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A LARGE WHITE BLOOM is what commercial chrysanthemum grower Robert Lefever seeks in his greenhouse. This flower is a good example of the confirmation and

size that is desired for best selling quality. Lefever grows mums for sale the year around by controlling day length of the flowers artificially. (LF Photo)

## Lancaster Greenhouse Man Now Grows Chrysanthemums All Year

Greenhouse operators and King St., Lancaster. "It finally growers were neither farmers took a specific ruling from the nor non-farmers for years, according U. S. Department of Agriculture ing to Robert Lefever, 1300 East to put us in the farming cate-

gory," he said.

Lefever, who now grows cut flowers with his son, John E. Lefever, started in the greenhouse business in 1922. He grows the normal variety of hothouse

plants and does some retail business.

But the bulk of the business is devoted to raising chrysanthemums on a year-round basis.

"Planning for the sale of the flowers starts about six months ahead," Lefever said. "This means that we start planning for the big wedding month of June in January."

Most of the mums grown are white, but for fall sales, a considerable number of bronze blooms are grown. Yellow flowers are, also grown on a continuing basis.

For the average grower, the chrysanthemum is a fall blooming flower. Just how does Lefever manage to produce good blooms the year round?

"The chrysanthemum is very sensitive to light and temperature," Lefever says. "It takes short days for it to set bud and produce blooms."

"To accomplish this, we control the day length in the greenhouse by a combination of light proof cloth covers and by the use of artificial lighting."

"In the winter, that is from October to May, we put lights on the plants for about four hours a day to give them a long growing day. Then when they are about 18 inches high, we shorten the day length. This makes the plant set bud," Lefever explained.

(Continued on page 7)

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