

Appendix 3

Plastics You Can Plant In

There are 7 types of plastics commercially processed and sold. The following are the kinds that are safe to use for planting.



PETE



HDPE



LDPE



PP

PETE or PET bottles. Used for most clear drinks bottles. However, many of these are designed for single use, and therefore can break down with continued use and exposure to light or heat. They have also been found to leach chemicals if exposed to high temperatures.

HDPE (high density polyethylene). Used for opaque milk and water bottles.

LDPE (low density polyethylene). Used in food storage bags and squeeze bottles.

PP (polypropylene). Used in rigid containers, including some flower pots, baby bottles, yoghurt pots, cups and bowls.



OTHER

This code is for miscellaneous types of plastic which don't fit in the above categories.

The following are **NOT** safe for planting in:



V

Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC). Used extensively as a rigid light plastic – from water pipes to wheelbarrows. Constant exposure to heat will cause chemicals to leach. PVC often has chemicals called 'phthalates' added to make it more durable and flexible. Research has shown that phthalates affect our natural hormones, and can lead to reproductive abnormalities.



PS

Polystyrene. Used in food and beverage takeaways, non-cardboard egg cartons and CD/DVD cases. Long term exposure to small quantities of styrene can cause neurotoxic and carcinogenic effects. Styrene is classified as a possible human carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC).