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Front Lines

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Axiom’s Outlook for 2026

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Market research firm Axiom released its annual Gardening Outlook Study in late 2025 and the take-home message is this: The time and money spent on gardening in 2025 was the highest since 2022, and it looks like that trend will continue into 2026. In fact, 48% of survey respondents said they spent more time gardening this year than previously and nearly 50% said they spent more money. That’s good news for us, especially considering another finding from the study—that Home Depot declined (from 30% in 2024 to 24% in 2025) as the leading purchase outlet for garden supplies and plants.

Who’s doing all this gardening and spending? The study found that Gen Y (67%) and Gen Z (64%) spent more time gardening in 2025 over the previous year compared to Gen X (33%). Those same two cohorts also said they spent more on gardening year-over-year compared to the number of Gen X respondents who said they spent more. Ditto for their expectations for time and money spent in 2026.

The study is packed with all sorts of data and I’ve pulled out a few that will be of interest to you:

- 64% of respondents plan to plant more and expand their gardens in 2026
- Specific variety of plant type (36%) remained the most important decision factor; price (19%) and highly descriptive tags (11.6%) were the second and third most important decision factors
- 77% are willing to pay more for the specific color of flower or variety
- 52% are willing to drive 6 to 10 miles for the color or variety they want
- 39% made four to seven visits to IGCs during the 2025 gardening season
- 39% spent more than 30 minutes during each IGC visit
- 37% cited inspiration as the No. 1 driver to increase time and money spent at IGCs
- IGCs (22%) surpassed websites (20%) as the top information source
- IGCs (29%) were cited as having the most knowledgeable store associates of all retailers

Your time and attention to sharing information with customers is paying off! Also, note that more than half of gardeners are willing to travel for what they’re looking for. That means they need to know you have it. How are you going to let them know what you have?

Again, the study is chock full of important data that you can act on when planning for 2026. **GP**