



## The sunshine boosts garden centre sales in May

THE GARDEN Centre Association's (GCA) Barometer of Trade (BoT) results for May (2012) showed outdoor furniture and barbecues to be the top selling lines at member garden centres during the month.

The results, which are compiled using members' sales figures and provide an up-to-date trading position statement, revealed a 9.5% increase in furniture and barbecues compared with May 2011.

Phil Slinger, GCA Chief Executive, explained: "Dismal weather at the start of the month turned to glorious sunshine, which boosted sales across the UK garden centre industry and helped to turn around what could have been a woeful May.

"As soon as the sun started shining outdoor furniture and barbecues were flying out of the door, demonstrating that there is a demand once the sun makes an appearance.

"After a disappointing April, May was a much better month and many members will be breathing a small sigh of relief. The focus on selling during the sunny spells was evident and many members saw a double digit increase in sales in their outdoor categories."

April saw poor sales for seeds and bulbs, however in May sales were up 6.01%. Gifts were also up 2.22% and clothing 5.34%. However, the weather affected overall performance and members saw an average decrease of 4.52% year on year.

The BoT reports produced by the GCA allow member garden centres to compare their trading positions with other GCA garden centres.

Phil continued: "We are all hoping that the sunny days outnumber the rainy ones during June and July to help boost sales.

"There is a definite link between the weather and sales, as demonstrated by our regional figures. Our members in Scotland had more days of sunshine than torrential rain in May and their overall sales were up 5.4%, whereas those in North Thames, which saw more rain, were down 19.6%.

"There is hope that trade through the month will keep ahead of 2011, with the season extending later into June due to the rainy weather during the past two months. This should have a positive impact on the overall year to date sales figures."

The GCA represents nearly 200 garden centres nationwide.

Through sharing information and its inspection programme the GCA helps members to achieve high standards in customer service, plant quality and reliability.

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For further details about the GCA, please call 01993 871456, visit [www.gca.org.uk](http://www.gca.org.uk), log on to [www.facebook.com/pages/Garden-Centre-Association](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Garden-Centre-Association) or follow the organisation on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/GC\\_Association](https://www.twitter.com/GC_Association).

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**For further media details, please call Porcupine PR on 01278 446801 or email [Ellie@porcupinepr.co.uk](mailto:Ellie@porcupinepr.co.uk). Alternatively, please contact Phil Slinger, GCA Chief Executive**