Many things in our world have changed since the COVID 19 lock downs that affected all our lives. Not only was toilet paper hard to find, it was almost imposable to find canning supplies and seeds for the vegetable garden. Because we were forced to stay home many people started gardening. Some of these gardeners have found that they can make money selling their extra vegetables and cut flowers.

I am sure that it is not news to most of you that the dahlia is one of the most popular flowers for the folks that are selling cut flowers. It is every obvious to those of us who sell dahlia tubers on the internet. At Lobaugh’s Dahlias well over sixty percent of our sells are to cut flower growers. In the last few years if you were not able to order in the first half hour that our website was open you probably did not get any dahlias that have been introduced in the last few years.

Recognizing the increase in new dahlia growers I felt that we (the American Dahlia Society) needed to find a way to help these new growers thrive and prosper. In 2022 the ADS spring planning meeting was held in Portland Or.. It was there that I meet Jess Becker and Misty Florez both of these wonderful ladies also saw the need to help and to integrate cut flower/dahlia growers into the ADS. It was at this spring workshop the ADS Cut Flower Committee was born under the leadership of Jess Becker. You have read some of our articles in the Bulletin and if you have attended the last few ADS National Show you have seen our display.

Last fall we started working on a definition for a cut flower bunch with the intent of it becoming a class in our dahlia shows. Not a mandatory class but a class that a society could add to their show if they chose to. If your society is like mine, you have seen an increase in membership and many of your new members sell cut flowers. At this time, we have produced a score sheet that will help judges award prizes to the show exhibits. There are things on the score sheet that are counter intuitive to those of us that are ADS judges, because of this we are in the process of making a video on how to judge a “Farmers Market Bunch.” Unfortunately, the video will not be ready for the 2024 show season because we need cut flowers for the video, our goal is to have it available for the 2025 show season so it can be shown at your judges’ trainings. If you want to or have already added the class to your show but have questions on how to judge it please contact the cut flower committee at cut-flowers@dahlia.org

Wayne Lobaugh