

OMB Number:	3235-0104
Estimated average burden	
hours per response:	0.5

INITIAL STATEMENT OF BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934
or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person * <u>Patel Apur Rohit</u> (Last) (First) (Middle) <u>1340 TREAT BOULEVARD</u> <u>SUITE 600</u> (Street) <u>WALNUT</u> <u>CA</u> <u>94597</u> <u>CREEK</u> (City) (State) (Zip)	2. Date of Event Requiring Statement (Month/Day/Year) <u>02/11/2026</u>	3. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol <u>CENTRAL GARDEN & PET CO [CENT]</u> 4. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable) <div>Director 10% Owner</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Officer (give title below) Other (specify below)</div> <div><u>Chief Legal Officer</u></div>	5. If Amendment, Date of Original Filed (Month/Day/Year) 6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing (Check Applicable Line) <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Form filed by One Reporting Person</div> <div>Form filed by More than One Reporting Person</div>
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Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Security (Instr. 4)	2. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned (Instr. 4)	3. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 5)	4. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5)
<u>Class A Common Stock</u>	<u>17,048⁽¹⁾</u>	<u>D</u>	

Table II - Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned
(e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 4)	2. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)		3. Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 4)		4. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	5. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 5)	6. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5)
	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date	Title	Amount or Number of Shares			

Explanation of Responses:

1. Includes 17,048 restricted shares of Class A Common Stock granted on January 26, 2026, which shares will vest annually in one-fourth increments and be exercisable beginning on January 26, 2027.

Remarks:

Exhibit 24.1; Power of Attorney

/s/Filomena Eickstaedt as

Attorney-in-Fact for Apur Patel

02/13/2026

** Signature of Reporting Person

Date

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 5 (b)(v).

** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure.

Persons who respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB Number.

POWER OF ATTORNEY

The undersigned hereby constitutes and appoints Howard Machek, Zora Mohseni, JoAnn Jonte, Madisen Hughes and Filomena Eickstaedt and each of them, his/her true and lawful attorney-in-fact to:

- (1) execute for and on behalf of the undersigned, in the undersigneds capacity as an officer, director, and/or person who holds more than 10% of the stock of Central Garden & Pet Company (the Company), Forms 3, Forms 4 and Forms 5 in accordance with Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act), and the rules thereunder;
- (2) do and perform any and all acts for and on behalf of the undersigned which may be necessary or desirable to complete and execute any such Forms 3, Forms 4 or Forms 5 and timely file any such forms with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission and any other authority; and
- (3) take any other action of any type whatsoever in connection with the foregoing which, in the opinion of such attorney-in-fact, may be of benefit to, in the best interest of, or legally required by, the undersigned, it being understood that the documents executed by such attorney-in-fact on behalf of the undersigned, pursuant to this Power of Attorney shall be in such form and shall contain such terms and conditions as such attorney-in-fact may approve in his or her discretion.

The undersigned hereby grants to each such attorney-in-fact full power and authority to do and perform any and every act and thing whatsoever requisite, necessary or proper to be done in the exercise of any of the rights and powers herein granted, as fully to all intents and purposes as the undersigned might or could do if personally present, with full power of substitution or revocation, hereby ratifying and confirming all that such attorney-in-fact, or his or her substitute or substitutes, shall lawfully do or cause to be done pursuant to this power of attorney. The undersigned acknowledges that the foregoing attorneys-in-fact, in serving in such capacity at the request of the undersigned, are not assuming, nor is the Company assuming, any of the undersigneds responsibilities to comply with Section 16 of the Exchange Act.

This Power of Attorney shall remain in full force and effect until the undersigned is no longer required to file Forms 3, Forms 4, and Forms 5 with respect to the undersigneds holdings of and transactions in securities issued by the Company, unless earlier revoked by the undersigned in a signed writing delivered to the attorneys-in-fact.

The undersigned has caused this Power of Attorney to be executed as of this 10th day of February, 2026.

/s/ Apur Patel
Signature

Apur Patel
Print Name
