



HighLights



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The titan arum (*Amorphophallus titanum*) will soon be in full flower at the South Mississippi Branch Experiment Station. Often called the largest flower in the world, this is technically the largest unbranched inflorescence in the world. When seeds of this rare plant are produced in cultivation, the seeds or seedlings are often shared among botanical gardens and research institutions.

Native to Sumatra (Indonesia), the titan arum is in the Araceae family, and thus related to *Anthurium*, *Caladium*, *Colocasia* (taro), and *Zantedeschia* (calla lily). The inflorescence of the titan arum is made up of a large **spathe**, a leaf-like or petal-like bract, and the **spadix**, a tall, hollow column with separate rings of male flowers and female flowers at its base.

Our titan arum is approximately 9 years old and this is the first time it has flowered. A single, huge, tree-like leaf is produced from the underground corm each year (except when the plant flowers). Our greenhouse-grown plant goes into dormancy for several weeks every year.

The inflorescence on our titan arum is currently over 53 inches in height (from the soil level). The spathe (the green, furrowed sheath in the photo) is still developing and, when fully unfurled, will be deep burgundy on the inside. The inflorescence will produce the odor of rotting meat, which attracts pollinating insects in the plant's native habitat. The fully opened inflorescence typically lasts only one day. Once the flower dies back, the plant will enter dormancy and eventually resume its annual production of a single leaf.

The titan arum will be on special public display at the South Mississippi Branch Experiment Station during regular operating hours (weekdays from 8 AM to 4 PM) until flowering has ended. Additional weekend hours may be added as needed. Please check for updates on display hours on our Facebook page:

[MSU South Mississippi Branch Experiment Station](#)