

# Survey explores how gardeners are adapting to a changing climate

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As gardeners and farmers across Britain survey the frost damage and delayed growth of their plants this Easter, scientists at the University of Reading are asking gardeners to participate in a new survey to understand how gardeners are responding to the UK's changing climate.

Vines growing in Scotland, [olive trees](#) in England and longer, drier summers - these were among the long-term predictions 11 years ago in a landmark report commissioned by, among others, the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), based on work by scientists at the University of Reading.

Now scientists are conducting the biggest survey of its kind to find how gardeners are responding to the reality of Britain's changing climate,

which has been dominated in recent years by cold spells in winter, extended periods of drought, record rainfall and flooding.

The new survey, again commissioned by the RHS, follows on from the 2002 report 'Gardening in the Global Greenhouse'. Since then, our understanding of how [climate change](#) is affecting Britain has developed considerably.

Dr Claudia Bernardini, a climate change plant scientist at the University of Reading and RHS, said: "Over the past three winters many optimistic gardeners have seen borderline hardy plants such as the Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*), Soft tree fern (*Dicksonia antarctica*) and Hardy banana (*Musa basjoo*) killed by severe frosts and snow. Yet, despite this, climate models continue to predict a warming of the climate and we are told to prepare for much hotter summers in the medium term.

"The Royal Horticultural Society with the University of Reading are now launching a survey to better understand how individual gardeners are reacting to these difficult [growing seasons](#) and to discover whether they have been provided with the knowledge they need to plan their gardening for the future.

"The latest projections indicate that the climate is likely to affect gardens and gardening in a significantly different way than that predicted in 2002."

The results of the [survey](#) will help researchers understand the perceived effects of climate change and the individual's response to those changes. The results will be used alongside the latest [climate models](#) to produce a new report to support British gardeners and the horticulture industry.

"Whether you are a keen gardener or new to gardening, whether you

visit parks and public gardens regularly or just occasionally, we would like to hear your view and personal experience of the effects of a [changing climate](#)," Dr Bernardini added.

**More information:** Take the online survey [here](#).

Provided by University of Reading

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