



CONTAIN YOURSELF

Offering eco-friendly options in your pots and planters department can boost sales as well as help the environment.

By Jasmina Radjevic

Plastic pots: They are a gardener's equivalent to a consumer's plastic shopping bag. We all know we use too many of them, but they're handy and often less expensive than their eco-friendly counterparts.

Of course, the obvious alternative would be to recycle pots or create a recycling program within the garden center, but that requires more effort for both the consumer and the garden center and can ultimately lead to sanitation issues. And although the economy is shaky and available resources are limited, it seems many people are still trying to live more sustainably — even if that means dropping an extra few dollars.

Expand Your Offerings

So what can you do to help customers who are looking for more eco-friendly options? You may want to look into adding biodegradable containers to your product mix. Many manufacturers are introducing biodegradable options to their lines. These pots are made from a range of materials such as coir, wood chips and rice hulls. These types of containers are becoming increasingly popular, especially with organic gardeners.

There are various types of biodegradable containers. Some may be planted right into the soil and will eventually break down, while others may be added to a compost heap after a few years.

Another idea, if your customers insist on using plastic containers: Suggest ones that are made from recycled plastic. They're eco-friendly and still offer the durability and versatility found in traditional plastic pots.

Getting the Consumer Excited

Creating buzz among your customers is probably much easier than you think. It can be as simple as creating a special eco-friendly section within your container department and putting up some eye-catching signage.

Some consumers are still unaware of the many benefits of using biodegradable and eco-friendly pots. You may want to keep various educational materials out on the display for them to read and take home with them. Also make sure your employees on the sales floor understand how they work and their advantages. For instance, many eco-friendly containers are porous, allowing more water and air to pass through.

Many manufacturers provide POP materials for garden centers to use with bulk purchases. This can include posters, display tags and ▶

Available in a variety of colors and styles, biodegradable containers are made from materials such as coir, rice hulls, vegetable fibers and bamboo.



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PRODUCT FOCUS POTS & PLANTERS

even educational pamphlets on the use of environmentally friendly containers.

It may take some extra initial effort to create your eco-friendly container display, but it can be well worth it once your customers begin seeing the benefits and taking advantage of them. 

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Decorative pots

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Patio planter

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Planter set

The Candicans set include three planters. Two color options are available: checked or blue green. Dimensions are approximately 12x7 inches, 10x5½ inches and 7x4½ inches. Ceramo Co. www.ceramousa.com (800) 325-8303. **Write in 1459**

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