

Kansas Sunflowers

When we think of the grand sunflower with its striking color and formidable size, there is little wonder why this plant is the Kansas state flower. This icon of summer beauty is one that has so much to offer including pure aesthetic value along with tasty treats. This state flower is one that stands above all others, quite literally.

The sunflower is scientifically known as *helianthus annuus*. This striking flower is one that is readily recognized by old and young and it is a standard for many country scenes across the United States of America. The Kansas state flower has its roots set deep in the natural landscape of the countryside.

One prominent image of this tall yellow flower is presented in the movie *The Wizard of Oz*. This film is set in the lovely state of Kansas and these yellow flowers are subtly peppered throughout the film. Some speculate that the Yellow Brick Road is inspired by the Kansas state flower but it is nearly impossible to tell.

The funny thing about this stunning flower is that it is a late bloomer. The blooms begin to emerge during July but they are quite small during this stage. Later, mostly in late August and early September, the blooms begin to tower over other vegetation. The sunflowers truly make their mark on the landscape during this time of year.

Many love this plant because of stunning size, appealing form and bright yellow hue. Others might be more attracted to the plant's tasty seeds. Sunflower seeds are very healthy snacks that are harvested, packaged and distributed each year. Nothing is more satisfying than collecting the harvest fresh but a nicely packaged collection of seeds is nearly as appealing.

It may be surprising to some to discover that there are eleven species of sunflowers that grow across the countryside of the beautiful state of Kansas. These plants are mostly perennials that show up year after year like clockwork. This is ideal for many who enjoy the plants but aren't really thrilled about the process of planting.

The unique Prairie Sunflowers are annuals that need to be replanted each and every year. Some find this task to be relaxing and enjoyable so they seek out this specific plant to enjoy year after year. These plants often crossbreed so they are quite similar in looks with their perennial counterparts.

The sunflower is such a stunning plant that blazes a bright yellow hue across

the plains. This Kansas state flower is an icon of prairie beauty and it is an all-American staple that is certain to bring joy year after year for generations to come.