

# Plastic Pot Recycling



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN



*The Missouri Botanical Garden Plastic Pot Recycling Program collects over 100,000 pounds of horticultural plastic each year, keeping it out of landfills.*

## Recycling

Plastic is likely to remain the dominant medium for pots in the short term. It's lightweight, waterproof, durable, and cheap—for now. However, limited landfill space, the rising cost of dumping, and an increase in the price of petroleum-based virgin plastic makes recycling the most attractive option until something more economical and sustainable is available.

## Alternative Pots

Pots made from renewable resources, such as bamboo, and from biodegradable materials such as rice, grass fiber, composted manure, feathers, and recycled paper are being introduced. However, these pots don't have all the desirable durability of plastic yet. In the next 5 to 10 years, commercial nursery pots may be made of bioresins, plastics derived from corn which degrade over time.



*Pots made from Miscanthus, a fast-growing perennial grass that can be harvested annually, offer an alternative to petroleum-based plastic.*

The community program as modeled by the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis can spread to your community. For more information, visit our website at [www.mobot.org](http://www.mobot.org).



**A Program  
that  
Works**

# Plastic Pot Recycling Works!

Few would question the virtues of gardening. Yet over 320 million pounds of gardening plastic is generated in the U.S. each year. Don't let garden plastic end up in a landfill. Choose to recycle instead!

For 10 years, the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis has collected plastic pots and trays from consumers and nurseries. Today, the program has grown from 10,000 pounds to over 100,000 pounds collected per year!



*An on-site grinder, purchased through a donation of Monrovia, and operated by volunteers, grinds plastic pots into chips for processing.*

## How It Works

Consumers bring clean plastic pots to the Missouri Botanical Garden collection site during specified times. The Garden provides collection trailers to area nurseries as well. At all collection points, the consumer is asked to segregate the plastic by type. With the help of volunteers, the plastic is processed into chips.

## Closing the Recycling Loop

Local vendors are contracted to process the chips of plastic into various recycled products, which are offered for sale to the public. Past collections have created lumber planks, compost bins, raised garden beds, retaining wall ties, and pallets.



*The plastic pot chips are recycled by outside vendors into plastic planks, compost bins, and raised bed kits for purchase by the public, completing the recycling loop.*



**Pots  
to  
Products**

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