SEEING 20/20
Garden Trends Report 2020
HOW TO USE TRENDS

- Trends drive consumers and consumers drive sales.
- Trend helps you – well in advance – select the plants, products or services consumers want.
- Trends ignite a new business, product, service or customer experience.
- Trends make you the gatekeeper, influencer and trend-setter.
- Trends can breathe new life into your current business.
BEING AHEAD

The team of trend spotters at Garden Media has had their finger on the pulse of garden trends for almost 20 years:

- 2001: The New Living Room
- 2002: Decorating with Containers
- 2006: Grow Your Own Food
- 2008: Gardening for Pollinators
- 2011: Succulents
- 2015: Millennial Gardener
- 2018: Self-Care and Mental Wellness
CITIES OF THE FUTURE

70% OF THE WORLD’S population will live in cities by 2050.

Thriving Cities of the Future will positively impact well-being and the environment...
More than ½ the world lives in cities.

Urbanization improves life, from better education to more employment opportunities.

While cultures are “connected” 24/7, there is a new ethos emerging.

People are longing for nature.

Tranquil, plant-filled environments for business and pleasure are a necessity.

As the world continues to urbanize, sustainability is key to managing growth.
THE RISE OF THE CRD

- Central Recreational Districts (CRD) are the new Central Business Districts (CBD.)
- CRD results in 16% higher housing prices, 10% growth in population and jobs, and attracts 3% more college graduates.
- They are urban areas to escape the hustle of the city, with parks, historic places, landmarks, and tourist destinations.
- The area attracts younger inhabitants for their “Instagramable” locations and draws people to urban centers.
- Similarly, America In Bloom (AIB) just launched a new self-assessment program, Growing Vibrant Communities (GVC). It measures a community’s commitment and progress in vitality, flowers, landscapes, urban forestry, environmental efforts, heritage and overall impression.
“Green infrastructure and horticulture combine to create desirable cities in which to live.

Pretty but functional cities need billions of plants, especially natives.

We need to know how to propagate, grow and maintain them in an urbanized environment. Not every plant will work.

We need an army of ecological landscape practitioners steeped in horticulture and ecological land stewardship. And, they need to be valued, demanded (or mandated) and supported in their work.”

- Debbie Hamrick, Director of Specialty Crops, NC Farm Bureau Federation
• Trees everywhere are important, especially within the green infrastructure of future cities.

• Trees are a best management strategy for controlling stormwater runoff, urban heat island mitigation, and reducing air pollution.

• Well-placed and managed trees sequester carbon and reduce energy consumption by shading buildings in the summer and reducing wind in the winter.

• According to Jim Zwack at Davey Tree, creating a well-canopied city is a cost-effective strategy to improving communities’ health, resiliency and economy.
• Architects, designers, urban planners and politicians are forced to reimagine how green environments are designed in cities.

• These leaders need to be influenced by people who know what they’re doing.

• Regulation will frame changes to highway buffer zones, urban forestry, green roofs, pollinator habitat, community gardens, new parks, and green stormwater.

• Green businesses are the ambassadors of change by educating people and decision makers about doing their part.
CIRCULAR ECONOMY

ENVISION OUR CITIES AS CIRCULAR.

How would they look? Green. A circular economy uses nature as a template. With the help of green infrastructure, we can create new business models...
WHAT IS A CIRCULAR ECONOMY?

• Many remember the days when things were made to last, items were mended, and fashions lasted longer than a season.

• Now society is consumptive. Just 9% of materials consumed globally are re-used.

• Global consumption tripled since 1970.

• 67% of global greenhouse gas emissions are related to material management.

• A circular economy minimizes waste and makes the most of resources. It replaces the end-of-life concept with restoration.

• According to Accenture, it could generate $4.5 trillion in new output by 2030.
• At the GreenBiz Circularity conference in June, Google’s Chief Sustainability Officer unveiled a plan for a circular Google.

• In July, MIT’s Solve called for innovative ideas to shift from frequent purchasing to recycled or biodegradable products.

