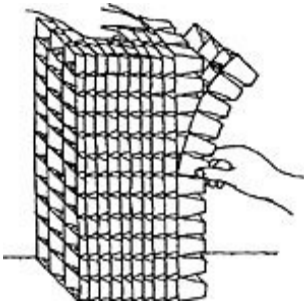
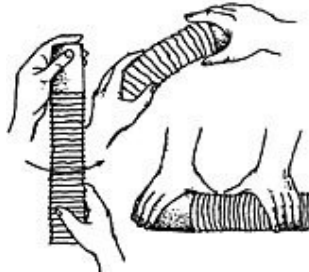




DOT Pots

Separation of pots:

Individual pots: twist and bend the stack of DOT Pots, supporting it at each end and roll it on a flat surface.



In strips:

Squeeze the stack together from the sides, and separate the strips from each other, removing each strip one by one. Pull from the shorter side. Starting at the bottom of the pile each strip can be pulled off one at a time.

Do Not Force, Separate Gradually.

Automatic Separation:

Individual pots: most mechanical separators can handle DOT Pots with anti-crush rims. The clamping jaws will generally need to be adjusted. Often a small pin is added to the clamping jaws to penetrate the DOT Pot when stripping from the stack.

Strips: automatic separation of strips can be accomplished with machines that have forks with prongs that penetrate between the strips and then separate them, releasing the strip at the bottom of the stack.

Spacing Plant Material:

Spacing should make an allowance for greater plant growth compared with a plastic pot of equivalent dimensions. Allowance should also be made for the fact that biodegradable containers are designed to break down over time. It can be useful to position the pots at the outset with sufficient spacing for the mature plant so as to prevent unnecessary moving or repeated handling.

Cultivation with Trays:

It is a good idea to use propagating or carrying trays when growing with DOT Pots. This will facilitate easy handling of the pots. There are many manufacturers producing appropriate trays. Contact your representative for suitable trays for your needs. The choice of tray should be based on the following simple rules: - aeration of the walls of the pots is of vital importance to ensure good aerial root pruning. It is therefore better to choose trays which allow the DOT Pot to "breathe" on all sides and, if possible, at the bottom.

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It should not be too easy for roots to colonize an adjacent pot, as this could result in roots becoming tangled, making subsequent handling difficult. Dividing partitions are advisable if plants are likely to be stored in their propagating trays for extended periods. Depending on the watering method used, a tray with or without a water trough can be selected.

Cultivation without trays

It is common, and often more practical, to use the DOT Pot by placing them directly on the ground, or on a bench (with or without mesh). This procedure is particularly suitable for DOT Pots in strips. In this case, once the strips have been sown, they cannot be moved very easily. In general, shifting up is done pot by pot, as they can be torn off quite easily when wet. Pots that are taller than they are wide (5 x 9, 7 x 9, 10 x 18 cm) are simply placed side by side.

The need for watering is usually reduced if the pots are touching. However, it does not promote aerial root pruning and thus increases the risk of roots becoming entangled if the plants are left growing for too long. This condition is frequently minimized when plants are grown on open mesh benches with good airflow.

Care should be taken to ensure that the pots are not left for extended periods on surfaces that are permeable to roots. This could result in the bottom of the pots becoming embedded in the surface at a later point in the growth cycle. Use concrete, coarse gravel or a plastic frame above ground.

Media Choice

The DOT Pot can be used with a large number of different types of growing medium. The media should be friable as well as allowing for good aeration.

Growth Time:

With quick turn crops, such as annuals, plants will usually develop faster in DOT Pots. Growth will however become slower if the pot remains cold during winter months, such as outdoor nursery conditions. The use of tunnels and greenhouses will mitigate this situation.

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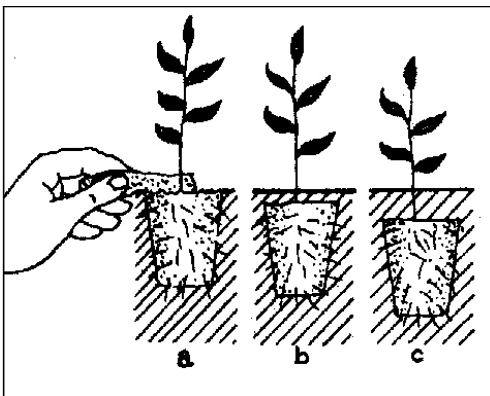
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Watering:

Watering is a very important factor in the success of any plant material. Be sure to water DOT Pots thoroughly immediately after planting. When using DOT Pots for seeds, take care to make sure that watering does not wash them away. Be sure to water once again shortly planting up. This process should dampen the DOT Pots thoroughly. The walls of DOT Pots will darken once damp. Then plan watering to ensure that the walls of the DOT Pots are moist at all times (but not saturated) and are cool to the touch. Each time they dry out, it becomes more difficult to dampen them again, so avoid sudden bursts of watering. Check the pots that are most susceptible to drying out, those next to the light in greenhouses, next to heating pipes or, in the case of a bench, next to the sides. Any type of watering system can be used, including sub irrigation systems. Avoid any systems that are very rough, such as jets or high-pressure sprinklers. These can damage the walls of the DOT Pot. Cultivation in DOT Pots generally requires more water than with plastic pots. Different treatment is therefore needed for different types of plant. Therefore the use of different irrigation zones for different plants is advisable.

Fertilization:

Growth will be generally accelerated in DOT Pots, so fertilizer may need to be applied earlier compared to those plants grown in plastic pots. Small amounts of fertilizer in the early stages of production will assist the microorganisms, to start the degrading process. There is no "nitrogen starvation" associated with DOT Pots, as is the case with recycled paper pots.



- a: Plants that need to be planted above grade
- b: Normal planting
- c: Plants likely to throw adventitious roots

Strength and handling of DOT Pots:

DOT Pots are designed to retain their strength during the growth cycle but degrade quickly after planting into the next container or landscape. This does mean, however, that the pots need to be handled with care. For example, do not pick up plants by pinching the sides or rims of the DOT Pots as you would with plastic pots; pick up the plants by the stem, or the hold the entire pot. This will be much easier once the roots have begun to penetrate the sidewalls of the container. At this point the roots will contribute to cohesion of the plant and pot. Allowing the pot to dry down slightly first will make handling easier. It is difficult to state a definite time frame to leaving pots growing. It depends on the plant variety, the method of cultivation, and the development of the micro-organisms in the growing medium. In order of magnitude, a small size DOT Pots such as the 6 x 6 cm will last 4 to 5 months in the greenhouse. A 14 x 14 will last some 12 to 15 months in controlled greenhouse conditions, or around 10 to 13 months in outdoor nursery conditions.

Transporting DOT Pots:

Before transporting, water thoroughly to prevent plants drying out during the shipping period. Try to place DOT Pots in shaded areas protected from wind while waiting for planting into the next container or the landscape.

Planting into the next container or landscape:

The top of the DOT Pots should be buried slightly below soil grade to prevent any wicking effect. If the top edge of the pot projects into the open air, the drying out process of the pot walls may adversely affect plant establishment. For plants in which the crown has to be level with the soil, (*and in that case only*), the top edge of the pot can be easily removed by hand. Compress the soil or medium around the DOT Pot to limit drying out, then water thoroughly. Make sure that the pot does not dry out during the first few days until the roots have started to extend beyond the pot.



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