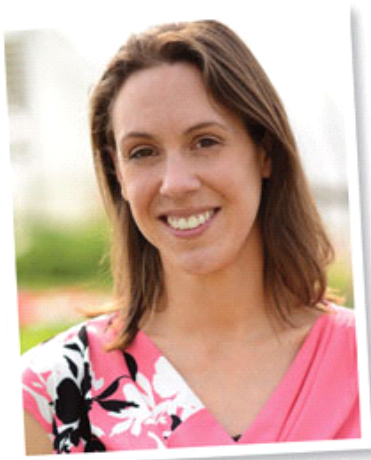


2/1/2018

Size Matters

Jennifer Polanz



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There's a lot of talk in the media about Millennials living in urban centers and not having much room, or moving into Tiny Homes (which I think happens less than it appears despite HGTV's shows). There's more to the story, though, based on overall national numbers and there's a big difference from inside space to outside, too.

For example, while the median size of American homes has slightly decreased, it's still around 2,453 sq. ft. (down from a high of 2,661), according to the National Association of Home Builders. The telling number, however, is in the lot sizes. The most recent data I could find was from 2015, but it showed that at 8,600 sq. ft., median lot sizes were the lowest since the U.S. Census Bureau Survey of Construction started tracking (which appears to be around 1992).

Of course, it all depends on where you live, but the median shown on a U.S. map indicated New England had the most land per detached home at 0.51 acres. The East South Central region (Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi) was next at 0.30 acres and the Midwest registered almost a quarter of an acre. Every other region was smaller.

Why all the talk of lot and home size? It starts to put into perspective at least one aspect of why container gardening and indoor houseplants/succulents has grown in popularity. Americans seem to have a lot more room to play with on the inside than on the outside. That doesn't mean they don't want beautiful porches, patios and even beds. It just means they have less room with which to work outside.

That's why we do the Pots, Baskets and Window boxes issue every February. These products are the facilitators for beautiful "gardens" inside and out. And make no mistake, customers who are doing mixed upright containers, hanging baskets and window boxes are gardening, even if it's not the traditional way our grandmothers did.

So what can you find inside to help your customers get started this year? You can check out the latest trends in containers. Then find some easy combo ideas from industry breeders to kick start your containers.

Don't just offer containers, though. Mason Day, co-founder of the GrowIt! social media gardening app, wrote a piece on a unique way to pair up customers with containers online. Meanwhile, Amanda Thomsen put on her reporter hat for a Q&A with The Horticult's Chantal Aida Gordon and Ryan Benoit to talk about how to level up when it comes to window boxes.

And finally, to address the tropicals in the room, Ellen Wells kicks off our year-long look at the houseplant department. Here she talks about how to best position them and the benefits they provide.

Here's to getting closer to spring! **GP**