

Is Gardening becoming a necessary life skill?

It is probably not so hard to believe from some of us who have been around the block before but one of the silver linings for us as Horticulturists in somewhat depressing times like these is that people have more time to spend reassessing their interests, what is important and un-important. So far it looks like the signs so far are telling us that nature, growing your own and generally appreciating the garden, parks and the free or not so expensive things in life are coming out as important.

In the USA there has been a very encouraging and dedicated lobby since last November to have a vegetable garden planted in the grounds of the White House and from the picture here you can see this has been successful and has begun. Congratulations are due to the idea instigator to the people who worked on and supported this project and for achieving such success. Have a look at the official White House Farmer website WWW.WHITEHOUSEFARMER.COM. With the eyes of the world on the new American first family this image on the Whitehouse farmer website has to be one of the most interesting garden images this month and many of us in the Horticulture world could not have imagined such an image emanating from such a prestigious and austere location until now.

A number of months ago I came across a saying from a contemporary American writer called Orson Scott Card which goes 'Unemployment is capitalism's way of getting you to plant a garden'. We have to hope that mass unemployment is not what it will take to get many of us to plant a garden. It's an unfortunate and interesting fact that sometimes it takes shocks of great magnitude to make some of us realize what's important and what's not. We can only hope now that when the world economy does eventually recover some lessons will have been learned and children will remember the folly of some of their elders in neglecting a few basic life skills and considerations that are the essence of our existence.

Whether it be for food or for pleasure plant life is beneficial to mankind even the humblest apparently undesirable weed gives benefit to the planet and our immediate environment. For those of us who depend on gardening for a living let's hope that the many skills in the industry the great plants, fruit and vegetables that are produced by our sector will be valued and appreciated much more, by a greater amount of people and a new kind of consumer and gardener. Lets hope our time in the sun has come.

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