• There are companies selling products, from nut butters and spices to soap and mouthwash, in reusable containers.

• Big companies such as GM, Annie’s and Unilever are getting on the circular bandwagon and mindful of the opportunities. Unilever’s sustainable brands grew 46% faster than the rest of the business in 2018.
• The circular economy does more with less. And as leaders in our industry, we have a responsibility to act sustainably.

• It’s about ensuring our products, where possible, have a second life. When that’s not possible, they’re taken apart so we can re-use the components.

• What do you sell that is renewable, repairable, reusable and recyclable?

• “Our pots get used up to 5x before they are discarded. We wash and sanitize them before each use.” Grady Roscoe, Wind In The Willows Nursery, SC

• The goal is to deliver customer value with minimal waste.
GREEN COLLAR JOBS

URBAN GROWTH creates trends in green industries, such as greater energy efficiency and resource sustainability…

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URBAN GROWTH AND JOBS

- Gardening is as popular as ever. According to EuroMonitor, U.S. gardening grew 6% in 2018, to reach $40.2 billion.

- Gardening is expected to reach $49.3 billion by 2023; we will need more labor.

- There are double the jobs available than students to fill them. Jobs in horticulture outnumber graduates 2 to 1.

- Seed Your Future research shows kids are familiar with and excited by pollinators, plants and growing food – but none of them had heard the term “horticulture.”

- The passion is there, but when it’s time to pick a major, plants are not considered a career.
Education diversity is key. While jobs exist that require much academic study, there is demand for green jobs that require less college education.

With the rising cost of college, enrollment is expected to dip 15% by 2025.

Careers in urban agriculture, environmental sustainability or garden installation, for example, may only need an associate degree or vocational program to launch a fruitful career.

And that can include on-the-job training.
- From horticultural therapy to plant blogger, new jobs range from full-on careers to seasonal opportunities.

- Booming hydroponic and aquaponic industries create demand for new, cleaner data-driven jobs.

- Baby Boomers are looking for even more services in the garden, from vacation watering to plant whispering.

- Changing perceptions happens as the industry grows.
ENDANGERED SOIL

WE NEED A NEW soil operating system.

Soil is our great green hope…
WE TREAT OUR SOIL LIKE DIRT

• Prior to the 20th century, soil was healthy and organically dense. Food was rich in vitamins and minerals.

• Erosion and deforestation have washed away 1/3 of the world's topsoil. And soil has been stripped of nutrients.

• Today, crops are developed for increased yield, not nutritional value.

• If current trends continue, soil as we know it – or more importantly, as we need it – will be gone by 2050, according to The United Nations Food & Agricultural Organization.
REGENERATIVE GARDENING

• Changes in farming, forestry and gardening could not only mitigate carbon, but actually reverse it.

• Regenerative practices aim to rebuild soil organic matter, restore degraded soil, sequester carbon and reduce runoff.

• A shift from extractive to restorative could remove 1 ton of CO2 from the atmosphere for every acre, says Rodale.

• The U.S. has 915 million acres of farmland and 135+ million acres of residential land.

• Practices such as composting, no-tilling and pasture cropping enable us to return to native soil, conserve wildlife and more.
REGENERATIVE ORGANIC CERTIFICATION

• Organic is not enough. Or that’s the thinking behind the certification launched at the Natural Products Expo show in June.

• The ROC adds soil health, fair trade and animal welfare to organic practices.

• It comes as people care about sustainability more than ever, according to Nielsen. Half of U.S. consumers would buy a brand if it was committed to the environment. People will spend up to $150 billion on sustainable products by 2021.

• Pilots include Patagonia, Dr. Bronner’s and General Mills. The latter committed to regenerate 1 million acres by 2030 and fund farm trainings.
SOIL-FRIENDLY HABITS

• Whether planting broccoli or begonias, it’s important to garden organically.

• Reduce waste by composting and create a probiotic for your soil. Composting reduces household waste by almost 40%!

• Test soil. Replenish with organic fertilizers, such as Espoma Organic.

• Till with worms and biochar.

