



## Gifts for Gardeners

By Marie Woodward, UConn Home & Garden Education Center



*Purchase a holiday plant for that gardener on your list. Photo by dmp2023*

Getting the perfect holiday gift for your favorite garden geek can pose a real challenge. They probably already have a library full of garden books and a shed full of tools. So, to help you find the perfect gift, we surveyed the pros at the UConn College of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture and the UConn Home and Garden Education Center and received a number of gift suggestions we think any gardener would love to have. Here are their 2023 choices: the perfect gifts for the gardener in your life - even if that gardener is you. Please note, no endorsement of products are meant.

Frank Catalano, a graduate of UConn's prestigious plant science program, combined his skills as an engineer with his love of plants to invent a revolutionary new line of planters and seed starters under the Naked Root brand ([www.nakedroot.us](http://www.nakedroot.us)), Naked Root planters — 3-inch, 5-inch. and 8-inch — are specially designed to allow roots to grow and breathe without ever becoming root bound. It is also a sure-fire cure for overwatering, too, which is the number one enemy of houseplants. In addition to creating beautiful and functional planters in several sizes and colors, Frank and his wife, Lisa, created a unique line of compactly storable, washable, and reusable starter pots that take advantage of Naked Root's special air root-pruning method to produce stronger, more grow-worthy starter plants. Naked Root can help your favorite gardener get next spring's planting off to a healthier start, which could lead to a much more abundant harvest, every gardener's ultimate goal. Prices start at \$7.99 Nakedroot.us

Even when wearing long sleeve shirts, many gardeners find they still get sunburned, thorn-scratched, and sometimes even itchy-rash arms while working in their gardens. Developed by a farmer, Farmer's Defense long, stylish protective work sleeves put an end to that, and does it in

style. Farmer's Defense protective sleeves are made to keep gardeners comfortable and protected from UV rays, scratches from prickly plants, burns from the sun, or rashes from a reaction. The sleeves are made out of recycled materials and come in compostable packaging. Farmer's Defense cares about the world you garden in as much as it cares about you. The company also donates a portion of all proceeds to causes such as saving the bees, defeating breast cancer, garden social rehabilitation programs, special needs farm programs, and more: So, when your gardener asks you what you're getting them for the holiday, you can tell them honestly, you've got something up your sleeve.

No doubt about it, a gardener can never have too many pruners. But how do you select the right pruner, without over-pruning your budget? Gerossi High Carbon Bypass pruners are equipped with high-quality SK5 carbon steel blades with superb sharpness and edge retention. They also have non-slip and ergonomic handles for less strain on your hands and can cut through branches up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch thick. Gerossi High Carbon Bypass Pruners are an all-purpose, highly rated pair of pruning shears at a price that will fit any budget.

Maybe the best garden gift is one that will get your favorite gardener through the winter, rather than out in the spring. Similar to Paintbar events, Bonsai Bars ([www.bonsaibar.com](http://www.bonsaibar.com)) teach participants how to grow and care for bonsai trees. Adult gardeners of all abilities are welcome to come and learn all about bonsai trees. Bonsai events are held at breweries and distilleries all over Connecticut. A great gift for date night. Classes start at \$75.00 per person.



*Interested in bonsai, check out a bonsai bar near you. Photo by dmp2023*

What gardener couldn't use a dedicated potting bench? This one has a galvanized steel countertop and plenty of storage space for tools, potting soil. Oh, and did I say it's a back saver too?

Holiday plants are always a hit. Choose from large or small poinsettias, holiday cacti, kalanchoe, cyclamen, rosemary topiaries or even a dish garden or floral arrangement.

And if you are still unsure what to get that gardener on your list, why not a gift card to their favorite garden center? You (and your favorite gardener) will have the fun of knowing they can

spend the winter months searching through catalogs and peering at store displays with the card in hand that will help them get what they really want.

That's it for this year. We at the UConn Home and Garden Center want to wish you and yours a happy holiday season and great weather for the best growing season in 2024. Brand names appearing in this newsletter are for product identification purposes only. No endorsement is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products not mentioned.

For your gardening questions, feel free to contact us, toll-free, at the UConn Home & Garden Education Center at (877) 486-6271, visit our website at [www.homegarden.cahnr.uconn.edu](http://www.homegarden.cahnr.uconn.edu) or contact your local Cooperative Extension center.