

Peony Research

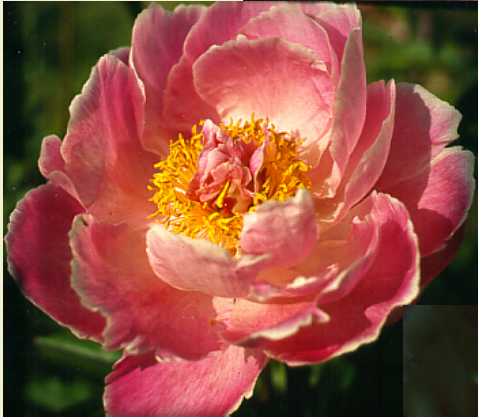


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Basis for Research:

Alaska peonies unique in
world markets

– Bloom times late June
through August



Two areas of interest



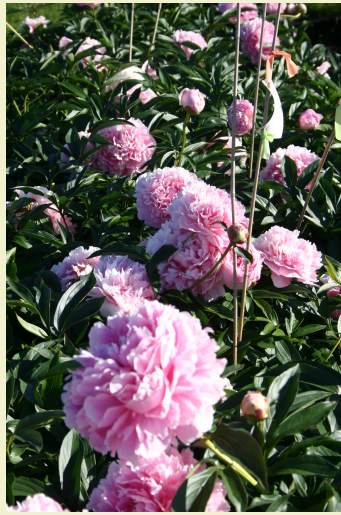
- Field cultivation techniques
- Market research- does anybody out there want Alaska peonies?





Peony Cultivation Research

- Cultivar evaluations
- Soil amendments
- Spacing
- Shading to delay snowmelt and flowering
- Winter mulching/snowmaking
- Disease/insect pest monitoring



Cultivar (cultivated varieties) evaluations

- Begun in 2001
- 30 cultivars
 - Late season
 - Stem length > 24 inches
 - Recommended as cut flowers



Planting

- South slope
- Fairbanks silt loam soils
- Overhead irrigation yr 1, 2 then trickle
- pH 6.4
- Landscape fabric
- Fertilizer 10-20-20s lb/100 sq ft



Rejects

- Died
 - ‘Nancy Nichols’
 - ‘Vivid Rose’
- Poor performers (< 3 flowers per plant)



- ‘Gardenia’
- ‘Better Times’
- ‘Mons. Jules Elie’
- ‘Raspberry Sundae’

Top 5 performers



'Dr. Alexander Fleming'



'Duchess de Nemours'



'Felix Crouse'



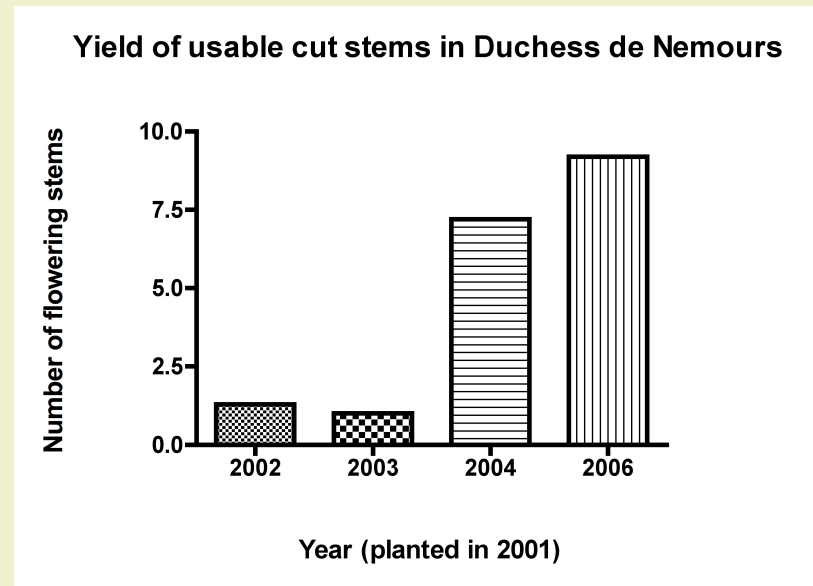
'David Harum'



'Sarah Bernhardt'

Top 5 cultivars

- Tallest, strongest stems
- 7- 9 blooms per plant
- Double or semi double
- Flower quality



Spacing & soil amendments



- -began in 2002
- 12, 17, 24 inches between plants in rows
- Silt loam
- Lemeta peat
- Garden compost

Making snow for winter protection

- Lots of water
- Temps below 25°F
- Shut off = freeze up
- Time consuming
- Compressor + Power washer + wand
- Mid winter thaw = disaster



Botrytis blight





Aphids



Lygus (stink) bug



Thrips



Peony budblast

Peony Growers

- How does the rest of the world grow peonies?



