

HorticultureWeek

GCA finds food up but seed down at garden centres

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Garden Centre Association (GCA) member garden centres during March (2016) were 5.6 per cent up, with food hall and farm shop up 23.33 per cent compared to the same month last year (2015).



[GCA garden retail sales - monthly year-on-year comparison - March 2016](#)

The best performing traditional category was houseplants at 8.36 per cent up.

Outdoor plant sales rose 3.31 per cent compared to last year while sales in seeds and bulbs were down -6.65 per cent. Catering sales were up 11.78 per cent and clothing was up 10.7 per cent.

Gift sales were up 0.13 per cent and pets and aquatics were up 6.19 per cent. Hard landscaping sales were down -0.94 per cent and furniture and barbecue sales were up 7.0 per cent.

GCA chief executive Iain Wylie said: "It's not a surprise to see the non-traditional food hall and farm shop category taking top spot in sales during the month as due to the poor, wet weather and early Easter break, many gardeners haven't had the chance to get working on their plots.

"As the Easter break was so early this year the month's sales figures aren't a like-for-like comparison on last year. Easter figures would have been much better if it was a couple of weeks later.

"Due to there being no Easter break in April it has been a more challenging month but as we move into the late spring and early summer we've got our fingers crossed that things, including the weather, will improve."

The GCA represents nearly 200 garden centres nationwide.