

# Larger Than Life

Consumers want big, extravagant pieces in their gardens. Are you up to satisfying these big demands?



By Catherine Evans

**W**ithin the past month, I have been traveling to a number of garden centers around the country (for more information on the travels, see Headlines on page \_\_) learning what is hot and what is not right now. One of the things that people were talking about quite a bit was consumers looking for extra large accent pieces for their gardens. People want to buy larger items to use in the garden as a focal point or a start to their gardens. Planting a large container and working around it with other plants; placing a bench in the yard to view the garden scene; putting a statue in the middle of the yard and accenting it with flowers. There are so many possibilities to apply this trend. Landscapers have been using large pieces as focal points for years, but now the DIY generation is catching on and looking for those items in your stores. Whether it is furniture, garden accents, statuary, pottery, even

plants, people want it now, and they want it big.

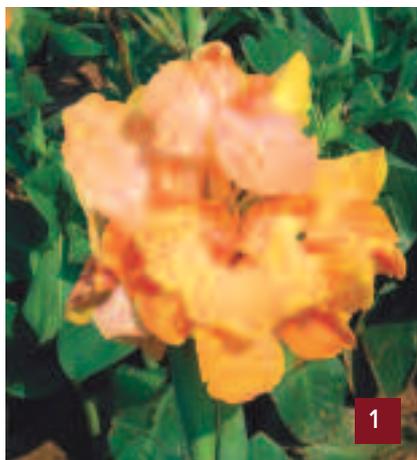
After talking to a number of garden center owners and managers from around the county, I learned this trend is hitting their stores fast. Some stores are running out of trellises, while others are in need of extra large pots and statuary. They say these items, which have not been huge sellers in the past, are now flying off the shelves. One manager said that people are looking for trellises to add plants to and build their gardens off of them. Consumers are most often using these trellises or arbors as an entryway into the garden, making it more of an escape than a part of the backyard. Another person said that using large pieces of furniture (benches, tables and chairs, etc.) offset the typical garden accent and gave the space more of a homey feel, making it a better place to sit and relax with friends.

Using larger plants is also becoming more popular. Planting cannas, sunflowers, trees and

shrubs, larger annuals and especially perennials along the garden is another way consumers are adding to the oversize trend. These larger or more mature plants define borders and create instantly mature gardens — a botanical garden home. This adds to the trend from last season when people were staying home more to enjoy their gardens. People want their gardens to look like botanical gardens on a smaller scale, using larger plants and accents can help do that.

Now, I'm not saying you need to start stocking, or over-stocking, a bunch of large items in your store. You shouldn't take away from your core or best sellers, but just add a few things here and there to give your customers ideas and the means to bring that idea to fruition.

There are so many products in your store that can be used as main accent pieces that will help the consumer find the right fit for their garden and add large sales to your books. 🌱



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### 1. Canna

This canna was hybridized at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Penn. 'Lenape' is a deep-gold color and is heavily peppered with large red speckles. Extremely large blooms sit atop dark green foliage, growing approximately 3 feet tall. Horn Canna Farm. (800) 365-5528. **Write in 1436**

### 2. Bowl

This 39-inch glazed, blue water bowl has a large water surface that makes it ideal for a water garden. Pacific Home and Garden. (510) 568-6088. **Write in 1435**

### 3. Chair

These pine and cedar Adirondack style chairs are available in a kit with easy-to-follow instructions, pre-drilled sanded pieces and all the necessary hardware for a one-screwdriver assembly. The Bear Chair Company. (800) 421-1406. **Write in 1441**

### 4. Container

Green Key handcrafted iron containers are available in either 20 x 20 x 19 or 25 x 25 x 24 inches. Ore. (801) 713-0568. **Write in 1434** ▶



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