

## Barefoot Garden Center



Larry and Shirley Stevens, owners of Barefoot Gardens Center, planned on opening their business in May, 1995, but twenty-three consecutive days of rain, delayed construction and the business opened in August 1995. The delayed construction explains why an independent retail garden center opened at such an unusual time of the year . Barefoot Gardens specializes in installation and maintenance of plants and landscape. They provide shrubs, irrigation, soil preparation, sod and snow removal for commercial and residential customers.

Larry had previous experience in this field and decided that there was a need for a good year round supply of plants, bulbs and seeds in addition to the landscape services he provides in the Gillette area. Barefoot Gardens is proud to provide a large selection of of plants with advice and service (even if they bought plants from another store). Larry and Shirley have a strong commitment to customer service. To

meet that commitment, they grow a large portion of their stock of herbs, perennials and house plants.

Business hasn't always been smooth sailing for the Stevens. They had to overcome several obstacles. The obstacles they faced were financing, cash flow, building a reputation in the community, finding proper and reliable suppliers and employees. Barefoot Gardens was financed with a U.S. Small Business Administration guaranteed loan.

The Stevens offer this advice for other start up businesses, "Plan working capital for two to three years (you never know how many consecutive rainy days you'll have), put together a good support team including your banker and accountant and update your business plan annually.



For more information check out Barefoot Garden Center at ???????? street, Gillette, Wyoming, 307-???-???? or e-mail