



Launch of The Edible Garden Show postponed until 2011

The painfully slow recovery from recession has forced organisers to postpone next month's (March 19-21) Edible Garden Show following concerns among potential sponsors and exhibitors over the uncertain economy.

The first-ever national event dedicated exclusively to 'Grow Your Own' fruit and vegetables was targeted to reflect the phenomenal explosion of interest among the public for home-grown produce and healthy eating. Although the imaginative concept for the new show had been well received, organisers found increasing difficulty in securing commitment from enough exhibitors to justify the scheduled launch on Friday, March 19, 2010.

The Edible Garden Show will now debut on March 18-20, 2011 at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, with organisers confident that the new date will allow time to maximise the number of exhibitors attending and to secure sponsorship deals.

Exhibitions expert Brian Wiseman, a shareholder and one of the key players behind The Edible Garden Show, said: "We always knew we faced an immense challenge to launch a national show of this scale against the backdrop of recession. When we decided to go ahead with the project back in September 2009 there were signs of the green shoots of recovery. There was real hope that the UK would be coming out of recession early in 2010.

"Unfortunately the speed of the economic recovery has been far slower in the UK than in many other nations, which has resulted in a natural reluctance for businesses to commit to expenditure in such an uncertain climate. Our concept has been well received and it has been widely recognised that, in The Edible Garden Show, we have a recipe for an exciting and innovative new national event.

"Timing has simply been against us with a number of potential exhibitors expressing their keenness to be involved but at the same time being cautious to committing themselves financially when there is still such uncertainty about the economic future."

Mr Wiseman added: "Naturally we are disappointed. A great deal of time, effort and money has been invested so far in this project. We might be downhearted at the moment but we remain unwavering in our belief in the show and that we have a concept which will be a massive hit with exhibitors, sponsors and the public."

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The show had already won official endorsements from two of the most high-profile organisations in the gardening and agriculture world – the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG), which boasts 103,000 members in the UK at over 2,000 allotment societies, and the Royal Agricultural Society of England. Both organisations have pledged their continuing support for the show and back the decision to postpone the launch until 2011.

The National Federation of Women's Institutes was also supporting the show with cookery demonstrations due to be conducted at the event by the WI's National Cookery School. Organisers had also secured a national media partner for the event through Mirror Group Newspapers.

Mirror Group has signed a three-year agreement to support The Edible Garden Show and will remain national media partner for next year's launch show. Mirror Group Managing Editor Eugene Duffy said: "The Edible Garden Show is a fantastic idea which we know our readers were looking forward to. We are obviously disappointed it has been postponed but look forward to supporting the show next year."

Officials from The Edible Garden Show are contacting exhibitors and visitors who had booked space or purchased tickets with a view to returning money or transferring orders to the 2011 event. A firm date for next year's show will be announced shortly.

For further details on The Edible Garden Show 2011, visit: www.theediblegardenshow.co.uk

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