

- *THE ROUGH GRAFT* -

NEWSLETTER OF SOLARIS FARMS, REEDSVILLE, WI



Winter 2021 | Vol. 2 , Iss.1



While things have certainly slowed to a glacial pace outside, we've been busy with many of our indoor-oriented tasks... not least of which has been making a great selection of new introductions is available for 2021. Now that the new catalogue has been live for about a month, some of these plants have sold out, however, excellent cultivars do remain available which are highlighted below. At the same time, some plants are newly available for fall shipment this year. The farm will again be open for appointments and more information to make signup easier is outlined here.

INSIDE THE WINTER EDITION

New Introduction Highlights - 1

Martagon Lilies -5

Scheduling Appointments - 6



INTRODUCING...

This year, a good number of new cultivars were introduced through Solaris Farms - here are some highlights:

If you have been waiting to shop (or even if you forgot!), I have good news for you! Though some stellar plants have sold out, there are *still* a number of cultivars you can get into your gardens this year. A vast majority of them are woody peonies, though we do have a few exceptional daylily seedlings which will be future registrations. While die-hard herbaceous peony collectors might be a bit disappointed by the lack of offerings remaining (many of those sold out almost immediately on January 1st!), we strongly encourage you to give at least one of these woody peonies a try. A common misconception is woody peonies (tree peonies) are difficult to grow - nay, woodies are just as easy as herbaceous peonies, and any of these are certain to get you hooked. Once you grow a few woody peonies for a couple of years the fever will have set in, and you'll be clamoring to get more of them into the garden landscape! Try one or two and begin a new addiction.

Big Sombrero



Big Sombrero

Let's start off with a bang. Speaking from experience, this plant is KILLER. If you are interested in growing yellow peonies and have others in your garden like Lemon Chiffon or Bartzella but don't yet have a nice yellow woody peony, this one is a must have. The flowers are huge and substantial, and in our opinion, one of the best clear yellows available anywhere. The plants themselves are compact for a woody peony, so it is also great for the gardener who is short on space. Likely, Big Sombrero owes this characteristic to the cold Wisconsin climate, and may prove to be a larger specimen in more forgiving regions. Nonetheless, the flowers are striking, no matter the overall size of the shrub.

Cloud Atlas

If you have a soft spot for white flowers, and with regard to lutea hybrid tree peonies, they are relatively uncommon. Cloud Atlas is not completely white, but nearly so with a hint of pink blush upon opening - then completely white after a day in the sun. The flowers, like many other lutea hybrids are waxier and with greater substance than what you would see in a suffruticosa or rockii hybrid woody peony where this color is more commonly seen. Like Big Sombrero, Cloud Atlas is on the smaller side and does take some time to get established in its new home. Once it does, though, it is an exceptional garden subject.



Cloud Atlas

Pan

If you have a collection of woody peonies, and in particular lutea hybrids like Pan, you might be thinking that you've seen flowers like this in the past. What you haven't seen, though, is a plant habit as exceptional as what this plant boasts. For the Northeast Wisconsin climate, this plant becomes very large - about four feet tall. A rather unprecedented height for a lutea hybrid that may prove even loftier in warmer climates! In addition to its size, it puts on quite the show, and does so consistently every year. If you have the space, you are definitely not going to want to miss this showstopper.

Rainbow Bridge

If you don't have as much space for a plant as large as Pan, then maybe Rainbow Bridge will be more your speed. A compact grower, this lutea hybrid is exceptionally rewarding for a gardener with little space to spare - it really is a different plant every year. The variations in color Rainbow Bridge displays from one season to the next are rather remarkable, and seldom expresses the same color in different blooming years. Pink with undertones of yellow might appear one year, blending to an orangey-red the following, then display as bright pink thereafter. Because of this mutability, it is a favorite plant for visitors and photographers.



