

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

11/1/2024

Hort School Enrollment Hits 10-Year High

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An enrollment survey conducted by North Carolina State University in collaboration with Seed Your Future indicates that bachelor's program enrollment reached a 10-year high in 2021 and nearly half (47%) of universities surveyed in 2024 reported increased enrollment over the past five years. Two-year horticulture programs, which had faced a long period of decline, have also seen an uptick, particularly following the disruptions caused by the COVID pandemic.

John Dole, study co-author, noted, "It's important to recognize that the rise in student numbers began before the pandemic, which further amplified interest in horticulture."

Co-author Melinda Knuth added, "Looking at historical data helps us strategize for the future. The steady rise in female and Hispanic students over the last decade is promising, and as we move forward, it's crucial to assess how well we are meeting the diverse needs of all students."

The study also highlights an encouraging trend at four-year universities: more students are entering horticulture programs directly from high school rather than transferring in, signaling a deeper interest in the field among younger students.

Among bachelor's degree programs, Colorado State University leads the nation in horticulture enrollment, followed by Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo, Oregon State University, Texas Tech and Washington State University. For associate degrees, Pennsylvania State University had the highest enrollment in 2021, with Michigan State, NC State, Ohio State and the University of Massachusetts rounding out the top five. Regionally, the West boasted the highest number of horticulture students, followed by the South, Midwest and Northeast.

Jazmin Albarran, Director of Seed Your Future, shared her enthusiasm about the growing interest in horticultural careers. Since its founding in 2014, the organization has been committed to raising awareness and inspiring the next generation of horticulture professionals. Jazmin emphasized the need for continued industry engagement to sustain this momentum, noting that Seed Your Future has developed several initiatives aimed at reaching even more students.

Read the full College & University Enrollment Survey Report 2024 [HERE](#). **GT**