



## GCA reports sales of outdoor plants are up

THE GARDEN Centre Association (GCA) has recently released its Barometer of Trade (BoT) results for January (2012).

The results, which are compiled using member garden centre sales figures and provide an up-to-date trading position statement, revealed nearly a 20% increase in sales of outdoor plants.

Phil Slinger, GCA Chief Executive, explained: "Analysis of sales figures have revealed that more than 40% of GCA members that submitted data saw sales growth during the month, most noticeably with outdoor plant sales up almost 20% and hard landscaping up nearly 30%.

"However, the results from January 2012 also show a 3.35% decline in overall sales as compared to January 2011. But when looking at the results a number of factors must be considered to put the numbers into perspective.

"In January, 2011, garden centres saw strong sales as a result of the weather. Heavy snowfall affected the end of 2010, keeping many people at home during December. In January these customers ventured out.

"Also, during this winter (2011 until 2012) garden centres found bird care sales to be challenging as the weather has been generally warmer and there has been less demand for food, therefore having a negative impact on total turnover figures."

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

Phil continued: "The retail environment remains very challenging, however members are remaining positive with many garden centres making further investment in their businesses, which are reflected in increasing footfall, customer spend and repeat business."

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.

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).