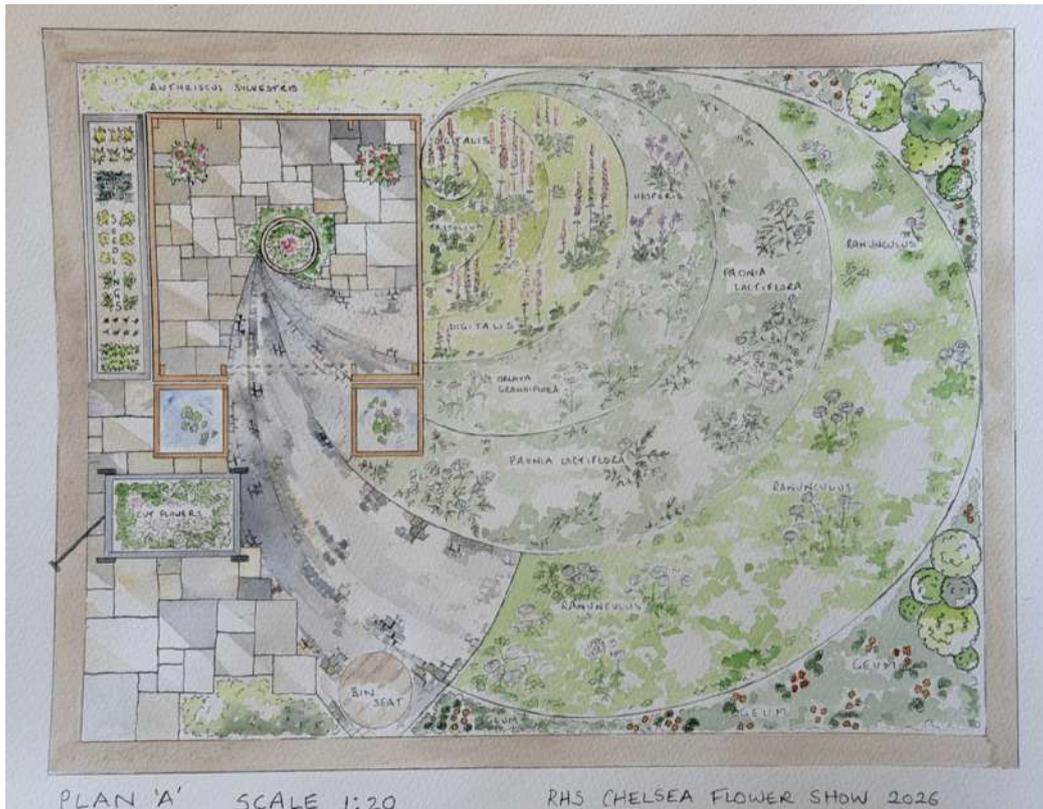
The flower selection includes ranunculus (the genus to which buttercups belong), making their Chelsea debut, alongside other crops such as foxgloves, orlaya, peonies and geums, creating a garden display that the Flower Show audience will likely never have seen before.

The floral mise-en-scène will be complemented using patterned fabrics by Guy Goodfellow Collection, whose botanically inspired design, Rendlesham, will be featured on the aprons of the Flowers from the Farm team attending the garden. The 'farm' will be planted in Sustain compost, and will be returned to Sustain after the show, where it will feature as a centrepiece growing space among the compost heaps.

A truly sustainable industry

By presenting a flower farm in microcosm, Flowers from the Farm hopes to encourage people to look to British flower farms as suppliers of cut flowers, rather than turning to imports, while also advocating for small-scale commercial flower growing as a financially and environmentally sustainable use of land.

Sustainably growing flowers for sale is one of the rare commercial activities with a net positive environmental impact, improving biodiversity and soil fertility, and sustaining ecosystems by providing habitats and forage for key pollinators. UK flower farms support hyperlocal supply chains, and significant substantial carbon savings compared to international imports.



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With growing interest in alternatives to more-for-the-sake-of-more business models, and increasing numbers of people looking for viable and rewarding mid-life career pivots, Flowers from the Farm is making the case for flower farming as an excellent option. The path to market is largely unobstructed, too – if there were a flower farmer in every one of the UK's 6,000 villages they would have to grow over 350,000 stems each season to satisfy current demand, so there is little danger of being squeezed out of the market by competitive pressure.

"When I started growing flowers for sale 15 years ago I couldn't get florists to buy from me. Now I have enquiries from event florists saying their couples are insisting their weddings are all British flowers and wanting to know if they can buy my entire stock."

– Georgie Newbery, flower farmer and external chair of Flowers from the Farm

By showcasing the possibilities of flower farming in Britain under the country's biggest and brightest horticultural spotlight, Flowers from the Farm aims to inspire visitors not only to buy British cut flowers, but also, perhaps, consider using their land to grow them.



Flowers from the Farm's Board of Directors: Jenna Walker, Sarah Wilson, Georgie Newbery, Natasha Midgley, Cissy Bullock, Olivia Wilson, Heather Ward, Oliver Jones

Notes to editor

For more information about Flowers from the Farm and their Chelsea Flower Show Grand Pavilion garden, please contact Tori Dance via flowers@zetteler.co.uk

About Flowers from the Farm

Flowers from the Farm is the UK trade association for cut-flower growers, representing over 1,000 members nationwide. Committed to promoting sustainable, agroecological growing practices, it empowers members to thrive while supporting a financially and environmentally sustainable flower industry.

flowersfromthefarm.co.uk

About Guy Goodfellow Collection

The Guy Goodfellow Collection has evolved from bespoke fabric designs created for interior projects, to a considered range of weaves, prints, embroideries and wallpapers. Inspired by antique textiles, the collection is constructed to render the handmade nature of the original documents.

guygoodfellowcollection.com

