LEAVENWORTH S.

Basehor flower farmer offers unique experience for visitors



Jeanette Klamm grows U-pick flowers at her Basehor flower maze. Photo Credit: Beth Kornegay

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Growing up on a farm, Jeanette Klamm saw firsthand that sometimes trial and error was the best way to learn if something would grow. Now in her third year of flower farming in her own cut-flower maze, Klamm continues to refine what flowers she grows.

Planning for each summer season begins while the ground is still frozen and snow covers the landscape. Based on what flowers did well the previous year, Klamm researches new varieties of flowers she'd like to grow in addition to ones that performed well in the past. She starts putting seeds in starter trays in January and February under growing lights in her basement.

"I learn something every year and I talk to people in the flower farming industry and do lots of research. Once I start planting seeds, I tend to plant more than I think I will need just in case all of them don't make it," she said.

In addition to the beautiful flowers and fragrant herbs, Klamm's flower maze is home to several types of pollinators including a variety of butterflies that lay their eggs on the leaves of certain types of flowers. Those eggs develop into caterpillars that feed on the leaves of the flowers, later create cocoons, and eventually emerge as butterflies. Buckeye butterflies are especially happy in the area of the maze where snapdragons grow.

Because her flowers are becoming more well-established, many of those flowers re-seed the area and grow the next year. Celosia, rudbeckia and sunflowers come up in the same area or spread to other parts of the maze with the help of the wind or garden visitors.

Klamm's U-pick flower maze is open to the public and she offers a group sip-and-snip in which guests can bring their own food and drinks, pick flowers and enjoy time in the country. She provides snippers, 32-ounce cups to collect flowers and flower food. The cost is \$25 for each cup, which can make several bouquets. Her flower maze has also served as a beautiful backdrop for bachelorette parties and family photos.

While the U-pick flower bouquets are popular, Klamm also offers the service of custom bouquets. For customers who might not have the time or talent to make their own bouquet but have a specific color scheme or flower type in mind, Klamm will make the bouquet and have it ready for the customer to pick up at a designated time.

Last month, Klamm had someone show up early one morning while she was still out watering the flowers. The person said that she was getting married in three days and the person who had committed to providing her flowers had backed out at the last minute and wondered if Klamm might be able to help. While she hadn't put together any flowers for a bridal party in the past, Klamm was able to create boutonnieres, wristlets, table centerpieces and the bride's bouquet from

flowers she had grown.

"Growing flowers is the greatest experiment for me. I grew a few houseplants but that was it, so I went from growing nearly nothing to learning more about flower farming each year," said Klamm.

Learn more about the hours and varieties of flowers available at www.KlammFlowers.com, on Instagram at jklamm or on Facebook. The flower maze is located at 15983 166th St. and is open seasonally during weekends and some evenings during the week. Contact Klamm through Facebook or her website for photography session scheduling and pricing.