

Trending into 2018

BY KATIE DUBOW AND MEGAN O'CONNELL

These seven trends aim to rebuild mental wellness through nature.

In today's world, it is almost impossible to escape the realities of social media, instant news, 24/7 connectivity and the mental exhaustion that follows.

The rising trend of wellness isn't just about keeping the body healthy anymore; it's about keeping the mind and spirit healthy, too.

In Garden Media Group's 17th annual Garden Trends Report for 2018, Nature's Rx for Mental Wellness, nature is the best medicine.

The 2018 report introduces seven industry trends that greenhouse growers can apply to their businesses in 2018 and beyond. It shows that when we disconnect from digital media and reconnect with Mother Nature, we can make steps towards rebuilding mental wellness.

Growers can use these trends to drive sales. Knowing what trends are coming down the pipeline may ensure that your business is offering consumers what they need to keep their garden, outdoor living space and home trendy and up-to-date. Knowing upcoming trends can also help avoid investing in a product that is no longer in demand.

"We know gardening works wonders for our physical health," says Katie Dubow, creative director at the trend-spotting firm. "Our 2018 Garden Trends report showcases trends in design, color and technology that will help improve mental well-being."

Gardening is again shifting to reflect global changes. The 2018 Garden Trends Report closely examines how these changes affect consumers and businesses alike.

Here's a snapshot of the 2018 Garden Trends: Nature's Rx for Mental Wellness. The complete report is available for free download at grow.gardenmediagroup.com/2018-garden-trends.

CLIMATE CONTROLLED

People can no longer rely on historical data to predict the climate in their own backyards. To adjust to these unpredictable times, we have outlined four climate controlled garden types. From wind-resistant gardens and desert gardens to rain gardens and freeze-proof gardens, each collection is designed to guide garden centers and gardeners toward successful choices for their climates.

While greenhouse growers have the ability to adapt to any climate they may be in, the end-user is still in need of education. Keeping up with the climate conditions and changes will make gardeners more confident in their purchases. Communicating which plants are adaptable to certain climates, such as Costa Farms' Desert Escape Collection, which stands up to hot, dry conditions, will make for more successful gardens.



SOCIAL NETWORK

Just as people utilize the benefits of networking, plants in gardens benefit from networking amongst themselves. It's time to shift from thinking of plants as individuals to thinking of them as a community.

Choosing plants that work in harmony allows management of the garden instead of maintenance of each plant, which makes gardening less stressful. Utilizing the effects of networking plants will help greenhouse growers successfully integrate plants with each other and take on the benefits of managing sections of the greenhouse — not individual plants. Plant communities, once established, are more for enjoyment and less for yard work.

Gardeners are going to be looking for more plants that do the hard work for them. Groundcovers such as sedge or golden groundsel will be in high demand. Plus, low grasses such as prairie dropseed, blue grama grass or buffalo grass help create that "green mulch" that gardeners of the future will desire.

IMPERFECT GARDENING

The ancient Japanese practice of Wabi-Sabi, an appreciation of the imperfections in life and the ability to age gracefully, is the new trend. Applying that perfectly imperfect attitude to the garden encourages an imitation of nature in a way that allows people to relax and appreciate humble and imperfect forms.

Understanding that gardeners no longer want perfect plants can boost profits and de-stress growers. Having fun with plants and exploring what goes well with other plants can help secure a sale. Gardeners will choose plants that do double or triple duty: they look good, are easy to manage and provide food for pollinators.

Allow natural beauty to shine in imperfect design, lawns and plants, and a peaceful, relaxing mindset will follow.

BREATHING ROOM

Take a moment to relax, unwind and clear the mind in new breathing rooms. Most people spend the bulk of their lives indoors, so the focus needs to shift to creating clean air around us.

Focus on growing the top indoor plants that clean the air

and help people breathe easier. Plants from Costa Farms' O2 For You Collection, such as the bromeliad and peace lily, reign supreme. As the trend continues to grow, the popularity of healthy indoor plants will continue to rise.

MAKE A SPLASH

As more public gardens receive overwhelmingly positive responses to reflective pools and fountains, there's proof that water is more popular now than ever before.

The growing trend of filtering water with plants helps with healthy water management, while still keeping beauty in the garden. Preparing the garden to embrace storms and excess rainfall will not only help save water by "rainscaping" but also help to control storm water runoff. Rainscape garden plants need to be more water absorbent to efficiently fulfill their purpose. Preparing plants for an abundance of rain and water while in the early stages will help their survival.

GROW YOUR OWN PROTEIN

There is a new consumer in town: The Flexitarian. Flexitarians are eating more plants and eating meat less often. Growing clean, sustainable, protein- rich foods at home is providing more control to the

consumer. Keeping a balanced diet starts with feeding plants the right nutrients such as Espoma's new organic liquid plant food line.

Gardeners tend to plant more transplants as they are introducing something new to a garden. Growing healthy seedlings that are rich in protein, such as edamame, peas and quinoa, will help keep profits up and consumers happy.

PURPLE REIGN

Purple is the color of 2018, mirroring Pantone's 2018 pallet "Verdure." Purple goes beyond the vibrant color and often indicates nutrient density and antioxidants in food. Grow more purple plants and colorful shrubs such as Bushel & Berry's new compact blueberry and blackberry plants. Purple foods promote mental focus, which is the first step in achieving mental wellness. *gpn*

Katie Dubow is creative director and Megan O'Connell is assistant account executive with Garden Media Group, a boutique public relations and marketing firm specializing in home, garden, horticulture, outdoor living, and lawn and landscape industries. They can be reached at katie@gardenmediagroup.com and megan@gardenmediagroup.com, respectively.



LEADS THE WAY

The America in Bloom national awards program brings out the best in hometowns and empowers communities to excel. Lead the way and experience the benefits by registering today.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION



HERITAGE PRESERVATION



PLANT BENEFITS

www.AmericaInBloom.org



SAFE
EFFECTIVE
PROVEN

RootShield® PLUS+ ... It Checks Out



For over 20 years our customers have trusted RootShield to control diseases and promote healthy root systems - safely.

With RootShield PLUS+ you get prevention of soilborne *Phytophthora*, and improved control of hot - season *Pythium*. It also controls diseases caused by *Cylindrocladium*, *Fusarium*, *Pythium*, *Rhizoctonia* and *Thielaviopsis*.

Safer for plants, workers and the environment - RootShield PLUS+ is the right choice for organic and IPM programs.

www.bioworksinc.com

(800) 877-9443

HOW YOU
GROW
MATTERS