

GROWERTALKS

Inside Look

4/1/2021

Heavy Home Improvements

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Being stuck at home for a full year has shined a bright light on the many things that need to be done around our house. If you're a homeowner, you know it never ends.

Doug and I knew that these things needed to be done, but we always put a Band-Aid on it or pushed it aside because we thought the money would be better spent going on a vacation or tickets to a game. (We're not that terrible with money; we just prioritize fun over frugality. Which I guess makes us bad with money. Oh well.)

But since we haven't done any of the expensive fun stuff for a while, we've managed to put some money to the side for some much-needed upgrades, despite Doug only working part-time for the past year. Now that the snow in Chicago-land is all melted and the weather is getting better, we're going to be busy doing some improvements during the next few weeks, including repairs on our garage and front doors, and all of the

wood trim around the outside of the house.

It'll be a relief when it's all done. We didn't realize how much it was hanging over our heads.

I thought about this as I was talking to a few growers for this month's cover story. Because of the gardening demands during the pandemic, all of them had a good 2020 and the sales windfall will allow them to make some facility upgrades. It turns out there have been some things on their improvement wish list that was hanging over their heads, too.

No major greenhouse or home improvement project comes without a little trepidation, but sometimes you just have to do it. You've crunched the numbers, you've got the money NOW. It's falling apart/getting old/becoming obsolete—time to move it off the To-Do List and onto the Done List.

The decision to invest in anything major for your greenhouse shouldn't be taken lightly, but it shouldn't be that hard if you know your costs. These growers and a couple of equipment suppliers lay out ways any grower can keep their operation current by investing in their business.

We have other articles that are in the realm of greenhouse improvement, too, like how to properly measure your structure for poly film; quick and easy ways to save time and increase productivity; and lighting strategies for

growing plugs indoors.

It's not just checking off some major stuff on our home improvement To-Do List that's making me feel lighter somehow; it's also the changing of the season to spring and brighter hopes on the horizon with regard to the pandemic. I guess the peeling paint on our wood trim wasn't the only thing that's been weighing us down. **GT**