

Chat ROOM

Editor's Note: Each month, we send out a survey to our readers on a variety of topics and report the results here. Chat Room is a perfect venue to get to know your peers and where you stand on different issues affecting the industry. Do you have a question you want us to ask? Contact editor, Jasmina Dolce, at jdolce@greatamericanpublish.com.

This month, we asked our readers about indoor potted plants, expectations for spring 2021, and safety and sanitation measures going into this season. Here's what they had to say.

Spring is here! Compared to the rollercoaster of 2020, are you projecting this year's sales to be up, down or about the same?

MORE THAN 75% SAID UP!

Is there anything you learned from spring 2020 that has helped you plan differently for spring 2021?

Here are some of your responses:

Customers are always looking for **something new**, but **still expect the usual** plant varieties.

We learned demand was up and we expected more orders, so **we had to plan our space capacity carefully**.

Prices are **not** the biggest purchasing factor.

Order seeds **well ahead** of time. **Keep extra** on hand.

Huge shift toward indoor plants as well as sustainably growing – customers are **experimenting a lot more** with growing their own plants either from seeds or cuttings.

Be **more flexible** with scheduling and continue to have **strong communication** with clients. Also, more frequent check-ins with employees.

Vegetables are **a must**.

Are you still under mandated restrictions?

MORE THAN 50% SAID YES!

Whether local mandates are in place or not, are there any safety/health measure you plan to implement this season for your employees and customers?

You said:

“ We continue to take temperatures daily. **All staff must wear masks at all times**, and we have a sanitation stand for anyone entering our premises.”

“ **Only 50% of employees allowed in the office at one time**. Greenhouse employees all onsite but wear masks and stay 6 feet apart.”

“ We have been **requiring all customers to wear masks**; we may relax that to highly encouraged in the near future. Staff will continue to wear masks in the store but may not in the greenhouse.”

“ The **level of cleanliness** required for healthy plants is also good for keeping humans healthy.”

“ **Additional cleaning** of bathrooms and public areas.”

“ We will continue to do pickup orders outside. In the past, our customers would pull into the headhouse and we'd help them load their vehicle. **In 2020, we put the carts of plants outside and they loaded their vehicles themselves**. They could take all the time they needed. It worked out well for everyone, so we will continue that indefinitely.”

“ **Continue to wear masks**, or at least carry them when we are communicating with client or running nursery errands. Having **sanitizer available** and sanitizing wipes for tools.”

Do you grow/sell potted plants, such as indoor or foliage crops?

65% SAID YES!

If you answered yes, what specific crops do you grow/sell?

YOU SAID:

- Kalanchoes
- Succulents
- Tropical foliage

- Ferns
- Easter lilies
- Hydrangeas
- Orchids

- Poinsettias
- Gerberas
- Violets
- Elatior begonias