• Grow green manures, cover and pulse crops such as buckwheat, beans, lentils and clover. They do double duty – enriching garden nutrients while controlling weeds.
THINKING OUTSIDE THE HOUSE

HOUSEPLANTS ARE HAVING a moment. And we don’t see this trend going anywhere soon. In fact, we see it as a way for people to connect with each other outside of the house...
THE OBSESSION

• Plants clean the air, reduce stress, bring life to a room, enhance creativity and connect you with nature.

• And the obsession with houseplants continues to grow – 10% in 2018 in the U.S., according to Euromonitor.

• As younger generations find themselves with less space, time and money, they are turning to indoor plants for the benefits.

• Plant Parents are so tuned in to greenery, stores are selling out of Millennials' favorite houseplants. The category is seeing greater percentage growth than shrubs, trees and perennials.
• According to Euromonitor, the largest proportion of plants sold are succulents. They are easy to grow and personalize. Tall indoor plants are also popular.

• GrowIt!, with 50% of users under 35, says echeveria was the most popular plant with users in March 2019. Indoor aloe came in second.

• Costa Farms says succulents continue to grow in popularity, but the biggest trend is decorating with houseplants.

• #PlantParenthood and #HouseplantClub reveal Instagram’s most popular plants include monstera, string of dolphins, pilea and echeveria.
• Increased consumer education on plant care and the importance of soil products helped drive growth in 2018.

• Enter opportunity: continued education will drive more growth in the future.

• Green industry players who educate, win.

• Create opportunities for Plant Parents to attend educational events while encouraging them to snap photos and post to social media.

• Unique selections are key to standing out from the pack. People are looking for something special and to connect.
CULTIVATING COMMUNITY

• Meet & Greets with plantfluencers allow people to network with their favorite Insta-celebrity or find other plant buddies.

• Pub crawls or plant swaps, like Homestead Brooklyn’s or Bloom and Grow Radio’s, help local businesses attract and retain customers.

• These events draw in a diverse group of mostly young women with a variety of experiences – people with large yards to those gardening on fire escapes – connecting over plants and sharing knowledge.

• With affinity groups including plants in their meet ups, this is an opportunity to attract a new audience to stores or brands.
THE FROG WHISPERER

HEALTH-CHECK YOUR BACKYARD.

A garden filled with amphibians indicates balance and a healthy ecosystem. The absence may indicate problems...

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SHHH! LISTEN...

- Does your garden seem too quiet? Silence in nature is not a good sign.
- Frogs and toads play an important part in ecosystems as well as our backyards.
- Frogs and toads are an effective, natural form of pest control.
- Leslie Halleck says it’s our responsibility to create frog-friendly backyards, as it benefits us as much as it does the frogs.
- Mosquitoes, slugs and plant-damaging beetles fall victim to these amphibian predators.
WHAT’S THE PROBLEM?

• Amphibians, such as frogs and toads, are going extinct at an alarming rate.

• According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, 1 in 3 of all amphibians are red listed as endangered.

• FrogWatch USA and the National Wildlife Federation say habitat destruction is a contributor to wildlife decline, as are pesticide use, pollution, invasive species, increased UV radiation, climate change and over-collection of food by humans.

• We aren’t exactly making it easy for amphibians to thrive.
TIPS FOR CREATING A FROG-FRIENDLY SPACE

• Go Natural. Water is the best frog attractor. This should be a fishless body of water that is shallow and sloping.

• Leave it to nature, meaning don’t clean it or add chemicals. Let debris fall in as it enables frog food sources – bugs – to breed.

• Minimize disturbance. Keep an eye on pets who can be destructive to wildlife and may eat frogs and toads.

• Frogs and toads prefer still-water, as opposed to pumps and waterfalls.

• Toad houses also protect and encourage them to move in.
TIPS FOR CREATING A FROG-FRIENDLY SPACE

- **Create cover.** Plant native ferns, swamp milkweed, Joe pye weed and veronica for cover on land when young are exiting water.

- Choose marginal plants to hide animals entering and exiting the water like iris versicolor, Chelone, lobelia, sedges.

