

# Forging a Connection

How a skilled blacksmith uses his love for his craft and his garden to create artistic and functional gardening tools



**WHEN IT COMES** to beautiful and handcrafted designs, Tuli Fisher of Bozeman, Mont., has mastered the technique. With strong, hand-forged steel skillfully set into stunning, rich walnut handles, his garden tools would fit as well in an art museum as they do in the tool shed.

Fisher's career as a blacksmith began in his 20s, when he started using his own tools for a horseshoeing business. He has created tools for more than

15 years now, but it wasn't until 2003 that he began to dabble in gardening tools, inspired by an encounter with a farmer in Cottage Grove, Ore., where he and his wife were living while she attended graduate school. "I guess with all the hammering it was no secret I was a blacksmith," recounts Fisher. "I fixed his tool for him, but realized I could make an even better one."

After successfully repairing the farmer's tools, Fisher dis-

covered that many local growers wanted something not only functional and lasting, but also handcrafted right here in the United States. "My garden tools are made of domestically sourced materials, something that can be hard to find these days," says Fisher. "Starting with high-quality materials is the beginning for creating a high-quality tool."

Materials and elements such as hardwood, steel, fire, water and air are how Fisher hand-