

## *Canada's Garden Guru Mark Cullen Reveals His Predictions for the Top Trends of 2010*

1. Canadians will be paying down their debt - to the soil. As more and more Canadians realize that they cannot draw on the goodness of soil forever, they will be 'giving back' by adding generous layers of organic material including [you guessed it] COMPOST
2. From Garden to Fork. Inspired by the recent trend to eat food produced within 100 miles, Canadians will be growing more of their own food in their own yards and on balconies- Why? to control what is put on their food [ie. No chemicals], convenience, money saving and honest to goodness wholesomeness.
3. Naturally. Canadian gardeners are discovering -in increasing numbers - the benefits of gardening organically or [at least] in the absence of chemicals. Or at the VERY least the minimal use of chemicals.
4. Heritage Gardening. As more and more Canadians are prepared to pay a premium for 'heritage' or 'heirloom' tomatoes and other produce, they are also more interested in growing what their great grandparents grew..... look for heritage tomato varieties at garden retailers this spring.
5. Water Conservation. Gardeners are acutely aware of water use and are naturally concerned about the limited availability of water in most regions of the country. Look for an increase in the use of rain barrels and other 'water saving' devices including low pressure water sprinklers and water conserving products like the new Water Wick tea bags.
6. Bringing Nature Home. Gardeners are closely connected to the natural world and are designing their gardens in an effort to embrace the natural world around them rather than insulate themselves from it, as we did a generation ago... as a result lawns will get smaller, native plants will gain in popularity and birding in all forms [including bird feeding] will continue to rise in popularity.
7. Gardeners as Community minded activists. Gardeners are seeing themselves more as a vital part of the community as a whole, with sensitivity to historic attributes of our towns and cities, our public green spaces and the overall beauty of our communities. We will see horticultural societies and individual gardeners give time and resources to partnerships with Historic societies, conservation groups and a growing interest in Communities in Bloom.

8. Smaller is better. As house builders continue to build larger homes on smaller lots, the nature of gardening spaces will continue to 'intensify'. The popularity of dwarf conifers, small flowering trees and growing in containers will continue to grow.
9. Gardening as Therapy. As our population ages there is a growing appreciation for the therapeutic benefits of gardening.... Improved cognitive skills, sharper minds, better memory, lower blood pressure, increased flexibility and overall better health result from the ACTIVITY of gardening, regardless of age.
10. Gardening for the NEXT generation and Gardening for Pets. The emerging generations of gardeners are integrating their kids and grand kids [and even their pets!] into the gardening experience. In an effort to reduce the growth of 'nature deficit disorder' the garden is providing the perfect opportunity to engage young people in Mother Nature's world, right in our own backyards.

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