Pan - full plant



Sun Devil

Sun Devil

Stunning is the only word most think of to use with regard to this cultivar. The plant exhibits nice variance in flower forms, from semi-double to full double with an orange glow hovering above a warm-yellow tone. The ruffled petals make the flower even more attractive, and it never disappoints with regard to overall bloom from year to year. The plants themselves achieve reasonable height in Wisconsin's cold climate, and have a tendency to sprawl - preferring to grow outward to five or more feet, rather than upward. Sun Devil is undoubtedly attractive and well worth the extra space necessary in your garden - even the foliage is quite beautiful, and leaves a mat of waxy deep green in the wake of its flowering that holds color through the growing season, gaining tinges of red hues into autumn as the plant begins to go dormant. It bears mentioning that all of these woody lutea hybrids do rather well as cut flowers, also. When cut in bud - in the soft marshmallow stage - they can be brought indoors to open and grace your home with a beauty and fragrance that is unparalleled. Some might be less inclined to cut because woody peonies bloom on old wood, but plants will very often send up new stems from the ground (basal shoots) every year and bloom on this new growth as well.



Three possible variations of Rainbow Bridge

Selene

Simple, elegant, and beautiful. The perfect flower for those who appreciate the beauty in minimalism. A large, pure, creamy yellow flower with lightly ruffled edges, Selene is a truly graceful cultivar that adds a sort of placid charm to any garden. The flowers are carried or displayed well above the foliage (which can be an issue for some lutea hybrid cultivars), on plants that may reach heights taller than three feet. Jordan Kabat reports "I have had great success with Selene in my own garden for several years now, and I must admit it in one of my most favorite plants". Nothing else is quite like it.



Selene above.

Wave Spectrum at right.

Siren's Song

This is one that comes to us from the late Bill Seidl, and it is one that continued to come up in conversations as one that needed to be registered. The flowers exhibit a nice blend of red-pinks and yellows that often blend to a sort of orange color. The color varies from year to year though (not unlike Rainbow Bridge!), and other years might show off a more blush strawberry color. Whatever color is displayed, you can count on Siren's Song being as captivating a garden specimen as any, growing to substantial size and with a blooming habit to match. This plant has rarely been available before, and was originally sold under the seedling number #118 - not just a plant for the collector of Seidl peonies, it is truly deserving of a place in every garden.



Wave Spectrum

Another Seidl cultivar, it is amazing Wave Spectrum was never registered in his lifetime. Given various garden names over the years, including Purple Mountain and Purple Wave, this plant is a rockii hybrid that reaches considerable height over a number of seasons. The original plant in what was Bill's garden stands about seven feet tall, with flowers blooming from the ground up beyond eye level. Airier, or a less dense a shrub than some other rockii hybrids of Bill's - most similar is Angel Emily - Wave Spectrums flowers are often slightly larger, and sway gracefully atop delicate branches. Not many are this particular hue of clear violet-purple either and for all of these characteristics, Wave Spectrum comes highly recommended.



Two faces of Siren's Song



#185-8

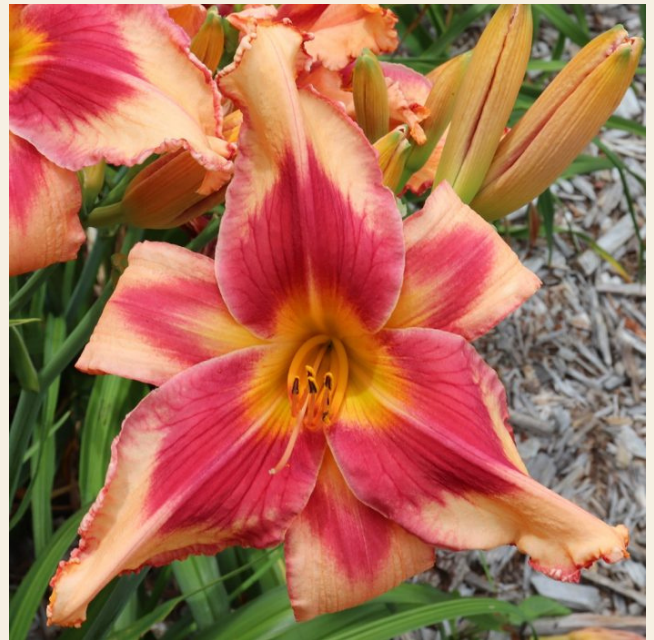
A few daylily seedlings available for sale this year are notable. These will be future registrations, and all stick out as some really stellar garden specimens that you'll want to get your hands on as soon as you can.

