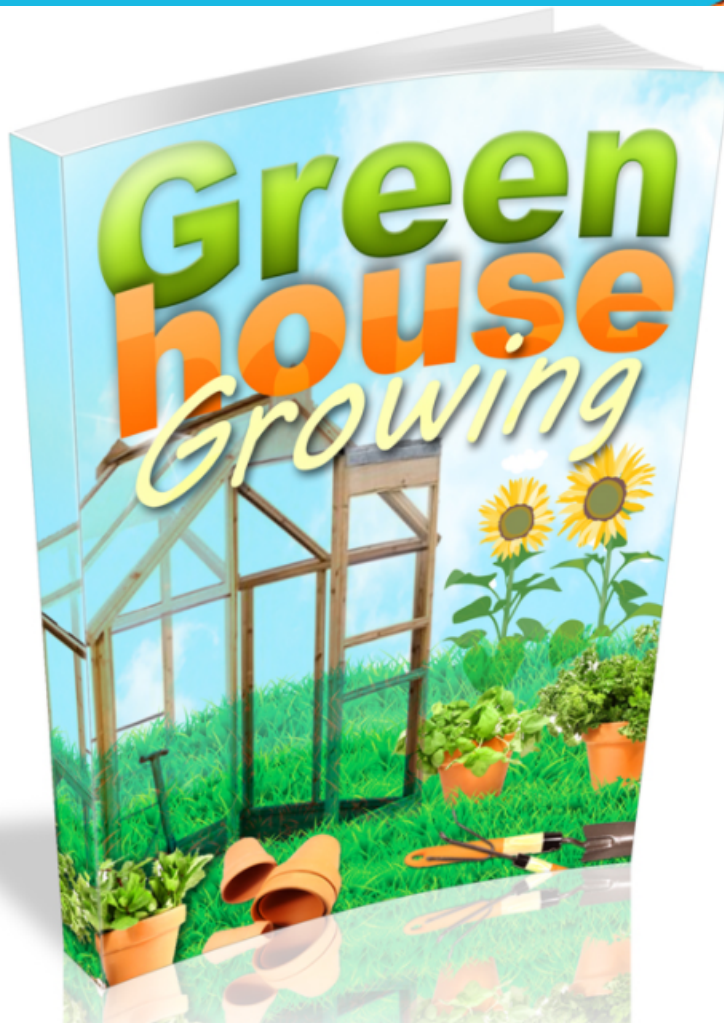


GREENHOUSE GARDENING KNOW HOW



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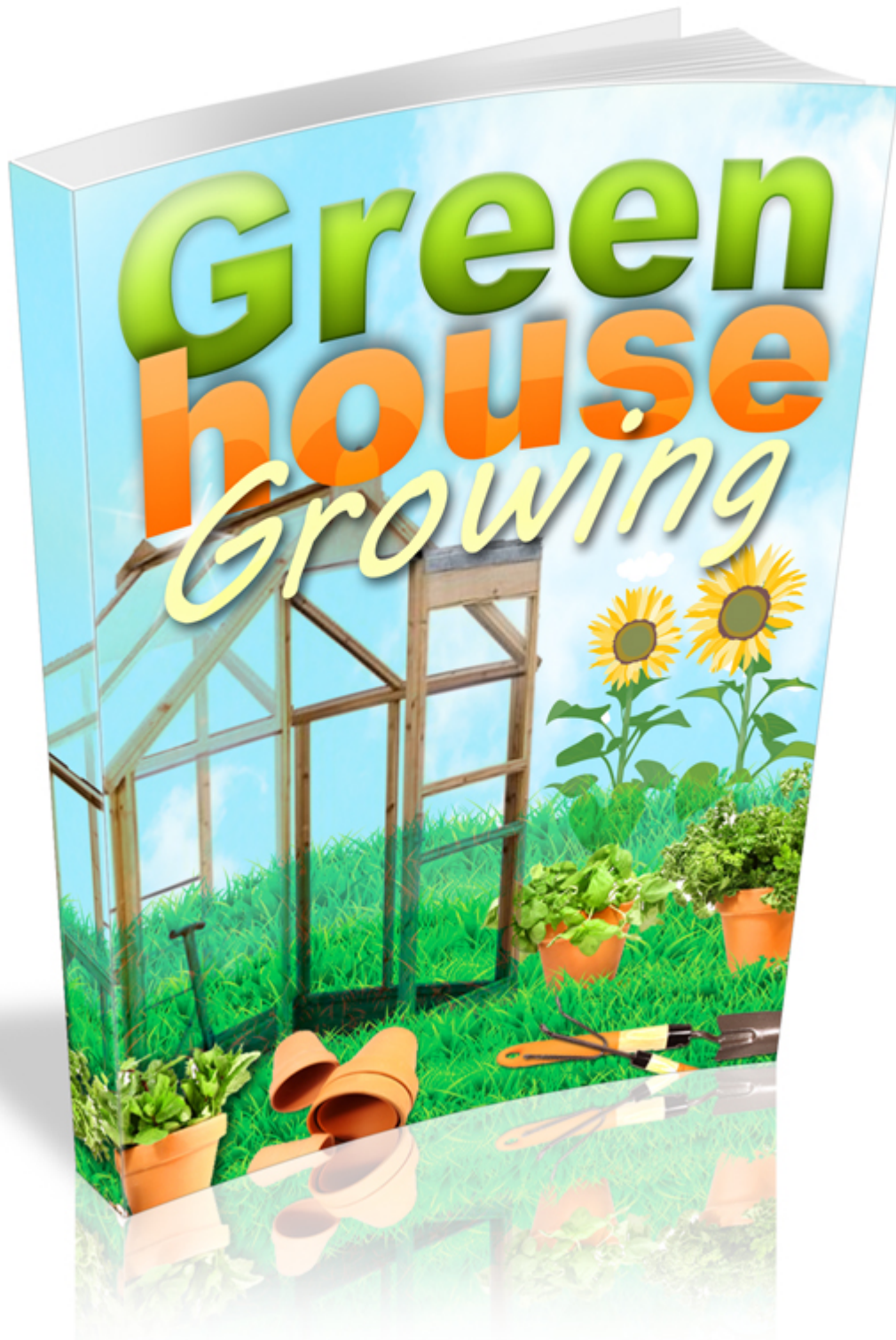
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Introduction

