

# GROUND RULES

By Beth Casson

Tips and tools for retailers to succeed in the “grow your own” movement.

**C**all it the greening trifecta of 2021 — everyday gardening meets self-sufficiency meets food origin awareness. The result? A backyard and balcony edible garden boom, where no space is too small for the “foodscaping” movement.

## The Benefits of Growing at Home

- **Physical and mental well-being.** Whether it's planting their first seeds, daily watering and weeding, or proudly reaping their harvest, gardening is the perfect way for homeowners to get off-screen time, physical activity, family connection, and a burst of creativity into their routines.
- **Perspective.** From soil care to seeding, pruning to prepping plants, the process of nourishing an edible garden can provide households with a new appreciation for the process of how food grows and reinforce a family's relationship to the nature that surrounds them. This experience can be particularly rewarding for young children who are at home or kids learning remotely.

- **Preparedness.** A personal garden brimming with fruits and veggies can prove useful in moments of emergency. During both world wars, people were encouraged to keep Victory Gardens in public parks and at home to supplement their rations and lower dependency on fragile food chains, while also boosting morale.
- **Pesticide-free.** A major advantage of home-grown food is first-hand knowledge of how the produce was cultivated, and the ability to eliminate the questionable stuff. With their own edible gardens, homeowners have complete visibility over what (if any) fertilizers, chemicals or pesticides are used to support their harvest.

## Edible Gardening Essentials

There are several tools that homeowners will want to have within easy reach as they sharpen their gardening skills. Here are some of our beginner picks.

### Hand Pruners

More resilient and sturdy than everyday shears, a cordless pruner



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will help cut through stubborn branches, twigs and stems. We suggest: Scotts 7.2V lithium cordless pruner

### Hori Hori

The unusual name for this tool comes from the Japanese word “hori,” meaning “to dig.” This narrow trowel makes an ideal weeding companion, featuring a special serrated blade that can also help divide clumps of roots and assist with other coarse garden tasks. We suggest: Radius Root Slayer soil knife

### Garden Gloves

A good pair of gloves will keep novice hands and fingernails dry and clean,





protect against blisters and calluses, and prevent small cuts or scratches from getting infected.

We suggest: *Radians Bellingham Bamboo Gardener Nitrile Palm Glove*

### Soil Scoops

Sometimes gardeners need a tool that's bigger than a trowel but smaller than a shovel. An ergonomic scooper can be used like a giant trowel for working garden soil and in raised beds. It's also handy for mixing soil in the potting shed.

We suggest: *Radius Ergonomic Soil Scoop*

### Potting Soil

The right potting soil can help gardeners create the perfect conditions to promote plant health and ensure abundant vegetables and herbs. Encourage your customers to invest wisely.

We suggest: *Dr. Earth Home Grown Vegetable Garden Potting Soil*

### Pots and Planters

Container gardeners will need the right planting pots. Showcasing a wide variety of planter designs and eco-friendly options in your garden center can sway even the most reluctant first-timer.

We suggest: *Smart Pot fabric pots with handles*

### Protection

Tending to a garden will mean more time outdoors in hot and cold weather, requiring proper protection.

We suggest: *Radians Crossfire RPG Premium Safety Eyewear and Corodova-brand Cold Snap Cooling Multi-Tubes*

## How Retailers Can Promote Home Gardening

- Make it accessible. Appeal to

those without access to a large outdoor space. Offer easily assembled planters for rented gardens or small indoor planting systems that can be stuck to walls or fridges for a space-saving approach.

- **Help consumers to unwind.** Position gardening or plant products as a way of calming the mind — either on pack, on shelf or via social media — to help appeal to wellness-focused consumers.
- **Emphasize togetherness.** Help get the whole family involved with gardening products that are suitable for kids. Help to build community with products and merchandising geared toward communal gardening projects and spaces. 🌱

*Beth Casson is vice president of the National Hardware Show. For more information, visit [www.nationalhardwareshow.com](http://www.nationalhardwareshow.com).*

