



GREENHOUSE GROWING



Growing Plants In
Your Own Greenhouse!

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Introduction

A growing number of people at least have one greenhouse story to share.

The idea of growing food at controlled temperatures all year round and extending the growing season have set fire to people's imaginations. No wonder the greenhouse building industry has recorded phenomenal growth.

From construction plans to tools and accessories for greenhouses, individuals are working on all fronts to satisfy the increasing demands of consumers who have made building their own greenhouses top priority. This trend, which started humbly in the 70's, is now a full-fledged endeavor on the part of greenhouse entrepreneurs and "homesteaders."

One greenhouse story told by a woman was particularly moving. Months before the spring, her husband bought the materials required for building a greenhouse. His plan was to attach it to the house.

The woman had protested because he was at the same time going through radiation and chemotherapy treatments for his cancer. His wife said he should be resting instead of putting about with shelves and glass and plastic.

What he said broke her heart. He wanted to build and finish the greenhouse while he still had some strength left, because he knew for a long time that she had always wanted one in their backyard. He said he wanted to see the joy in her face when she started planting her tomatoes or gardenias or whatever else she wanted to put there.

Greenhouses are an extension of our personalities. Most especially, it mirrors our soul and what we want from life.

Chapter 1: a Peek into a Greenhouse: a Primer

What is a greenhouse?

A greenhouse is also called a glasshouse or a hothouse. It is a structure where plants – fruits, vegetables, flowers – are grown. It attracts heat because the sun’s electromagnetic radiation warms the plants, soil, and other components within the greenhouse. Air is warmed from the hot interior area inside the structure through the roof and wall.

How does a greenhouse capture heat?

A greenhouse uses a special kind of glass that acts as a medium which selectively transmits spectral frequencies. Spectral comes from the word “spectrum”.

In layman’s terms, a spectral frequency can be defined in terms of the following principle: any object in the universe emits, radiates or transmits light. The distribution of this light along an electromagnetic spectrum is determined by the object’s composition.

Therefore, the glass of a greenhouse traps energy within the greenhouse and the heat in turn provides heat for the plants and the ground inside the greenhouse. It warms the air near the ground, preventing it from rising and leaving the confines of the structure.

For example, if you open a small window near the roof of a greenhouse, the temperature drops significantly. This is because of the autovent automatic cooling system. An autovent is simply a device used by