

HEALTHY POTS, HEALTHY PLANET: WHAT USERS WANT

Greenhouse Grower September 2025

Survey of growers in *Greenhouse Grower* magazine. Responses to many questions will total over 100% because respondents were asked to check all that apply.

QUESTION 1

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR CONTAINER USE WOULD YOU ESTIMATE IS PETROLEUM-BASED PLASTIC?

Average answer

94.43%



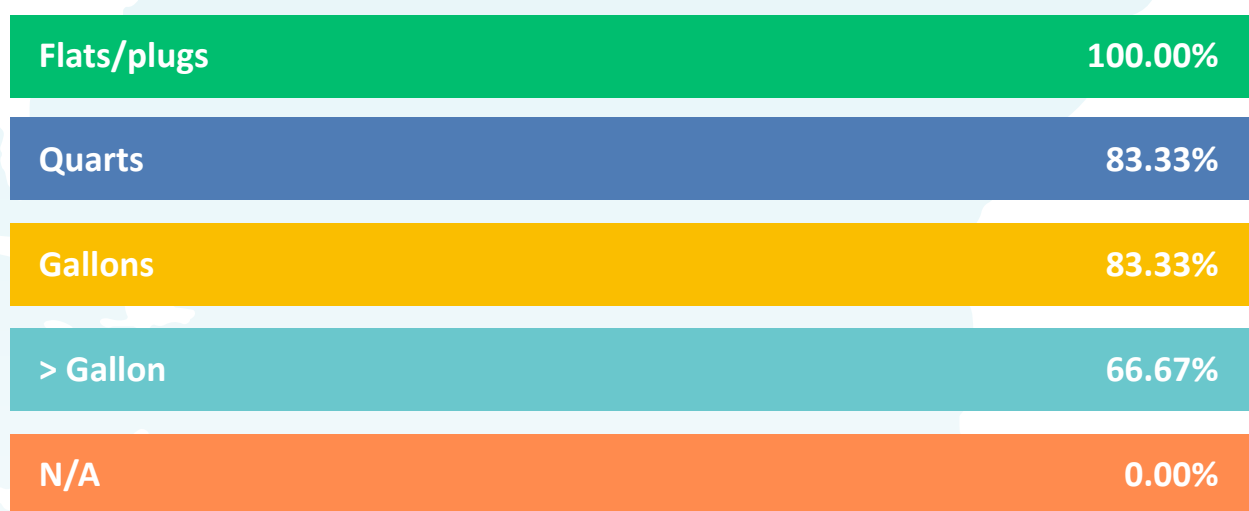
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QUESTION 2

WHAT SIZES OF PETROLEUM-BASED CONTAINERS DO YOU WORK WITH?



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QUESTION 3

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR CONTAINER USE WOULD YOU ESTIMATE IS ALTERNATIVE POTS (POTS MADE FROM NATURAL, COMPOSTABLE MATERIAL OR BIOPLASTICS)?

Average answer

67.14%

33.33%



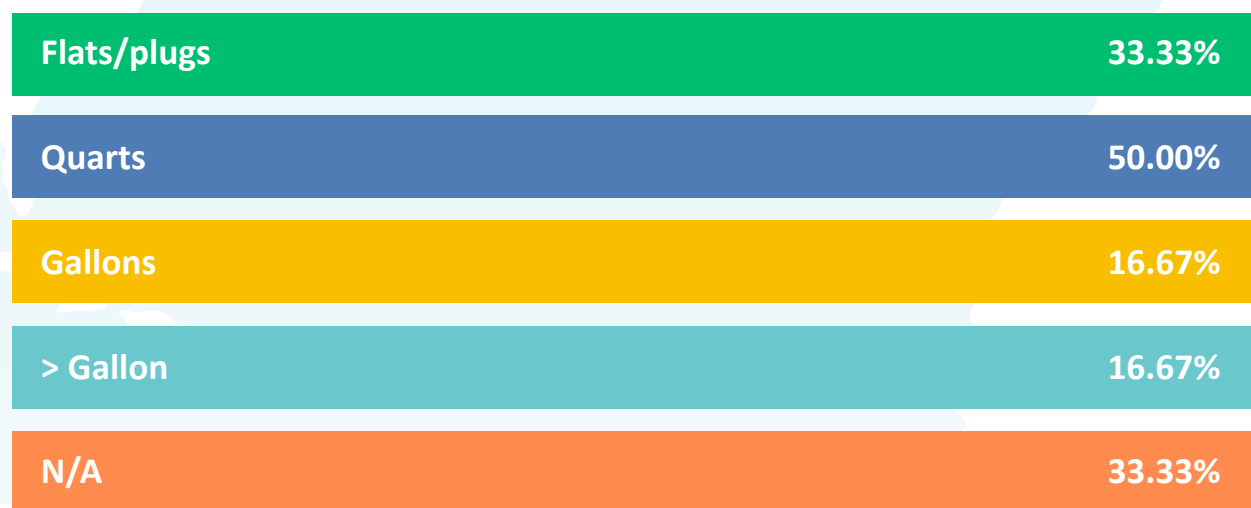
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QUESTION 4

WHAT SIZES OF ALTERNATIVE CONTAINERS DO YOU WORK WITH?



