

Discover Plants

the surprising side of

Tip: they're not just "pretty"



Benefits for gardeners



Great landscapes save money and make a difference

Working in a plant-filled office can make you healthier

Your community will be better with more plants



Find out what plants can do for you where you live, work, and play.

Did you know that plants are among the hardest working living things on our planet?

Plants are giving back...to you...your family...your work...and your community. They offer environmental, economic, mental, and physical benefits. Consider this: Plants provide us with food, medicine, shelter, and much more, while also offering habitat for all kinds of creatures and improving the environment.

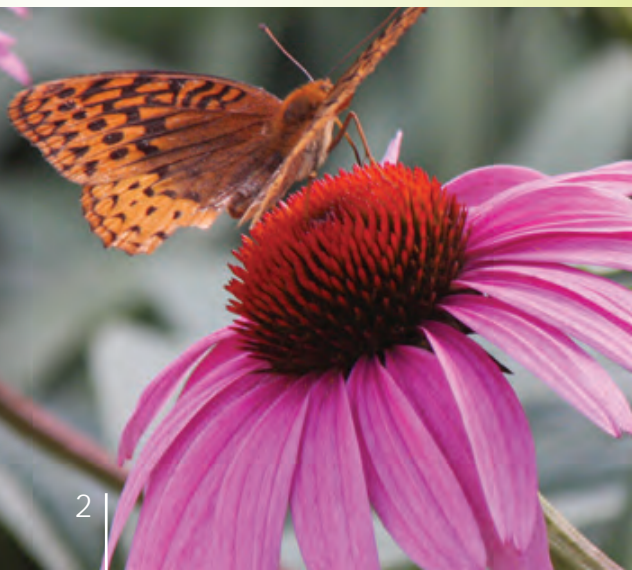
Every day, healthy landscapes produce oxygen that we breathe, use CO₂, and sequester carbon. They even make cities cooler while removing pollutants from the air. *Great news!*



Your connection with nature is essential for optimal health, happiness, and well-being. Enjoy plants in your home and office. Spend time in parks. Let plants and trees work for you in ways you've never imagined. *They work for free!*

At home, at work, in your neighborhood - indoors and out - plants of all types - flowers, shrubs, trees, and even grasses and groundcovers, make a difference in your quality of life.

Whether it's providing food, cleaning the air, or simply giving you pleasure, every hour of every day, plants are working hard to make your life better.



Plants

for friendship...



- *Did you know?* In addition to making your home look attractive, a well-kept landscape adds to your property value.

Tip: Your neighbors will like it.

- *Did you know?* Shade trees reduce cooling costs during summer. While trees are saving energy, they're also reducing noise and adding privacy.

Tip: Use trees and shrubs as a living fence; they make good neighbors, too!

- *Did you know?* Vegetables blend with flowers and shrubs. You don't need a dedicated "veggie" garden in the back corner of the yard to enjoy the fresh flavors of homegrown food. Flowers attract bees and butterflies to your vegetables.

Tip: A good pollinator habitat is good for the world.

- *Did you know?* Research has shown that most recipients feel very positively about flowers and plants as gifts and overwhelmingly translate those feelings into positive feelings about the gift-giver as well.

Tip: Surprise a relative or friend with a gift of plants or flowers just because you appreciate them.

Speak with the professionals at your local flower and plant retailers about adding plants...pleasure...benefits...to your home, your life, your work and your town.



Plants *for the home...*

- *Did you know?* Adding to your landscape is the only home improvement - inside or out - that will add a value greater than what you spend.
- *Did you know?* Besides shading your home on summer's hottest days, situated appropriately, trees and shrubs can also serve as windbreaks, saving money on winter's heating bills.
- *Did you know?* Vegetables look terrific mixed with flowers and shrubs? Have you considered a blueberry hedge? It can offer multi-season interest. Fruit trees can offer spring bloom, followed by fruit, summer shade, and fall color.
- *Did you know?* Flowers in your garden help to stimulate your senses while reducing stress. Some flowers make great cut flowers, so you can bring the color and fragrance indoors.
- *Did you know?* Flowers indoors are great mood enhancers; they stimulate creativity and memory, and even help bring a smile to the faces of residents and visitors.





At Loveland Elementary School in Loveland, Ohio, the entire campus is a garden tended by teachers, students, and volunteers. This award-winning garden is used throughout the curriculum.

Plants *for schools...*

More and more schools are discovering that gardens on the school grounds can enhance every part of the curriculum, while engaging teachers and students in the joys of gardening.

- *Did you know?*
School gardens grow kids, too!

Studies show that being around plants helps children to:

- improve concentration
- boost creativity
- improve memory
- enhance health
- improve grades



Plants *for neighborhoods...*

- *Did you know?* Transforming a vacant lot into a community garden will give you a chance to grow flowers, fruits, and vegetables, while making new friends, learning new skills, and getting to know your neighbors better.

Tip: Trade some of what you grow with other gardeners.

- *Did you know?* Vacant land improvements result in surrounding housing values increasing by as much as 30%? Imagine the impact of a community garden to your entire neighborhood!

Tip: Share your tools.