#185-8 has been a favorite for garden visitors, particularly those who naturally gravitate toward lavender colored daylilies. The flower has really nice substance (heavy), and is of medium height, which means it can fit into almost any spot in the garden. The green throat that bleeds out into the eyezone is a striking contrast against the lavender outer coloring, and all is accented by a nice darker purple edge.



#D2017-27

Another medium-sized plant, this one also has a striking flower that offers a different color combination. A strawberry pink over peach that is quite a loud flower in the garden, commanding attention when in bloom. While the flower is quite nice, the plant itself is exceptionally vigorous, meaning you'll have a nice large and showy clump in no time at all. With heritage in both Nate's breeding program and that of Phil Korth, you know this plant has solid background and will be a reliable performer in your garden for many years to come.



#D2017-3

This plant, also with background in Phil Korth's seedlings, is one that catches the eye due to many unusual attributes. The wide ruffled dark purple edge with just a hint of gold draws the viewer in and is unusual for northern hardy daylilies. It's also a reliable performer, and sports some really nice sturdy scapes. This daylily is highly recommended, but if you're looking to get it into your garden this year, we urge you to act fast - at the time of this writing, we only have two plants left! By the time the farm opens for July onsite sales, it is quite possible all three of these new seedlings may be unavailable. If any or all of them look interesting to you, it would likely be in your best interest to order ahead of time through our online catalog as soon as you can.





MARTAGONS FOR FALL SHIPMENT

We've offered martagon lilies for sale for several years, but this is the first time they will be available outside of farm-only sales.

Martagon lilies are an excellent addition to the garden. They have proven stellar performers after years of trialing at Solaris Farms and we highly recommend these fine plants. They are finally starting to catch on due to their penchant for shade, showy nature, and relatively easy culture. This year, Solaris is offering a wide array of different cultivars in a host of different colors, and all are available through the website catalog for fall shipment.

One thing that has assisted with this transition is the discontinuation of containers (potted bulbs). In moving the bulbs out of containers and into either the field or raised beds, the bulbs will have a better opportunity to grow larger and healthier than ever before, and once dormant late in the season, will transplant exceptionally well.

Certainly, they will still be available for on-site sales during the summer (we'll dig them out for you at that time just like the daylilies), but now people farther afield will have the opportunity to add some of these stellar plants to their collections without having to stop by to see us (not that we don't want you to!).

Lilium martagon hansonii,
at right.
'Attiwa', below



'Claude Shride' below,
'Chameleon' at right



'Gay Bird'

*To order yours, find the "Lilium-
True Lilies" heading under Shop
Plants at Solarisfarms.com*



VISIT US THIS SUMMER

Last year, we experimented with a new 'by appointment' system for farm visits. It worked so well that we will be maintaining the same system this summer.

Due to the pandemic last year and a large degree of uncertainty, an appointment system was adopted, and was the only method by which customers would be able to visit the farm. This worked exceptionally well for farm visitors and staff.

By scheduling individual appointment sessions, visitors were able to safely distance themselves from others and staff was better able to serve each and every visitor. In previous years, during our open weeks in July and August, the farm frequently experienced long stretches of time with no visitors, then be bombarded with large groups without notice - causing service issues. Large groups of visitors at a single time lead to a less than ideal scenario in which staff was focused on digging plants and not servicing customers in other ways. Overall, this is not the experience we'd like to offer our guests, and thus we would like to continue to utilize this system now and in years to come.

