

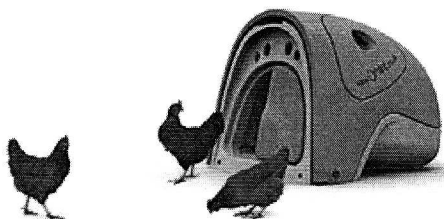
Bee Station

Bee Station provides a refueling site and nesting habitat for bees.

Mr. Kohfink says it is part of a greater movement toward sustainable living. "Beekeeping used to be a hobby for older men. Now, it is a hobby for young families," he says. "People are conditioned to think about the food they eat.... You can show children how food is made by bees, and people want to do something for the environment."

However, for some, it is the actual design that provides the biggest draw. Frederik Bruinewoud and his partner Jack van Abeelen live in a Gerrit Rietveld-designed glass-and-steel house built in 1938 in Blaricum, outside Amsterdam. They spotted the "Breed Retreat," a four-story wooden chicken hut designed by Dutch architect Frederik Roijé, and thought it would blend in perfectly with their house. They now have four chickens, which

produce 14-20 eggs a week. "Most chicken houses are nice if you have a farm, but this one looked fabulous and fit our home, with its Cubist design and glass front," says Mr. Bruinewoud. "I am very fond of animals. I adore my girls. They are so funny. I can stare at them for one hour and just laugh. They are free to run around, but they always go back there, so it must be a nice place for them."



omlet.com

Omlet's Eglu classic chicken coop.

With high-end consumers like Mr. Bruinewoud taking up urban farming, companies are rolling out new products to appeal to the aesthete. Nogg's chicken coops comprise giant pods that are works of art in themselves—with a price tag to match, around £1,900. Livia Firth, who sells the coops at her store Eco Age (www.eco-age.com) in London's Chiswick neighborhood, says design is now reaching areas previously untapped. "It's wonderful to see that stylish and eco-friendly products can be extended to garden design today," says Ms. Firth, the wife of actor Colin Firth.

Those products are also moving beyond the garden into urban homes. The Windowfarms project (www.windowfarms.org)

allows users to grow vegetables hydroponically through a plastic-bottle system. Budding ornithologists in the city, meanwhile, have a number of choices—from the Small Green Company (thesmallgreen.com)'s "Mr. and Mrs. Birdee" nesting bird box to the colorful steel "Birdhaus Birdfeeder" by Rethinkthings (www.rethinkthings.co.uk).

Items often seek not only to provide sustainable options, but to address environmental issues. The Bee Station (beestation.com), a small porcelain ball with a hole in it, was designed to help stimulate the U.K.'s declining bee population. "I got the idea from an announcement by the [Royal Society for the Protection of Birds] on Radio 4," says Leeds-based designer Jamie Hutchinson. "There are many reasons why bees are struggling—mites, pesticides and reduced nesting sites. The RSPB asked for people to put out egg cups of sugary water, which provides bees with an instant pick-me-up. I decided to create an instant refueling system in the garden that would look stylish as well."

Sam Roddick, co-founder of London boutique Coco de Mer and daughter of Body Shop founder Anita Roddick, is also passionate about the preservation of the honey bee. She is part of a new campaign entitled "Bee Lovely," run by natural-remedy store Neal's Yard, which aims to help address the problems facing bees and educate those who want to keep them. "I went to the Natural Beekeeping Trust course a few years ago and, soon after, started transforming my garden," Ms. Roddick says. She has planted what she calls a "bee buffet" in her London garden, including lavender, rosemary, thyme and hawthorne, and plans to start keeping bees there soon.

Her 30-meter garden in Hampstead also provides her with abundant fruit and vegetables, and she is considering keeping chickens. "There is nothing better than fresh vegetables out of the garden; it makes you feel vital, alive. I eat so well. All my garden is organic, the compost is unbelievable," says Ms. Roddick. "I believe that everybody is becoming more proactive. You cannot shop your way into happiness; growing your own like this is sustenance for the soul and you cannot attach a price to it."

Corrections & Amplifications

The captions for Omlet's Eglu Classic chicken coop and the Bee Station were reversed in the initial version of this article.