- *Did you know?* Plants assist in controlling storm water runoff. Trees, shrubs, groundcovers and grasses can help stabilize soil by reducing wind, water and soil erosion. Plants used as a screen can also help to reduce light pollution. Plants can also help to mitigate water pollution.

Tip: Plant a rain garden.



Bexley, OH

Plants *for the workplace...*



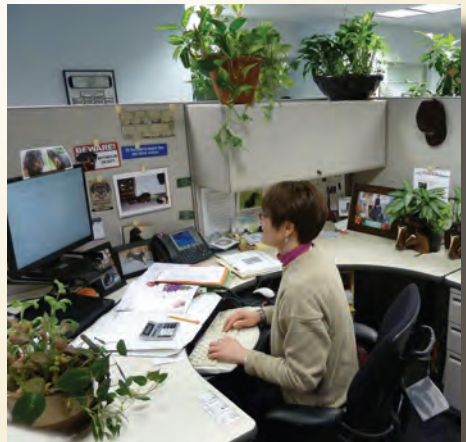
Successful merchants know that an attractive storefront draws customers. Want to enhance an entire shopping district? Get merchants together to create an overall beautification effort. Not only will this increase shopping traffic, it will keep shoppers in the area longer. And it will reduce store vacancies!

- *Did you know?* Plants have been shown to offer greater benefits than artwork or other office furnishings in sparking creativity among employees. Want a creative workforce? Encourage employees to bring plants to work.

Tip: Remind them to bring a watering can.

- *Did you know?* Plants reduce office pollutants and reduce employee sick time by 14%.

Tip: That's probably because plant-filled rooms contain 50-60% fewer airborne molds and bacteria than rooms without plants.



Plants for community...

Plants make your community

- more inviting
- safer
- healthier
- more prosperous

Plants at town gateways are great “welcome mats,” greeting visitors, potential new residents, and employers.



Did you know? Strategically placed plants deter litter, graffiti, and crime, making neighborhoods and downtowns cleaner and safer, and reducing costs. Attractively landscaped areas shout the presence of people who care. Statistically, the more plants you have, the lower the crime rates.

Interesting median plantings or borders along roads can help calm drivers, slow traffic, and even designate thoroughfares or parking areas. Attractive civic plantings announce to visitors that they have arrived at a special place, promoting jobs and tourism.



One of the top factors residents associate with the place they call “home” is an aesthetically pleasing environment enhanced by the natural beauty that trees, shrubs, flowers, and other plant materials add. A stable population helps to increase productivity (GNP) and ultimately attracts employers to your community.

Could more plants improve your town?

Check these photos and decide for yourself.



Buffalo, MN



New Bedford, MA



Vernal, UT



Horseheads, NY



Springfield, OH



Williston, VT

Plants *for YOU...*

Parks, botanic gardens, trails, sports fields, and other urban green spaces can favorably impact your health (and reduce health care costs) by providing you with inexpensive and convenient recreational opportunities. Even those who don't garden appreciate exercising in green spaces. Excellent turf and ground covers make this possible.

Did you know? Hospital patients experience accelerated healing not only when exposed to flowers and potted plants in their rooms, but also when they have views of beautifully landscaped areas around the hospital.

Did you know? Gardening is one of the most rewarding forms of exercise for people of all ages. Stretching, bending, pushing, pulling, weight-bearing...gardening offers a broad range of benefits to all your muscle groups.

Most of the images in this brochure are from America in Bloom's participating communities, which understand the value of plants at home, at work, at play, and around town.



It's clear...flowers, plants, trees, and quality landscaping are **NECESSITIES**, not luxuries.



Speak with your local flower or plant provider today. Professionals throughout the horticulture industry are ready to provide suggestions on how to add plants to your home, business, or community landscapes, inside and out.

In these few pages, we've barely touched on all the benefits plants offer. Volumes have been written on these topics, and America in Bloom is proud to have collected many of the best scientific references for your further reading.

For full references on the benefits of plants, visit www.americainbloom.org, click the Resources tab and check the "Benefits of Plants - Health" and "Benefits of Plants - Economic" sections. We welcome your inquiries on how to add more life to your landscape and more flowers and plants to your life.

Email us at aib@ofa.org.

America in Bloom proudly presents an annual national awards program honoring cities and towns that excel in using horticulture, preserving the environment, honoring their heritage, and involving all sectors of the community to make their town an exemplary place to live, work, and play.



Please check our web site for details of our annual awards program and what participation can mean to your city. Be sure to ask for a FREE Community Action Kit that contains everything you need to promote America in Bloom in your city.

Want to know more about the best practices of America in Bloom cities and towns?

Visit www.americainbloom.org and order "Ten Years of Best Ideas" with nearly 2,000 best practices and photos from participating America in Bloom communities across the country. You'll be amazed and inspired.



America in Bloom promotes nationwide beautification through education and community involvement by encouraging the use of flowers, plants, trees, and other environmental and lifestyle enhancements. America in Bloom is an independent, non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization and contributions to AIB are tax deductible.

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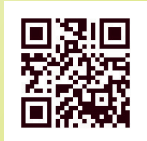


Planting pride in our communities!

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Contact AIB at AIB@AmericainBloom.org



Talk to the professionals at your local florist, greenhouse, garden center, landscaper or nursery about adding plants...pleasure... benefits to your home, to your life, to your work and to your town.