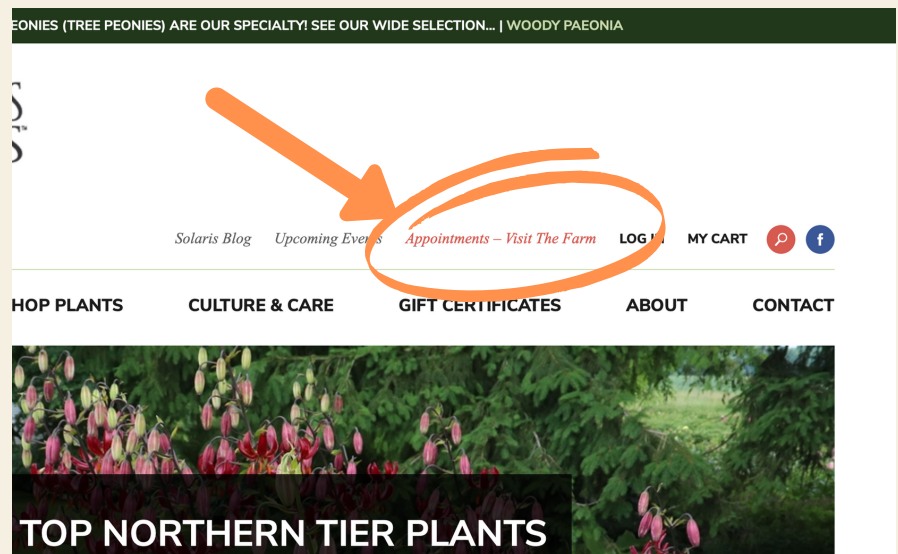
By spreading people out over longer periods of time, staff is in a much better position to talk with customers and give everyone the time they deserve. As a result, a better understanding of what our visitors are looking for is gained, which allows staff to make well thought out recommendations.

Last year, to set up an appointment, customers were able to schedule a convenient time for themselves through our website. While this worked well for some, others struggled to complete appointment confirmation. Through feedback, some changes were made to the system to provide a more seamless experience.

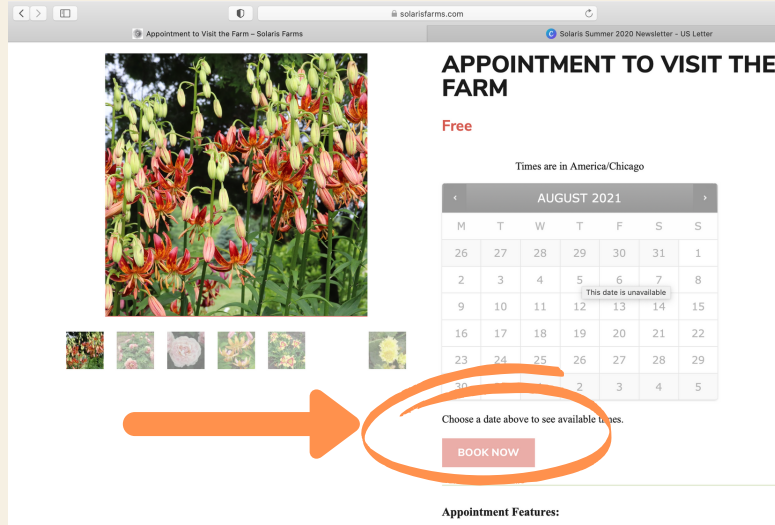
However, there are some aspects which could not be worked around with the website-based system.

The following are some simple steps to secure and appointment to visit Solaris Farms.

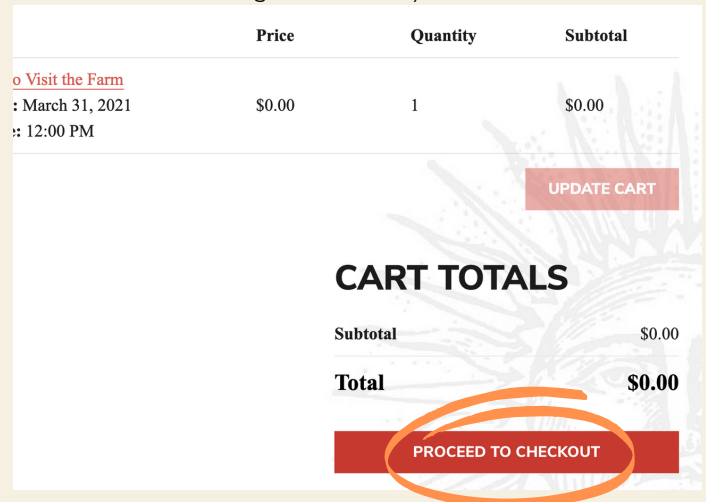
1. Go to Solarisfarms.com. Once you're there, you will see an appointments link above our main banner (as seen below).



