

# Nursery and Landscape Jobs

Horticulturists work with plants and trees and use their scientific knowledge to help them grow. Careers are available in a variety of fields, including nurseries, garden centers, government agencies, or landscape installation, maintenance or irrigation companies. Horticulturist provide a wide range of services so they must have knowledge of the entire industry. They must demonstrate an ability to communicate, work well with others and provide excellent customer service.

## Nursery & Garden Center

Working in a nursery among the scent of blossoms and interesting foliage is a popular career choice for those who love the outdoors. A nursery worker's duties range from cultivating plants and keeping pests at bay to detecting plant diseases and answering customer inquiries. Some nursery workers are responsible for growing plants, trees and flowers, while some are responsible for propagating from seed, cuttings, or tissue culture.

Garden centers focus on the sale of plants and horticultural products to the general public. They are a direct link between producers and consumers. Many consumers look to garden centers for tips on how to nurture potted plants, as well as tricks to rid their gardens of pests. In addition to customer service, garden centers employees may put their creative talents to work designing merchandise displays, selecting items (including plants, flowers, and lawn decorations) for the store to stock and sell, or helping customers design their gardens. Writing newsletters for customers and developing advertising campaigns are other responsibilities often taken on by garden center employees.

## Landscaping

Horticulturists conduct landscaping activities and design attractive grounds through their expert selection and placement of plants. Applicants should know about which plants are placed in different kinds of light, plants which should be placed together or not and how plants are selected to enhance the environment. The job might require directing projects for repair or improvement of a landscape, so prospective employers might check knowledge of coordinating labor, equipment and materials. Knowledge of Florida Friendly Landscaping™ Principles and Green Industry Best Management Practices for the protection of our natural resources is also important to know.

## Administrative Skills and Interacting with Customers

Oral and written communication is essential to prepare reports for superiors, clients and customers, and to be able to answer queries from visitors. Basic mathematical skills are also essential to calculate areas, circumferences and volume. Another important skill is to be able to understand instructions.

While retail nurseries attract customers to shop for plants and get advice and recommendations, most jobs within nursery and landscape interact with customers of some sort. Nursery workers answer inquiries from wholesale buyers about the characteristics of plants sold. Landscape workers interact with property owner when maintaining or enhancing a landscape.

## Physical Requirements

The job of a horticulturist includes a lot of physical labor, so hiring managers will want to know applicants' capability of dealing with long hours outdoors, working with their hands, lifting heavy weights, and working in hot, humid conditions in all kinds of weather.