Oregon Roses, Inc. Forest Grove, OR



Jense Farm, British Columbia



Adelman Peonies, Salem, OR.

Peony growing

- Few constants
 - Sarah, Duchess, Red Charm
 - Plant spacing
 - Hilling
 - Trellising
 - Time of harvest
 - Irrigation
 - Fertilizers



To trellis
or not?

On-farm sorting shed & cooler



Peony Markets

Is there a market for Alaska peonies?

How do we process them for market?

Where do we sell them?

Can we make a million bucks?



Wholesale flower distributors

Los Angeles

San Francisco

Portland

Omeo Peonies, New Zealand

Flamingo Holdings, Ltd.
UK



Mayesh Wholesale
Flowers, L.A.



Oregon

Grower

Farmer's markets

CSA

Ebay

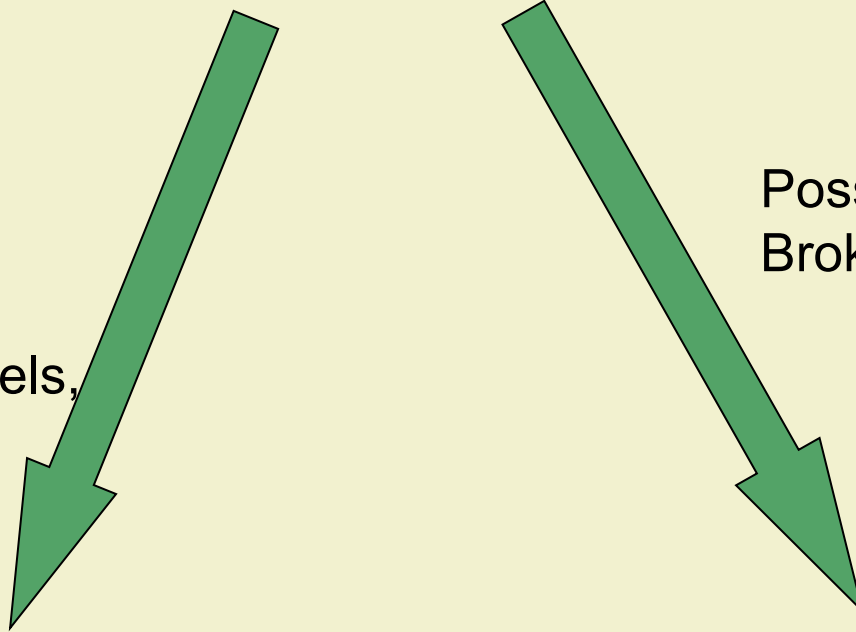
Contracts

(ad agencies, hotels,
florists)

Possibly through
Broker, Co-op

Direct to
Consumer

Wholesale
Flower Markets



Trial run with Mayesh Wholesale Flowers, L.A.



Recycled rose boxes

Gold Streak (33 lb)

240 stems

Mayesh said yes,
...and they pay shipping!

\$1.00 - \$1.50 per stem = 2-3 x
going rate



Alaska Peony Growers?

- 35 interested individuals and businesses
 - Fairbanks, Eielson, Delta, Mat Valley, Kenai, Homer, Nenana, North Pole

- 12 already have peonies planted
 - 25 - 3000 plants



Main issues



- Getting flowers to markets
 - How to sell, where to sell
 - How much will the market pay?
 - On-farm coolers
 - Methods of packing, storing
 - Possible marketing co-op





Can we grow marketable peonies as cut flowers?

Yes!

Is there a market for Alaska-grown peonies?

Yes!

Can a grower make a million bucks?

Alaska Peony Growers Blog

akpeonygrowers.blogspot.com

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