2. You will be taken to the calendar where you can make your date and time selection. First, click on an available open date on the calendar. Then select a time for your visit (shows up below calendar). Click "Book Now". This page also has links on the bottom with helpful information for visitors.

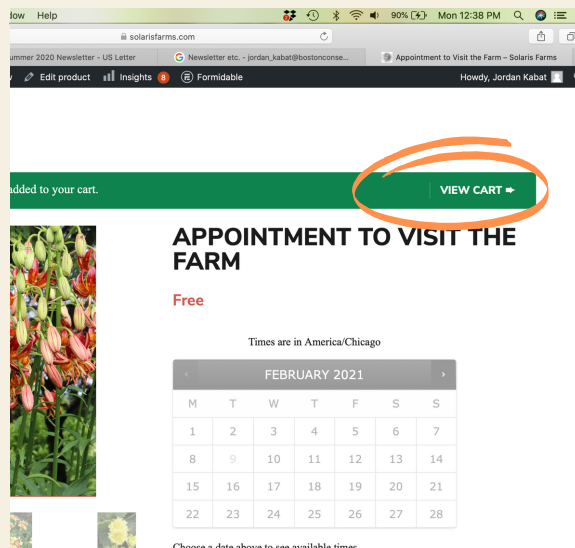


5. Once on the cart page, click "PROCEED TO CHECKOUT", as seen below. (you can also couple an appointment booking with any plants you'd like to order through the website)



Next, enter your contact information so staff knows who to expect:

Your not finished yet! The way appointment bookings work through the website is much like a product, and you must complete checkout for your appointment to be recorded and confirmed. Once you've clicked on book now, you'll see your appointment was added to your cart.



BILLING DETAILS		ADDITIONAL INFO
First name *	Last name *	Order notes (optional)
<input type="text" value="Jordan"/>	<input type="text" value="Kabat"/>	<input type="text" value="Notes about your order"/>
Company name (optional)		Gift Certificate (optional)
<input type="text" value="Solaris Farms"/>		<input type="text"/>
Country *		
<input type="text" value="United States (US)"/>		
Street address *		
<input type="text" value="House number and street name"/>		
<input type="text" value="Apartment, suite, unit etc. (optional)"/>		
Town / City *		
<input type="text"/>		
State *		
<input type="text" value="Wisconsin"/>		
ZIP *		
<input type="text"/>		

6. And finally, click through the agreements and place your appointment "order". You will be taken to a confirmation page and also receive a *confirmation email with the details of your scheduled appointment!

Looking ahead, we are hoping to have the farm open for appointments during peony bloom season solely for viewing (no on-site sales at that time), and then for our usual daylily/lily season and sales come July.

Product	Subtotal
Appointment to Visit the Farm × 1 Booking Date: March 31, 2021 Booking Time: 12:00 PM	\$0.00
Subtotal	\$0.00
Total	\$0.00

Your personal data will be used to process your order, support your experience throughout this website, and for other purposes described in our [privacy policy](#).

- I have read and agree to the website [terms and conditions](#) *
- I understand all daylilies ordered now are shipped July 1 to July 31. No spring or fall shipping available. *
- I understand peonies ordered now are shipped in late September to mid October. Coldest areas will receive peony orders during the earliest part of the shipping season. *

PLACE ORDER

All in all, not too complicated, and don't hesitate to send us a message if assistance is needed - we can book an appointment for you with enough advance notice. Our hope is you will find the booking service easy to use and convenient.

*Another tip: make sure to your spam filter does not block Solaris Farms email notifications. This proved to be a common problem for not receiving confirmations.

Check back as spring nears for updates regarding appointment dates and any additional open times which might added. Again, we are looking forward to seeing many of you this coming season, and hope that you will enjoy your visit. If we start to see warmer temperatures in the weeks ahead and no late frosts, we should have some beautiful blooms for you.



Woody peony 'Tria' in full bloom at the farm.

In anticipation of spring, we are anxious for temperatures to begin climbing and more cooperative weather, as we are sure you are too. As days continue to grow longer and brighter, we are just as anxious to see all of you this coming season. Until then, do take care,

Jordan Kabat & Nate Bremer