

# 'Mountain Of Mums'

(Continued from Page 1)

people went for it, so we made it bigger and bigger."

In 1972, the hill was expanded, almost to its present size at 700 feet around the base, and a tunnel was added. The Mountain of Mums stretches 45 feet high, with three sets of steps and a "promenade" deck, of sorts, at the top.

In the fall, the hill is literally covered with 8,000 mum plants with 50 different varieties, all for sale at the greenhouse. They are planted the first week of July with 3-inch pots.

Because of the slope of the hill, "they're easy to plant," said Ott, "if we work real

good. It takes about 25 hours to plant," he said, with the help of about three people working 8-10 hours.

The plants are nurtured on potting soil consisting of peat moss, sterilized soil, and fertilizer, "our mix," said Ott. "Some people are here just to get the potting soil."

The soil is easy to care for and the plants "grow fast," said Ott. About 40,000 individual blooms light up the mountain on a dazzling fall day. The mountain is open until hard freeze.

The mountain is covered about four times in the fall for frost protection. The greenhouse uses a white

cover made in Georgia. The material is lightweight, weighing only 150 pounds, but provides about eight degrees of temperature difference. About six people, with the help of an overhead crane, get the job done.

In the spring, pansies are planted on the mountain, about four seedlings in a six-inch pot on 15-18 inch centers. They put about 20,000-25,000 pots in, encompassing about 100,000 plants.

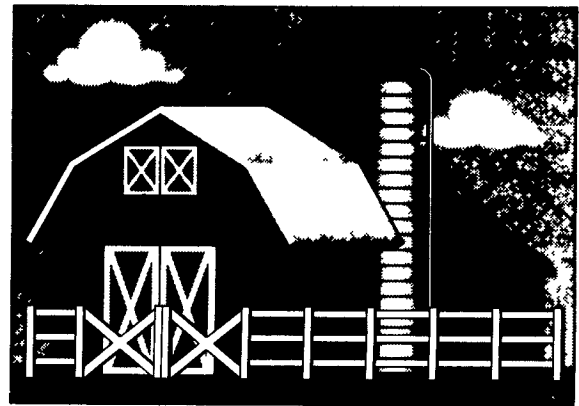
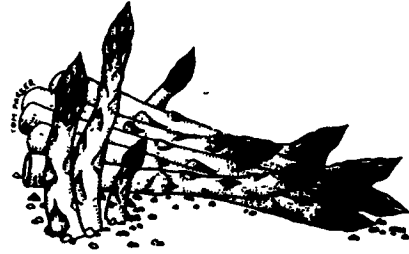
At the top of the mountain, near the end of the lane, is a lookout-type structure containing four pillars of PVC pipe. The plants are drip-fed through the PVC type, form-

ing a column covering.

Ott's Exotic Plants, located on Rt. 29 a few miles above Collegeville, was established at a nearby location in 1935. The Ott brothers, Godfrey H. and Clarke, run the business, with assistance from about 10 full-time and two part-time

employees.

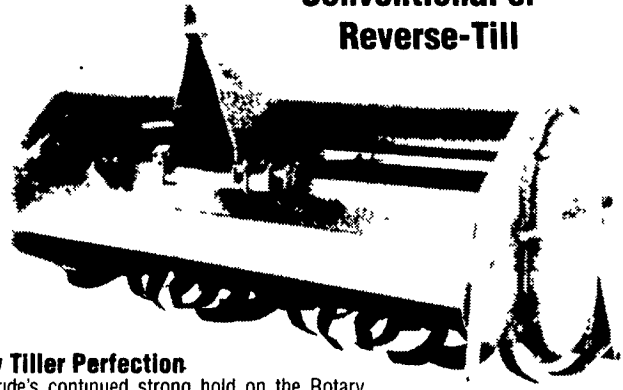
The greenhouse, which has about 60,000 square feet of space, is open every day of the week and on every holiday except Christmas. For more information, call Ott's at (610) 287-7878.



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