

Washington flower grower Erin Benzakein and son Jasper in her field of alliums and wood hyacinths



**The Western pioneer**

**Budding ambition**

Erin Benzakein has turned her two Washington acres into a sustainable flower farm

**What makes sustainable flowers important?** Buying them helps reduce the use of jet fuel, keeps money in your local economy—and you enjoy healthier blooms.

**Beyond organic practices, how do you limit your farm's carbon footprint?**

I schedule my Seattle flower deliveries for two days a week so I don't have to drive more than necessary. My little van gets packed to the brim.

**What is the next sustainable frontier?** Buying more locally grown products: not just milk, meat, and eggs, but also honey, gourmet cheeses, even wine and cider.

**Which gardening trends impress you these days?** Everyone I know is changing the way they see and use their yards, especially in cities. Lawns are being replaced by vegetable gardens, flowers, and fruits—even chicken coops. It's fantastic.

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