- Submerge plants like water lilies, broad leaf arrowhead or pickerelweed to oxygenate water and provide cover from above.

- **Keep it native.** Don’t introduce non-native species. It’s illegal and they can be invasive and destructive. Take the “if you build it, they will come” approach. Provide the above and over time, local amphibians will find you.
Mushrooms are one of the most health-promoting superfoods that exist.

And they’re not just good for us, they’re also good for the planet...
• Mushrooms can potentially solve some of our most pressing world problems, according to world-renowned mycologist Paul Stamets.

• From helping to clean up oil spills and absorbing pollution to fighting off smallpox and flu viruses, mushrooms are nature's recycling system.

• If they didn't exist, plants wouldn't either because mushrooms break down organic matter and create rich soil.
PLASTIC POWER

• Management and elimination of plastic is a great challenge we face.

• Discovered in 2012 by Yale students, Pestalotiopsis microspora is a mushroom from the Amazon that loves to eat plastic.

• It also lives without oxygen – meaning it could clean landfills from the bottom up.

• Katharina Unger at Utrecht University in the Netherlands found other mushrooms ate plastic, too, and tasted good afterwards.

• If the natural rate of decomposition can be reduced from 400 years to a few months, these fungi could be part of a solution in a world filled with plastic yet scarce on food.
• Edible mushrooms have a positive effect on health beyond basic nutrition, too.

• Mushrooms are useful in preventing and treating 200+ conditions and have 100+ different beneficial effects on the body.

• They boost immune system health and longevity, improve digestion and reduce weight.

• Offer mushroom-based products, from teas to powders. Inoculated logs are easy to grow and popular.

• Workshops teach people how to grow and about the benefits.
INDIGO

FROM THE SOFT HUE of a summer sky to colors dark as the deep sea – indigo is this season’s sweetest shade of blue..
WHAT’S OLD IS NEW

• With its calming effect, indigo has been used to dye clothes naturally for thousands of years.

• But natural indigo has been abandoned. It’s in less than 1% of clothes on the market. Clothes today are dyed using petroleum or coal.

• New initiatives have people asking - what’s in my indigo?

• Jeans may be the world’s most beloved fabric, so denim manufacturers are innovating to produce it sustainably.
Blue plants are always the most sought after hue in the garden. From hydrangeas to salvia, place blue plants at the forefront of stores.

Merchandise berries in blue hues, like the collection of ornamental edible blueberries from Bushel and Berry.

Natural dyes are available to buy, as are plants in the indigo hue such as salvia, baptisia australis and the real indigo, Indigofera tinctoria.

Accessorize with indigo pots, pillows and other décor.

Use indigo in displays, peppered around and en masse.
GET CREATIVE

• According to the report, Generations on the Move, 74% of people value experiences over things.

• Millennials desire in-person activities and DIY workshops that utilize nature.

• Events build community.

• The lost art of DIY indigo dying is returning. Shibori – the Japanese technique of creating patterns on fabric – is a trendy workshop for all ages.

• Host a Blues night, complete with a band and blue-themed décor.
THANKS TO THESE COMPANIES FOR THEIR SUPPORT!
CITIES OF THE FUTURE

- Architectural Digest
- Bloomberg
- United Nations

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

- New Hope

GREEN COLLAR JOBS

- Green for All
- Joe Gardener
- Learn How to Become
- Monster
- Seed Your Future
- Yes Magazine

ENDANGERED SOIL

- Ag Funder News
- Civil Eats
- Food Dive
- Food Tech Connect
- Garden Writers
- Reuters
- Rodale
- UN Food & Ag Organization
- Regeneration International

INDOOR PLANTS

- Euromonitor (proprietary)
- National Gardening Association (proprietary)

THE FROG WHISPERER

- Garden Center Mag

NOT JUST SOME FUNGI

- Educate Inspire Change
- Food Revolution
- Green Med Info

INDIGO

- Brooklyn Botanic Garden
- Garden and Gun
- Interior Design
- Mind Body Green
- Phys.org
- Generations on the Move