

Picture: DAVID BURGES



Harvest time among the delphiniums at Wyke Manor Farm, Worcestershire. More than 20,000 pints of the petals will be dried and packed as confetti for wedding suppliers across the country.

Confetti farmer brings in a crop of many colours

By PIPPA DUNLOP

AMID the traditional hues of the English countryside comes a high voltage shock of colour that could be the answer to the prayers of a generation of vicars.

Charles Hudson has devoted 16 acres of farmland to dazzling delphiniums to be scattered as confetti, and hopes his crop may supplant the paper variety that is the bane of churchmen's lives.

For years, parish workers have swept up a carpet of confetti after every wedding to keep their churchyards tidy. When the scale of the task has proved too much, however, paper confetti has often been banned.

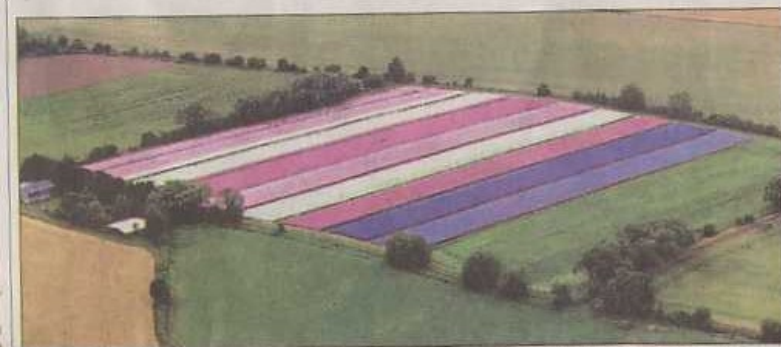
But this weekend saw the start of the harvest of Mr Hudson's natural alternative at Wyke Manor Farm, near Pershore.

Worcestershire. More than 20,000 pints of the pink, purple, lavender and ivory petals will be picked before being dried, packaged and sent to wedding suppliers across the country.

The petal confetti is completely biodegradable and retains its colour and smell for many months, Mr Hudson said.

He admitted, however, to not having any confetti at his own wedding but has since tried to make up for the oversight. "I always take a bunch of flowers home to my wife but now the entire house is full of delphiniums," he said. "I think she's getting a bit fed up with it."

Ivor Pugh, a church warden at nearby Pershore Abbey, where paper confetti is banned, gave Mr Hudson's idea a cautious welcome. "At least nobody would have to clean up the flower petals and it would look and smell pretty," he added.



Strips of confetti colours break up the traditional summer hues on Charles Hudson's farm