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QUESTION 5

IF YOU CURRENTLY USE ALTERNATIVE CONTAINERS, OR HAVE USED THEM IN THE PAST, HAVE YOU BEEN SATISFIED WITH THEIR PERFORMANCE?

Yes

33.33%

No

66.67%



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QUESTION 7

IF YOU HAVE USED ALTERNATIVE CONTAINERS, WHAT WERE THEY MADE FROM?

Paper	16.67%
Wood fiber	50.00%
Manure	16.67%
Coir	0.00%
Peat	16.67%
Starch	33.33%
Bioplastic/Biopolymer such as PLA (polyactic acid)	66.67%
Other	50.00%



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QUESTION 8

IS YOUR PRODUCTION AUTOMATED?



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QUESTION 9

DO YOUR CUSTOMERS EVER REQUEST ALTERNATIVE CONTAINERS?



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QUESTION 10

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT PETROLEUM-BASED PLASTIC PLANT CONTAINERS?

They perform well and enable me to meet my production goals.	85.71%
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They are affordable.	85.71%
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I know what to expect when using them.	57.14%
--	--------

I use them because there are few alternatives that meet my needs.	85.71%
---	--------

I am concerned about their environmental footprint (energy, pollution, microplastics, toxicity).	57.14%
--	--------

I am concerned that they are difficult to recycle.	71.43%
--	--------

I am concerned that they are often treated as single-use containers and go to landfills after one use.	71.43%
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QUESTION 11

HOW DO YOU CURRENTLY DISPOSE OF PETROLEUM-BASED PLASTIC CONTAINERS?

We re-use them.	85.71%
They are donated for re-use.	28.57%
They go to a recycling facility.	28.57%
They are picked up by a recycling company that specializes in containers.	28.57%
We don't have many extra containers to dispose of.	0.00%
They go to trash.	57.14%



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QUESTION 12

IF YOU DO NOT RE-USE PLASTIC POTS, WHAT ARE THE REASONS?

I am concerned about contamination.	66.67%
They should be cleaned and I do not have time for that.	66.67%
I do not have the space to store them.	33.33%
I don't have a simple, dependable supply chain that would provide them.	0.00%
Other	33.33%



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QUESTION 13

WHAT DISPOSAL OPTIONS WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE?

Home compostable	57.14%
Industrial compostable	71.43%
Plantable	42.86%
Easily recyclable at a facility close to me	71.43%
I am satisfied with sending used pots to landfills and/or incinerators	14.29%
Other	28.57%



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QUESTION 14

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE BIGGEST PROBLEM WITH ALTERNATIVE CONTAINERS?

Durability	66.67%
Cost	33.33%
Compatibility with automation	0.00%
Appearance	0.00%
Confusion about disposal	0.00%
All of the above	0.00%



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QUESTION 15

“DURABILITY” IS THE ABILITY OF SOMETHING TO EXIST FOR A LONG TIME WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT DETERIORATION IN QUALITY OR VALUE. WHEN IT COMES TO DURABILITY, WHAT QUALITIES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE?

Strong material that contains plant, soil, and moisture	66.67%
Does not require more frequent watering	33.33%
Sufficient lifespan for storage and growing	66.67%
Decay and water resistant	50.00%
Other	0.00%



