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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

Young Gardeners Stoked
Organics Survey Coming
USDA Pilots Regenerative Ag
Biochar Education
Report from the MT Outpost

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Axiom Survey Shows Gardeners' Stoke

You'll find some positive news in Axiom's annual Gardening Outlook Study. Folks say they spent more time and money on gardening in 2025, and all signs point to that trend continuing into 2026. However, maybe the most interesting uptick in this survey was that people are feeling more successful in their gardening. Here are some fun numbers to ponder:

MORE TIME: 48% of survey respondents said they spent more time gardening this year than previously. And 34% spent 50% more time gardening, which is pretty impressive. Gen Y and Gen Z are leading the charge over Gen X in that category.

MONEY: Nearly 50% said they spent more money. Again, Gen Y led the way, with 61% spending more money on gardening. And for next year, 42.8% expect to spend more. However, for some, tight finances are an issue and led to less spending.

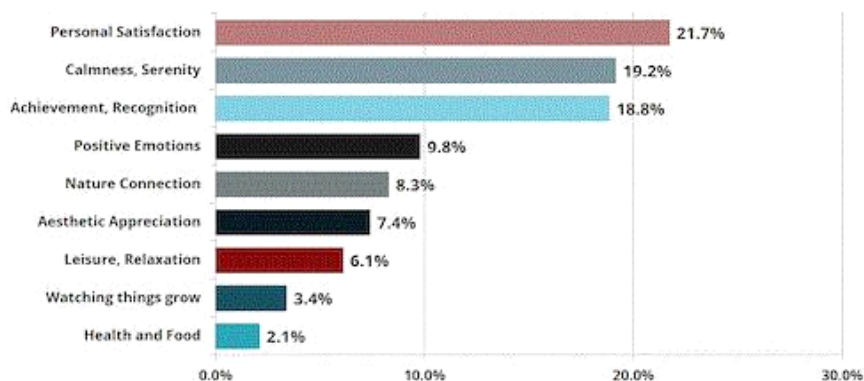
SUCCESS: 30.7% of respondents said they felt "very successful" with their gardening in 2025, which is up 19.5% over the previous year. And 63.5% said they plan to plant more and expand their garden next year (up 13.8% over last year).

IGCs: It looks like folks are leaning on the knowledge of their favorite independent garden centers. The top two "places to learn about new plants and garden supplies" include IGCs (22%) and websites (19.8%). Total increase is 31% for IGCs in 2025 vs. 2024. Total decrease for websites is 29.2% in 2025 vs. 2024.

And as for how gardening makes them feel? The answers are a good reminder that the rewards of gardening are often intangible.

The Value of Gardening

How does your garden make you feel? (All open-ended question)



The whole report is worth a read (with lots of easy-to-skim graphs). Download it [HERE](#).



Organic Survey Headed Your Way

You organic growers should be on the lookout for the 2025 Organic Survey from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). The agency just announced that they will conduct a 2025 organic survey (the last such survey was in 2021). They'll be gathering data on organic production, marketing practices, income and expenses in the U.S.

"Organic agriculture is a growing industry, and it is our job as a federal statistical agency to help measure this part of the agriculture sector," said NASS Administrator Joseph Parsons. "We are excited to provide data on organic agriculture that will help inform organic producers and other industry professionals to make informed decisions for their operations."

Expect to see a code to take the survey in your mailbox in December, followed by the mailing of full surveys in January. The 2025 Organic Survey is part of the Census of Agriculture Program and is required and protected by law (Title 7 USC 2204(g) Public Law 105-113). These federal laws require producers to respond, and USDA to keep identities and answers confidential. The deadline for response is February 5, 2026.



New USDA Regenerative Ag Pilot

A new Regenerative Agriculture pilot program has been [announced](#) by the USDA, with the goal of helping farmers adopt practices that improve soil health, enhance water quality and boost

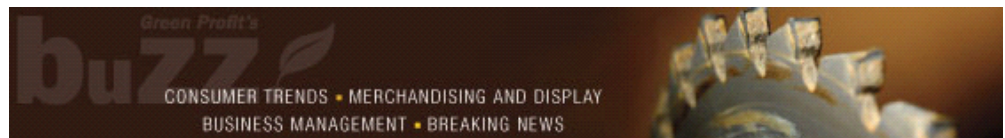
productivity. The announcement was made jointly between several U.S. agencies, citing that it would advance the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) agenda and help connect regenerative agriculture to public health.



U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins, alongside U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz, announced the \$700 million Regenerative Pilot Program.

Administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), this new Regenerative Pilot Program will help producers plan and implement whole-farm regenerative practices, and they'll be able to bundle multiple practices in one application. A press release from the USDA says that the program is for both beginning and advanced producers.

Farmers and ranchers interested in regenerative agriculture are encouraged to apply through their local NRCS Service Center by their state's ranking dates for consideration in FY2026 funding. Applications for both EQIP and CSP can now be submitted under the new single regenerative application process.



USBI Looks to Educate More Growers on Biochar

The U.S. Biochar Initiative (USBI) has launched a series of sessions to help U.S. growers make use of biochar. This week, they held their first two sessions in California, showing growers and ag professionals how to use best practices with biochar to improve their production. They also covered strategies for sourcing and storing biochar, as well as how to navigate federal and state cost-sharing programs. While these sessions drew field-growing participants, the organization says they have their eye on targeting controlled-environment agriculture as well.



USBI notes that biochar carbon credits are a sought-after tool in corporate sustainability strategies, and they're seeing a rising demand for biochar projects right now, which has tightened the credit market considerably.

Stay tuned for additional workshop dates as **USBI** expands their education program to visit other parts of the U.S.

Report from the MT Outpost



December hit hard.

As in, I hit the ice hard in a snowstorm and put myself on the injured list.

Which is how I ended up with the most giant Christmas tree in our living room.

I found myself directing our tree-cutting adventure from the bottom of a steep hill I couldn't climb. I'd yell, "How about that one?" as my tree cutter trudged along the hillside with a chainsaw. And then, "Or that one?" (The chainsaw, while highly unnecessary for this adventure, is his favorite tool.) You'd be surprised how minuscule that tree looked from my bottom-up perspective (plus, my tree cutter failed to contradict—or at least warn—me).

And thus there is a still-undecorated 14-ft. tree in my living room. I did manage to finish the holiday decorations over at our [Backroad Cabin rental](#), where we have a much more modest fir tree, trimmed out with dried citrus fruit and bells (my guests for Christmas would not book until I confirmed we would have a tree for them).

It turns out a lot of people are searching for an "old-fashioned Christmas."

Until next time,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer".

Jennifer Duffield White
jwhite@ballpublishing.com

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