

Pushing for glory

You should find a new buzz of excitement at your local garden centre this spring.

By The Vancouver Sun February 8, 2008 [Be the first to post a comment](#)



You should find a new buzz of excitement at your local garden centre this spring.

Staff will be friendlier, signage will be clearer, plants will be displayed more creatively, and information will be more helpful.

You can expect to see some fantastic examples of hanging baskets and container planting -- bigger and better displays than anything you've seen before.

Your garden centre is working at becoming a more fun place to visit with more bonus features designed to make your shopping adventure a much more positive and productive experience.

Why are they doing all this? Well, I would like to say it is because of their love for you, the customer. But, no. Although there may be something of that to it, their real motive is not to look silly in the eyes of the world. Or, at least in the eyes of the world's top garden centre owners.

In September, the B.C. garden centre industry will be hosting the world -- 300 garden centre owners and operators from 18 countries.

Before they get here, there's a lot of work to do. The plan is to make our garden centres look spiffier, operate more efficiently, and hum with goodwill to all customers by then.

The goal is not only to make garden centres look more beautiful and attractive with sumptuous floral displays and intelligent product display, but to demonstrate just how professional and efficient our garden centres are.

All this has to be in place before the delegates arrive for the 50th annual congress of the International Garden

Centre Association.

The five-day event from Sept. 8 to 12 is being put on by the Canadian Landscape and Nursery Association in conjunction with the B.C. association. Delegates will be staying at the Westin Bayshore Hotel.

The beauty of all this is that B.C. gardeners are going to benefit from all the extra effort garden centres will be putting in to make a good impression.

swhysall@png.canwest.com

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q: I want to buy a greenhouse so I can start growing vegetables and flowers early. I also want to use it to overwinter tender plants that I grow in pots like fuchsias and pelargoniums. Do you have any tips before I take the plunge?

SW: Your first step should be to check out B.C. Greenhouse Builders website at www.bcgreenhouses.com.

If that doesn't satisfy all your questions, then I would give Christine Heinen a call there at 604-882-8408.

My best tip is to think carefully about regulating temperature. This is probably the most important aspect of owning a greenhouse.

Invest in a good thermostat rather than an expensive heater that comes with a thermostat. A quality thermostat can run any heater.

Pick a model of greenhouse that has good insulation and good roof vents. And don't skimp on space: you will always wish you had gone a little bit bigger.

I am told that triple-wall polycarbonate greenhouses with panels that are 5/8-inch thick are the best.

Finally, make lots of friends. You will no doubt grow far too many plants for your own use.