



## Encouraging Women in Horticulture

I didn't find horticulture in a classroom, it started long before that, in small home gardens that quietly shaped how I see the world today.

Growing up, every home I knew had a garden. My mother and grandmother believed that a house wasn't complete without plants, flowers, and something growing. I remember watching them care for their gardens with patience and pride – nurturing life not because they had to, but because it was part of who they were. Those early moments stayed with me, even when I didn't yet realise their impact.

As I grew older, my path naturally leaned toward science and higher education. With my family's encouragement, I pursued advanced studies in agriculture, eventually completing a PhD. On paper, my journey became technical – research, data, and scientific understanding. But underneath it all, the connection to plants, growth, and the land was always there, quietly guiding my direction.

Professionally, I moved into the commercial world, working at the intersection of agriculture, chemicals, and industry. This gave me a broader perspective – understanding not only how things grow, but how entire supply chains, markets, and decisions shape the future of agriculture and horticulture.

Now, looking back, I see that my journey has never been linear, it has been layered. From childhood gardens to scientific research, and from there into commercial leadership, each step has added a different lens.

Horticulture, for me, is not just an industry. It is a connection between people, science, and something deeply human, the instinct to grow, to care, and to create life.

This is the perspective I bring, bridging science, business, and lived experience, with a genuine passion to contribute to a stronger, more connected horticulture community.

*Reyhaneh*

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