Workshop Title:
Quality Blooms Start the Moment You Harvest

Speaker:
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Executive Summary:
Continued from "Keep Your Flowers Blooming with Succession Planning and Season Extension". Tania explains how and when to harvest in order to receive exceptional blooms. Details on specific varieties are explained.

Detailed Notes:
Quality blooms start the moment you harvest.
Don't do sales! Even at the end of the day!! Even if someone asks!!!
BOGO: Buy one, get the one you bought ☺

Your grand plan:
You've planned out successions, now they are blooming for you.
Where do you cut? When do you cut?

What to do:
Schedule field walks. If you have a couple of employees, bring them with you. Early morning, noon, or end of day - make time for this. You may be surprised: *'Holy crap - that came into bloom?!".* Remember your notebook and date everything.

"If I cut this bud in the early stages, will it open for when I bring it to the customers?".
Start cutting the flowers for yourself early on so you get a better idea when to cut them.

When customers ask: *"How long will they last?"* ... It depends on how you store them… or until you replenish them!

Having a full bloom flower is not always necessary. Unopened blooms add texture to bouquets (especially dahlias - you don't want that eye to be completely opened). No flower is worth 50 cents. Even an unopened dahlia should stay the same price as an opened because it has more texture.

Stem length - Important for florists.

Tag flowers so you know where they are going, and so you know when to change the water.

Keep your harvest in the shade and don't over crowd your buckets.

Don't sell a bent neck even if it as a perfect flower.

Don't sell abnormal development - save those for your table display on your Instagram posts.

Chrysanthemums (mums): Heirloom mums are amazing. Don't tell customers you have mums or they will think the ones they sell at Sobeys and Kent. The Canadian Flower Facebook group is the only place in Canada to get the heirloom mums.

Dahlias: Dinner plate dahlias are not worth it, so get the flat back dahlias. The rounded out dahlias are not going to last.

Zinnias : Need to be cut at a flat back stage. If you cut beforehand, it'll never open up for you. Rounded back flowers can be used for Instagram and photography.

Tulips: Harvest with bulb attached for optimum storage. Dry pack, dark, and lay flat. Put them in a black container. This will allow you to save them for 2 weeks.

Mature stages in flowers: When cut too soon, the stem may not be developed and could fall over/bend.

Persian cress and crinkled cress look good in seed stage.

Where to cut?
Right above a node, especially in a branchy type flower. In a dahlia, you need to cut below a node.

Never put a wet flower in the cooler. Bring them inside and put a fan on really far away but close enough to dry them out before putting them in the cooler.

5g buckets, un-galvanized for holding and transport.

Tall stems: hard to find tall plastic buckets, do not overcrowd and always have in tall buckets. Therefore, tall buckets are usually galvanized. Use craft paper to separate flowers when they are in buckets. Make sure craft paper covers over all the flowers. Try not to hide them too much but to protect them. Craft paper is used instead of plastic because plastic can make the flowers sweat.

Make sure you have a good work space and sheers that last. Tania cut hair for 20 years so she really appreciates a good pair of shears.

CoolBots work really well and are easy to install for a refrigeration unit. Racks in a cooler are ideal. Keep the flowers off the floor because people might brush up against them.

Especially cosmos, wrap them so they stay straight.

Know when to pinch - but who has time for that? Cut the mother, use the mother for jars; this way the other flowers branch out and you get longer stems there.

Even at the market, make sure you keep them out of the sun, rain, and wind. Secure the blooms because customers will take them and throw them around.