

makes his functional creations. "The forging process, in its basic form, is heating up the material using fire," he explains. "Whether that's gas or coal, you need to add air to it in order to make the fire burn hotter. That in turn heats up the steel, and when you have the steel shaped or formed the way you want it, you clinch it in water."

With the growing demand for Fisher's gardening tools, he has started using electricity and some power tools in place of making all of his own rivets and punching holes with a hammer and anvil; this allows for fabrication in a much more reasonable timeframe. Previously, one tool took three days to make!

Though the labor can be extensive, Fisher thoroughly enjoys the life of a blacksmith, saying making garden tools is the perfect combination of his love of blacksmithing and gardening. After creating a set of gardening tools, he tests their durability and functionality in his own garden, full of vegetables, apple and cherry trees and a flowerbed teeming with tulips, a process he likes to call "field testing." This allows him to experience firsthand how the tools feel.

Through trial and error Fisher's tools have grown in complexity and functionality. "The tools that I made originally where a lot larger and somewhat awkward to use," he recalls. "It's only been through making changes every time that I make a batch of gardening tools that I have kind of refined my designs and got them to look the way they do now."

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rent line, Fisher feels there is always room for improvement and expansion. He has started using reused and recycled materials and he plans to create more variety in his garden tools so his customers will have more choices.

While his selection in product may be limited compared to mass-produced gardening tools, Fisher is confident that his artistry offers more to gardeners. His abilities as a blacksmith

mixed with his own experience as a gardener creates the perfect balance, sparking a personal connection between the gardener and Fisher's tools.

"The time and the effort I put into my garden tools are really

The products of blacksmith Tuli Fisher are as much art pieces as they are fully functional garden tools.

