



Americans are planting

By GILLIAN FLACCUS
Associated Press Writer

LONG BEACH, Calif. (AP) — With the recession in full swing, many Americans are returning to their roots — literally — cultivating vegetables in their backyards to squeeze every penny out of their food budget.

Industry surveys show double-digit growth in the number of home gardeners this year and mail-order companies report such a tremendous demand that some have run out of seeds for basic vegetables such as onions, tomatoes and peppers.

“People’s home grocery budget got absolutely shredded and now we’ve seen just this dramatic increase in the demand for our vegetable seeds. We’re selling out,” said George Ball, CEO of Burpee Seeds, the largest mail-order seed company in the U.S. “I’ve never seen anything like it.”

Gardening advocates, who have long struggled to get America grubby, have dubbed the newly planted tracts “recession gardens” and hope to shape the interest into a movement similar to the victory gardens of World War II.

Those gardens, modeled after a White House patch planted by Eleanor Roosevelt in 1943, were intended to inspire self-sufficiency, and at their peak supplied 40 percent of the nation’s fresh produce, said Roger Doiron, founding director of Kitchen Gardeners Inter-

national. Doiron and several colleagues are petitioning President Obama to plant a similar garden at the White House as part of his call for a responsible, eco-friendly economic turnaround. Proponents have collected 75,000 signatures on an online petition.

“It’s really part of our history and it’s part of the White House’s history,” Doiron said. “When I found out why it had been done over the course of history and I looked at where we are now, it makes sense again.”

But for many Americans, the appeal of backyard gardening isn’t in its history — it’s in the savings.

The National Gardening Association estimates that a well-maintained vegetable garden yields a \$500 average return per year. A study by Burpee Seeds claims that \$50 spent on gardening supplies can multiply into \$1,250 worth of produce annually.

Doiron spent nine months weighing and recording each vegetable he pulled from his 1,600-square-foot garden outside Portland, Maine. After counting the final winter leaves of Belgian endive, he found he had saved about \$2,150 by growing produce for his family of five instead of buying it.

Adriana Martinez, an accountant who reduced her grocery bill to \$40 a week by gardening, said there’s peace of mind in knowing where her food comes from. And she said the effort has fostered a sense of community

19th Annual

KXXZ The Ride

790 AM 100.3 FM

and the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce

Better Home & Living Show

March 27, 28, & 29

Colby Community Bldg. * FREE Admission

• Show Hours •

Fri.: 4 - 8 p.m.; Sat.: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Sun.: 11 a.m. - 3p.m.

DOOR PRIZES

Concessions available

Hundreds of Ideas for Better Living!

BERINGER
B
HARDWARE

Come see us at the Home Show and see what we have to offer!!

elltel
wireless
authorized agent

Whirlpool
HOME APPLIANCES



Benjamin Moore
PAINTS

PAINTS and
PAINT SUPPLIES

PRICED RIGHT
Everyday!



165 W. 4th • Colby
460-2432



The
ULTIMATE
Lawn
Fertilizer

