

## Media release for the Garden Centre Association

# Wet weather didn't dampen outdoor plant sales

GARDEN centre customers didn't let the wet weather in January (2014) put them off buying outdoor plants according to the Garden Centre Association's (GCA) Barometer of Trade (BoT) results.

Outdoor plant sales were up 41.29% for the month as compared to January 2013.

Will Armitage, Chairman of the GCA, explained: "Despite the wet and windy start to the year our member garden centres have seen good sales and we believe the milder weather has got gardeners out into their gardens earlier than usual.

"Other good sellers in January were hard landscaping, 43.94% up, Christmas products, 20.04% up, food hall/farm shop, 17.82% up and catering, 16.95% up."

The GCA BoT reports are compiled using actual sales figures and provide an up-to-date trading position statement.

Will added: "In January 2013 and 2012 overall sales were approximately seven to eight percent down on the previous January each year.

"The better sales we have seen in January 2014 is a great improvement and shows people are still keen to visit garden centres and enjoy their gardens despite the rain."

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

Nigel Wait, Managing Director of Newbridge Nurseries in West Sussex, which won the GCA award for Most Improved Garden Centre 2013/2014, said: "The weather can very much determine the categories that will be the best performers and this is particularly true during the winter months.

"Lots of our visitors were taking advantage of the unusually mild temperatures and getting back into their gardens, which was reflected in our outdoor plant and hard landscaping sales. However, wild bird care products, which tend to sell better during colder spells, were down on this time last year.

"We also saw a 40% increase in sales in our Stooks restaurant as compared to the same time last year and we believe the wetter weather certainly had a part to play in this rise."

For further information, please call 0118 930 8918. Alternatively, please visit [www.gca.org.uk](http://www.gca.org.uk), log on to [www.facebook.com/pages/GardenCentreAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/pages/GardenCentreAssociation) 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 [Capella@porcupinepr.co.uk](mailto:Capella@porcupinepr.co.uk). Alternatively, please contact Iain Wylie, GCA Chief Executive on 07843 633408 or email [Iain@gca.org.uk](mailto:Iain@gca.org.uk).

**Photograph caption:** Will Armitage, Chairman of the Garden Centre Association.

