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# The Garden of Invention: Luther Burbank and the Business of Breeding Plants

*Jane S. Smith*

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# The Garden of Invention: Luther Burbank and the Business of Breeding Plants

*Jane S. Smith*

**The Garden of Invention: Luther Burbank and the Business of Breeding Plants** Jane S. Smith
**The wide-ranging and delightful history of celebrated plant breeder Luther Burbank and the business of farm and garden in early twentieth- century America**

At no other time in history has there been more curiosity or concern about the food we eat-and genetically modified foods, in particular, have become both pervasive and suspect. A century ago, however, Luther Burbank's blight-resistant potatoes, white blackberries, and plumcots-a plum-apricot hybrid-were celebrated as triumphs in the best tradition of American ingenuity and perseverance. In his experimental grounds in Santa Rosa, California, Burbank bred and cross-bred edible and ornamental plants-for both home gardens and commercial farms-until they were bigger, hardier, more beautiful, and more productive than ever before. A fascinating portrait of an American original, *The Garden of Invention* is also a colorful and engrossing tale of the intersection of gardening, science and business in the years between the Civil War and the Great Depression.

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