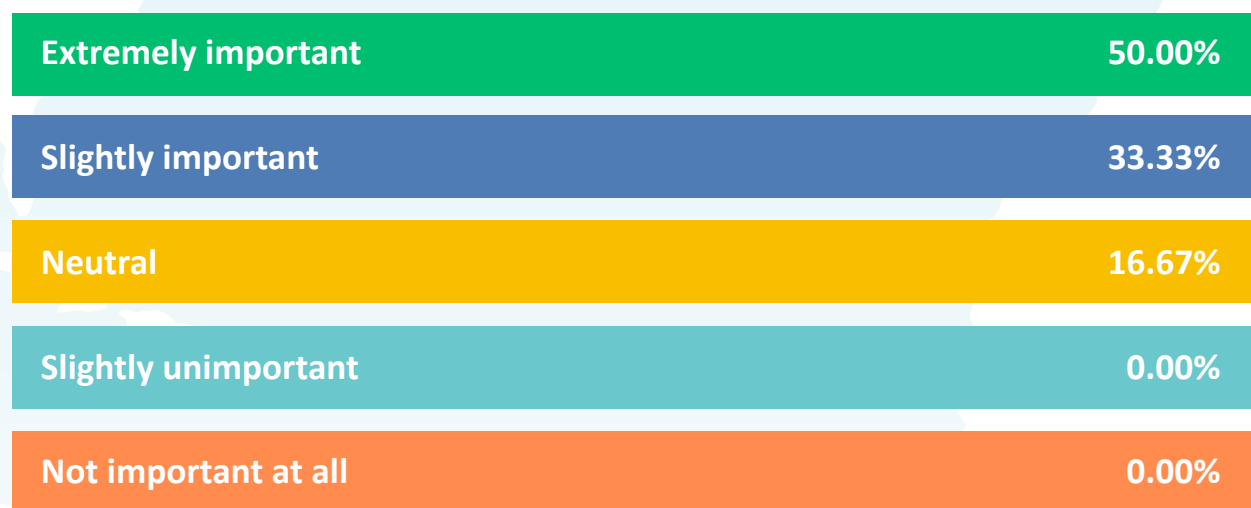
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QUESTION 16

HOW IMPORTANT IS THE COST OF ALTERNATIVE CONTAINERS TO YOU?



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QUESTION 17

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN APPEARANCE OF AN ALTERNATIVE CONTAINER?

A variety of colors	16.67%
Ability to brand	16.67%
Design that is appealing to customers	66.67%
Ease of labeling with important information about the plant, culture, maintenance, origin, production, grower, etc.	33.33%
The appearance does not matter to me as long as the pot is easy to handle and dispose of	50.00%



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QUESTION 18

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU WHEN IT COMES TO AVAILABILITY OF ALTERNATIVE POTS?

Widely available from a variety of suppliers	60.00%
Produced as close to the point of use as possible	60.00%
Availability and procurement similar to petroleum-based containers	80.00%
Other	20.00%



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QUESTION 19

ALTERNATIVE POTS SHOULD SUPPORT GOOD PLANT HEALTH. WHAT QUALITIES ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Retains moisture	50.00%
Maintains appropriate soil temperature	33.33%
Harmless to plants	50.00%
Fertilizes plants	0.00%
Provides good drainage	100.00%
Supports strong root development	83.33%
Safe for growing edible plants	50.00%
Other	33.33%



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QUESTION 20

WHEN HANDLING ALTERNATIVE POTS, WHAT QUALITIES ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Light weight	33.33%
Easy to pick up	66.67%
Easy plant removal	66.67%
Stackable	100.00%
Shippable	66.67%
Plantable	33.33%
Suitable for automated processing	50.00%



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QUESTION 21

CERTIFICATIONS FROM A THIRD PARTY CAN GIVE A PURCHASER CONFIDENCE THAT THE MANUFACTURER'S CLAIMS ARE TRUE. WHAT PRODUCT CERTIFICATIONS ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU?

USDA BioPreferred (a U.S. Dept. of Agriculture program certifying biobased content in various products)	33.33%
ASTM (international voluntary and consensus products standards developed by the American Society for Testing and Materials)	0.00%
OMRI (confirmation from the Organic Materials Research Institute that the product can meet organic certification requirements)	33.33%
BPI (certification that a product meets ASTM standards for industrial composting)	33.33%
Certifications do not matter to me	50.00%
Other	16.67%

Suitable for autom



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QUESTION 22

WHEN YOU CONSIDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF AN ALTERNATIVE POT ACROSS ITS PRODUCTION, USE, AND DISPOSAL, WHAT QUALITY MATTERS MOST TO YOU?

Low embodied energy (the amount of energy used to produce a product)	0.00%
Non-toxic	0.00%
Low polluting potential	0.00%
Not likely to deplete natural resources	0.00%
A better net impact than petroleum-based pots	100.00%
Other	0.00%



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QUESTION 23

IF YOU USE PETROLEUM-BASED PLASTIC POTS, WOULD IT BE HELPFUL TO KNOW THE PERCENTAGE, IF ANY, OF RECYCLED PLASTIC IN THE POT?

Yes	100.00%
No	0.00%



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QUESTION 24

WHAT IS THE #1 THING KEEPING YOU FROM USING MORE ALTERNATIVE POTS?

Cost	33.33%
Lack of customer demand	0.00%
Availability of alternatives	16.67%
Quality/Performance of alternatives	33.33%
Other	16.67%