A growing number of people at least have one greenhouse story to share.

The idea of growing food at controlled temperatures all year round and extending the growing season have set fire to people's imaginations. No wonder the greenhouse building industry has recorded phenomenal growth.

From construction plans to tools and accessories for greenhouses, individuals are working on all fours to satisfy the increasing demands of consumers who have made building their own greenhouses top priority. This trend, which started humbly in the 70's, is now a full-fledged endeavor on the part of greenhouse entrepreneurs and "homesteaders."

One greenhouse story told by a woman was particularly moving. Months before the spring, her husband bought the materials required for building a greenhouse. His plan was to attach it to the house.

The woman had protested because he was at the same time going through radiation and chemotherapy treatments for his cancer. His wife said he should be resting instead of puttering about with shelves and glass and plastic.

What he said broke her heart. He wanted to build and finish the greenhouse while he still had some strength left, because he knew for a long time that she had always wanted one in their backyard. He said he wanted to see the joy in her face when she started planting her tomatoes or gardenias or whatever else she wanted to put there.

Greenhouses are an extension of our personalities. Most especially, it mirrors our soul and what we want from life.

And what we want is a steady supply of home-grown healthy food. During these precarious times when terrorist attacks and life-threatening calamities can cast us in the dark indefinitely, we have one thing we can be sure of – the tomatoes and cucumbers that are in the food basket in the kitchen will tide us over should the country go on emergency mode.

The sweet potatoes and carrots will be around, and there will be more from the greenhouse to feed our families for a few weeks before things return to normal.

Not that we believe that a shortage will ever happen, the country has become much more prepared for any kind of emergency, but just on the off chance...

If greenhouses can save our lives, we may, at some point in time, consider the idea of building one soon, a first step towards self-sufficiency.

It's not just a constant supply of healthy food that concerns individuals, but a greenhouse – and building it – can be sources of pure enjoyment and clean fun for everyone in the family. Most greenhouse owners are familiar with the advantages of growing their own plants and flowers, prolonging the growing season and the possibility of heating their home. And who knows? They could be selling fresh produce in the communities they live in.

There are many greenhouse models to choose from. You can go from affordable to very expensive. You can build a greenhouse by using junk or a plastic film stretched over a rudimentary structure, or purchase elaborate metal and glass pre-manufactured sun-rooms.

Each of them serves the fundamental function of extending the growing season. Even the question of irrigation can be simple or complex, depending on your preferences.

Just want to make it a hobby? Why not? Homeowners attach theirs to their homes. Even schools have greenhouses built by elementary and high school students.

Finally, the wholesome taste of a home-grown tomato! Everyone knows there is a difference. But really, between you and I, it goes beyond just tomatoes.

Perseverance, labor of love and the sweet anticipation of "harvest time" are what truly matter.