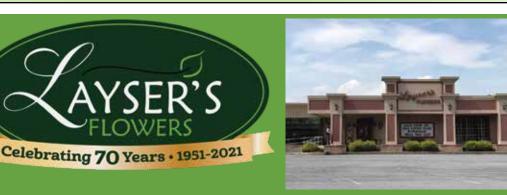


JAL



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Layser's Flowers is blooming with anticipation for its 70th spring season. The wholesale and retail operation that claims to "grow everything under the sun since 1951" boasts 35 production greenhouses bursting with blooms and foliage for one of the floriculture industry's busiest times of the year.

Mother's Day is always the busiest time of year. That's due not only to the holiday, but also to the spring planting season. While "flowers" is front and center in the business' name, the hottest seller is the Boston fern. Layser's grew 30,000 of them this year, with 20,000 taking up an entire greenhouse.

When Donald & Frances Layser started the business seven decades ago, they focused on growing starts for markets. The demand for flowers quickly took over with seasonal blooms. The business is currently run by Steve Layser, their son.

Layser's also sells vegetable plants, sales of which boomed last spring when gardening became a popular pastime of homebound people. Foliage sales also surged too as some of that demand came from people who wanted something nice in the background of their video calls.

Many of the greenhouses feature relatively new technology such as automatic watering, under-bench radiators and shade curtains. Deciding which flowers to grow in all those greenhouses is a challenge. Layser's business is 80% to 85% wholesale, and plants go to Pennsylvania, Maryland and New Jersey.

Seeds and starts have to be bought well ahead of the marketing season. Boston ferns start in August to be ready for spring and Christmas poinsettias are ordered in January and planted in June. With so much lead time, it's hard to predict which varieties will be popular when it's time to market the plants.

The flowers might not change, but the varieties change rapidly. Plants are started as seeds, plug trays and unrooted cuttings. The bulbs and cuttings are ordered from all over the world.

Layser's Flowers employs 35 year-round employees, many of whom have worked there for over 30 years. The farm also has about 10 seasonal employees to help in busy times..



Along with its two retail greenhouses, the business has a store that sells gifts and garden items. Steve's wife Lu, runs this side of the operation. Come and take a stroll through the greenhouses and see the variety of plants and gifts available.

Article courtesy of Stephanie Speicher, Lancaster Farming

East Lebanon/ West Berks Communities

May 2021 Issue #52

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is a postcard research center for the study, display and use of picture postcards that have, over the years, been recording the culture, social life and customs, and the history of the United States and countries that border the USA in North and Central America. Since 2010, the Institute is aligned with the University of Maryland Library system that maintains the National Trust for Historic Preservation Library where the postcards are being sent to be catalogued online for wider access and use in research.

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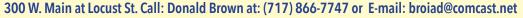
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